



## NEWS RELEASE

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2019

### **Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) held productive meetings in Vietnam**

**Ottawa, March 22, 2019** – On February 26 and 27, the Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) attended meetings in Hanoi of the APF's Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee (the Committee) and Network of Women Parliamentarians (the Network), at the invitation of Vietnam's National Assembly. The Canadian delegation was composed of Mr. [Joël Godin](#), MP, and Ms. [Sylvie Boucher](#), MP and the Network Rapporteur. Parliamentarians from 20 different legislatures were also in attendance.

During the Committee meeting and as a follow-up to the final report on this subject, Mr. Godin put forward a declaration emphasizing the importance of encouraging post-secondary mobility for students. The declaration calls on francophone parliamentarians to encourage agreements, programs and bursaries to facilitate student mobility among French-language educational institutions, particularly by removing financial and administrative obstacles as far as possible. The declaration also calls on these parliamentarians to develop ways to address the brain drain. The Committee adopted the declaration, which may be debated during the plenary session of the next APF annual meeting.

Ms. Boucher presented a report and declaration on the health needs of refugee women and girls to the members of the Network. The Network adopted the declaration, which states that given the unique problems they face, refugee women and girls must have access to appropriate health services. The declaration is aimed at making more parliamentarians, both men and women, aware of this issue in view of the unprecedented international refugee crisis taking place.

Lastly, the Canadian delegates attended a joint meeting of the Committee and Network concerning the failure to register the civil status of children in many countries of the Francophonie. This detrimental situation creates a barrier to education and health care for millions of children; it can also create obstacles for these children for their entire lives. The parliamentarians adopted a declaration to raise awareness of this issue among their colleagues in their respective legislatures.

The APF is composed of 87 parliaments and interparliamentary organizations on five continents. Its mandate is to promote the French language, cultural diversity, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The APF is the advisory assembly for the Francophonie.

The Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee is one of the APF's four committees. Its mandate is to explore issues related to education and training, cultural expression in French, communications, information and communications technologies, and audiovisual materials.

The Network of Women Parliamentarians seeks to encourage women's increased participation in political, economic, social and cultural life, both nationally and throughout the Francophonie. The Network also promotes human rights, particularly those of women and girls.

**-30-**

For	more	information,	please	contact:
Jean-François				Lafleur
Association Secretary	Canadian	Branch of the	<i>Assemblée parlementaire de la</i>	(APF)
<i>Francophonie</i>				
131	Queen	Street,	Room	05-28
Ottawa,				Ontario
<a href="mailto:assem.franco@parl.gc.ca">assem.franco@parl.gc.ca</a>				
Tel.: (613) 995-9560				