



VIP Speaker Bios

The Honourable Josée Verner (*Canada*), *Local Co-Chair, Leadership Programme Committee, AIDS 2006; Member of the Parliament; and Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages, Government of Canada*

Josée Verner was first elected as a Member of Parliament in January 2006 from the riding of Louis-St-Laurent and was appointed as the Minister of International Co-operation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's cabinet. In addition to being the chair of the Québec Caucus for the Conservative Party of Canada, in June 2004, she was named the spokesperson for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Region of Québec in Mr. Harper's shadow cabinet. This was widened to also include the Official Languages portfolio in September 2005.

Ms. Verner has spent close to 20 years in the communications and public service fields. She has worked for former Québec Premier Robert Bourassa and for the deputy speaker of Québec's National Assembly, and worked closely with the Ministry of Health. Ms. Verner is deeply involved in her community, and has spent a significant amount of time fundraising for the Children's Make A Wish Foundation.