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WORLD CITIES DAY

Statement by:

The Honourable Judith Seidman

Thursday, October 27, 2016

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Hon. Judith Seidman: Honourable senators, October 31 marks World Cities Day. Designated by the United Nations, this day aims to promote the international community's interest in meeting opportunities and addressing challenges of urbanization, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world.

This year's theme is "Inclusive Cities, Shared Development," and I can think of no better occasion to take a few moments and highlight significant achievements of my hometown, Montreal.

Starting as a small mission colony of a mere 50 settlers, Montreal has since become a prominent North American city, a metropolis of over 4 million inhabitants.

Historical events would mould the city into a beacon of modernity with roots of intellectual freedom and ambitious large-scale social and political reform. Montreal quickly became one of the most prominent urban, multicultural, political and artistic cities within Canada.

My hometown continues to distinguish itself by implementing innovative policies aimed at enriching life for its citizens while becoming a forerunner in the world. A recent example is the Community Sustainable Development Plan. Implemented earlier this year, in collaboration with more than 180 organizations from all walks of Montreal society, this plan focuses on reducing

greenhouse gas emissions, increasing biodiversity and ensuring access to sustainably healthy neighbourhoods.

These priorities will promote a healthier and more responsible city. It should come, then, as no surprise to hear that earlier this year, Montreal was ranked by *The Economist's* Safe Cities Index as the second-best city in Canada to live in.

On an international scale, Montreal has managed to position itself as one of the world's smartest cities. Designed to improve citizens' experiences, boost tourism and accelerate the city's economic development, the Montréal Smart and Digital City Action Plan aims to install technology making city services and systems more efficient, while creating a collaborative ecosystem for business, institutions and citizens alike.

To celebrate this initiative, Montreal was awarded Intelligent Community of the Year this past June by New York's Intelligent Community Forum. This non-profit research organization dedicated to the study of 21st century city development salutes the accomplishments of Montreal in developing inclusive prosperity on a foundation of information and communications technology.

Honourable senators, Montreal continues to evolve as a metropolis on the cutting edge of both the arts and the sciences.

Thank you.
