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Parliamentary Association



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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting  
its Mission to Romania, the next country to hold the rotating  
Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and its  
participation at the Fourth Part of the 2018 Ordinary Session  
of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

**Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association**

**Bucharest, Romania and Strasbourg, France  
October 8-18, 2018**

# Report

From 8 to 18 October 2018, the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association sent a delegation of five parliamentarians to Strasbourg, France and Bucharest, Romania to participate in the fourth part of the 2018 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and as part of a mission to the next country to hold the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union. The delegates were Mr. Scott Simms, MP and head of the delegation; Hon. Senator Rosa Galvez (for the PACE part of the mission); Hon. David Wells, Senator (for the Romania part of the mission); Mr. Don Davies, MP; Ms. Rachel Harder, MP; Mr. Nick Whalen. The delegation was accompanied by Association Secretary, Ms. Guyanne Desforges, and Association Advisor, Ms. Laura Barnett.

## **PARTICIPATION IN THE FOURTH PART OF THE 2018 ORDINARY SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

From 8 to 12 October, the delegation participated in the fourth part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, for which Canada has observer status. The delegation was joined in Strasbourg by Mr. Alan Bowman, Deputy Head of Canada's Mission to the European Union and Canada's Permanent Observer to the Council of Europe.

### **A. Overview of the Agenda of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

During the fourth part-session a wide range of topics were debated in the Assembly and in its committees and political groups. The Assembly held debates on the following:

- Progress report of the Bureau and the Standing Committee;
- Observation of the early presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey (24 June 2018);
- Strengthening the decision-making process of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning credentials and voting;
- The treatment of Palestinian minors in the Israeli justice system;
- Regulating foreign funding of Islam in Europe in order to prevent radicalisation and Islamophobia;
- Radicalisation of migrants and diaspora communities in Europe;
- Current affairs debate: The future of the Council of Europe;
- Private and family life: achieving equality regardless of sexual orientation;

- Unlimited access to member States, including “grey zones”, by Council of Europe and United Nations human rights monitoring bodies;
- Nuclear safety and security in Europe;
- The role of national parliaments in successful decentralisation processes;
- Family reunification of refugees and migrants in Council of Europe member States;
- Migration from a gender perspective: empowering women as key actors for integration;
- Deal-making in criminal proceedings: the need for minimum standards for trial waiver systems;
- The crash of Polish Air Force Tu-154M transporting the Polish State delegation, on 10 April 2010 on the Russian Federation’s territory;
- Free debate.

The Assembly also heard from the following speakers:

- Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia;
- Ms. Marija Pejčinović Burić, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia and Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers.

## **B. Canadian Activities during the Session**

### **1. Overview**

The members of the delegation actively participated in proceedings of the PACE, including plenary proceedings and committee meetings. The members also attended the meetings of the various political groups in the Assembly.

In addition, the delegation was briefed by Mr. Bowman, and special meetings were held with Mr. Lawrence Early and Mr. Stefano Piedimonte Bodini of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR); Ms. Dunja Mijatović, Commissioner for Human Rights; Mr. Thomas Markert, Secretary of the Venice Commission; the delegation of Georgia to PACE; the delegation of Romania to PACE; and the delegation of Turkey to PACE. Mr. Bowman also held a reception for the delegation to meet Canadian employees at the Council of Europe.

Finally, Mr. Scott Simms and Mr. Don Davies travelled to Paris on 10 October to participate in the meeting of the OECD Global Parliamentary Network.

### **2. Briefing by Canada’s Permanent Observer to the Council of Europe**

On 8 October, the delegation met with Mr. Bowman, Deputy Head of Canada’s Mission to the European Union and Canada’s Permanent Observer to the Council of Europe. Mr.

Bowman began with an overview of PACE and the Council of Europe for new members of the delegation, discussing Canada's observer status, and the role of the European Court of Human Rights, the Venice Commission and the Commissioner for Human Rights. He noted the evolution of Canada's involvement in the Council of Europe, from its active participation during Eastern Europe's transition from Communism, to today, when Canada's capacity-building efforts are more focused on Afghanistan and countries in Africa. Nevertheless, Canada does remain involved in Council of Europe initiatives – it is actively engaged in Ukraine, particularly with respect to media freedom issues; it is involved with Eurimages; and Canadian officials have recently indicated a willingness to re-engage more fully with the Venice Commission.

