Message from the Governor General  
on the occasion of National Nursing Week:  
A Voice to Lead—Nursing the World to Health

The year 2020 has been designated by the World Health Organization as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, in honour of the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s birth. This remarkable heroine laid the foundation for modern nursing and served as a model for generations of caregivers to emulate.

Now, more than ever, we as a society are cognizant of the critical role nurses play in our daily lives. Throughout the rapid turn of worldwide events during the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses across Canada have been facing this crisis on the front lines: performing triage in crowded emergency rooms, tending to patients on hospital wards and in intensive care, educating the community and looking after the housebound. They have been putting themselves and their families at great risk to help us all as we struggle together through these challenging times.

Beyond this watershed moment in global health, nurses constitute the backbone of our health care system, working with their colleagues in a broad range of settings and medical specialties to ensure continuity of care.

On behalf of all Canadians, I commend this country’s nurses and the Canadian Nurses Association on the work they do to keep us safe and healthy—today, tomorrow and always.

[Signature]