The delegation discussed with Mr. Bowman the status of Russia within the Council of Europe and at PACE, as a number of the debates during the week dealt with this issue and the PACE rules surrounding the acceptance of a delegation's credentials. Russia's voting rights at PACE were suspended in 2014 in reaction to its annexation of the Crimea. In response, Russia did not submit credentials for PACE in 2016 and in subsequent years. In June 2017, Russia announced that it would suspend payment of its contribution to the budget of the entire Council of Europe moving forward. This move has had a significant impact on the Council of Europe's overall budget and has led to numerous discussions about the future of the Council of Europe. The Committee of Ministers received a legal opinion on the suspension of Russia's PACE voting rights that indicated that the suspension had a significant impact on Russia's participation at the Council of Europe as a whole, as Russia is currently unable to, for example, vote for the Secretary General or the Commissioner for Human Rights. The Secretary General is currently searching for ways to engage with Russia and find a compromise that will allow Russia back to the Assembly.

### **3. Meeting with Officials from the European Court of Human Rights**

The delegation met with Mr. Lawrence Early, Jurisconsult of the Registry, and Mr. Stefano Piedimonte Bodini, Head of the Research and Library Division of the ECHR, to receive an overview of the functioning of the court and its role within the Council of Europe. Mr. Early explained the unique nature of the court, including the scope of its jurisdiction and the international resonance of its decisions. Mr. Early also explained the court's case management procedure and enforcement mechanisms, while Mr. Bodini discussed some current trends in ECHR caselaw with respect to terrorism and state surveillance. Mr. Early noted that the current absence of a Russian delegation at PACE has had significant impact on Russia's ability to shape the ECHR in the same way as its Council of Europe counterparts because ECHR judges are elected by PACE.

Mr. Early and Mr. Bodini responded to questions from the delegation with respect to the court's current backlog and enforcement mechanisms. Mr. Early indicated that five years ago, the court faced a significant backlog of 165,000 cases. This has now been reduced to 60,000 amid an effort to bring efficiency to the ECHR's working methods, including an improved IT system and more effective remedies. With respect to enforcement mechanisms, Mr. Bodini indicated that the role of the court essentially ends after it issues a decision – it is up to the Committee of Ministers to bring pressure to bear on governments moving forward. He noted that monetary awards were generally complied

with more frequently, while calls for a state to address structural problems were more complicated. With respect to the evolution of the court's caselaw, Mr. Early noted that the ECHR draws from international standards (for example, United Nations documents and national high court decisions) when deciding cases and will often look at trends and the shared vision of rights among Council of Europe member states in order to reach a decision on emerging interpretations on human rights.

#### **4. Meeting with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights**

On 9 October, the delegation met with Ms. Dunja Mijatović, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights. Ms. Mijatović provided the delegation with an overview of her own history working on freedom of expression and access to information files, and then described the work of her current office. She commented that her office's priorities evolve, following the course of events in Europe. Currently one important issue is the safety of journalists, following the murders of four journalists in Europe over the past year. Another relevant topic involves the digital world and the impact of artificial intelligence on human rights such as disability and labour rights.

In terms of enforcement powers, Ms. Mijatović highlighted the importance of dialogue – engaging with actors and raising awareness of pressing issues. From this perspective, cooperation with other international bodies and civil society is also crucial. Ultimately, political will from governments to address the issues that she raises is essential. Ms. Mijatović emphasized that although “naming and shaming” is part of her role, she sees the relevance of quiet diplomacy, dialogue with governments, and ultimately, making clear and direct calls for action. The point was made that it is important for the Commissioner not to politicize issues in order to maintain the credibility of the office.

#### **5. Meeting with the Georgian Delegation to PACE**

The delegation then met with Ms. Sofio Katsarava, member of the Georgian delegation to PACE to discuss Canada-Georgia relations and Georgia's perspectives with respect to Europe and PACE. Ms. Katsarava began by emphasizing Georgia's position with respect to Russia – her delegation cannot see any opening for rapprochement. She highlighted that Georgia regularly attempts to de-escalate its current relationship with Russia and to participate in negotiations on security and policy issues in order to promote stability in the region, but it sees no reciprocity and no progress in the negotiations. Nevertheless, Russia remains a trade partner, due to geographical proximity and historical ties.

Ultimately, Georgia's goal is to focus on its relationship with the EU and NATO – Georgia currently has visa free access to the Schengen zone and has a free trade agreement with the EU. The country's goal is to modernize along EU lines. In this vein, Ms. Katsarava discussed recent constitutional changes in Georgia and the important role that Parliament now has in the country's governance and oversight. She hopes that the country will be able to move from a monitoring to a post-monitoring phrase at PACE.

Ms. Katsarava also expressed Georgia's wish to explore further bilateral opportunities with Canada, including trade. She noted Georgia's potential as a regional hub and its involvement in China's One Belt, One Road plan. She discussed the country's plan to

build a deep sea port in the Black Sea and the growing importance of tourism to the country's economy.

## **6. Meeting with the Venice Commission**

The delegation met with Mr. Thomas Markert, Secretary of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), to discuss the role of the Commission and Canada's involvement with it as an observer state. Mr. Bowman and Mr. Markert began with a discussion of the Honorable Stéphane Dion, Canada's Special Envoy to the EU and Europe's recent interest in enhancing Canada's cooperation with the Venice Commission. Mr. Markert expressed a hope that Canada could become a full member of the Venice Commission in the future, highlighting the importance of Canada's common law tradition, the relevance of the Supreme Court of Canada's case law, the relevance of the sovereignty question with Quebec, and the importance of Canada's voice in Latin America (where the Venice Commission is playing a growing role).

Mr. Market noted that the Commission is an independent advisory body of legal experts that focuses on the importance of strong democratic institutions. The Commission organizes conferences and develops guidelines such as its Rule of Law Checklist and its guide on holding referendums, and provides opinions on draft legal texts put forward by Council of Europe member states. Countries moving towards EU membership must also receive a positive opinion from the Venice Commission before their application can move forward.

Three key issues promoted by the Venice Commission are the importance of parliamentary democracies (in lieu of presidential democracies), the benefits of constitutional courts, and the independence of the judiciary. Mr. Markert noted that the Commission is very aware of the need to respect state sovereignty, so the body is often careful with its criticisms and appeals to public opinion to help move issues forward. It also attempts to choose rapporteurs who may be well-perceived by a state receiving an opinion so as not be accused of bias. Mr. Markert highlighted the Commission's current involvement in opinions with respect to Turkey, Hungary, Poland and Romania. Ultimately, Mr. Markert sees the Commission's role as a preventative one – helping states put in place better legislation to shape their democracies.

## **7. Meeting of the OECD Global Parliamentary Network**

On 10 October, Mr. Scott Simms, and Mr. Don Davies attended the meeting of the OECD Global Parliamentary Network in Paris. The Director of Public Affairs and Communications, Mr. Anthony Gooch welcomed the participants and outlined the main themes of the day.

The first session, entitled "10 years after the crisis – what has changed?," dealt with how the financial crisis has affected ordinary people in OECD countries. Ms. Gabriela Ramos, Chief of Staff and G20 Sherpa at the OECD outlined the OECD's pioneering New Approaches to Economic Challenges initiative, identified the analytical and policy tools needed to understand these approaches, and outlined the narratives best able to convey them to policymakers.

The second session, entitled “Improving integration of refugees and other vulnerable migrants,” was led by Mr. Jonathan Chaloff of the International Migration Division at the OECD. He looked at what OECD countries have learned from the recent spike in demand for international protection and how countries can be better prepared for the next surge. Early warning systems, co-ordination across levels of government and internationally and interaction with other actors can help reinforce institutional capacity to respond. A number of specific integration programs work for groups with vulnerabilities such as unaccompanied minors and very low-education refugees. Mr. Simms then spoke about the “New Horizons Program for Seniors,” a Canadian federal support for programming that promotes volunteerism and wellness among Canadian seniors.

The next session was presented by Mr. Marcos Bonturi, Director for Public Governance and Stephan Naundorf, Vice-Chair for the OECD Regulatory Policy Committee on the launch of the “OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook,” which tracks how OECD countries develop, implement and review their laws and regulations to ensure regulatory quality. They mentioned how laws and regulation are essential, and their effects are felt everywhere: building safety, reliable transport and safe drinking water, to name only a few. The pace of technological changes and the unprecedented interconnectedness of economies leave governments unsure of what and how to regulate. The latest edition of the *Regulatory Policy Outlook* provided evidence of how 30 economies dealt with the quality of their laws and regulations, highlighted countries’ good regulatory practices and identified area for improvement. Canada is ranked in the top five OECD countries for all three categories evaluated. In addition, the *Outlook* highlights the Cabinet Directive on Regulation, Canada’s renewed regulatory policy which came into effect on 1 September 2018.

The fourth session, “Regions and Cities at a Glance,” examined indicators for individual regions and cities to assess disparities within countries and their evolution in over 40 countries. Mr. Rudiger Ahrend, Head, Economic Analysis, Statistics and Multi-level Governance Section at the OECD Secretariat, highlighted the most recent findings and recommendations and what policies are needed to address disparities. A report is published every two years looking at how regions and cities across the OECD are progressing toward stronger economies, higher quality of life for their citizens and more inclusive societies.

Mr. Anthony Gooch then engaged in a brief session to consult on regional trends, and Mr. Simms and Mr. Davis had an opportunity to sit down with the OECD Ambassador, Michelle d’Auray, who represents Canada in the organization’s governing body – the OECD Council – which determines the organization’s programme of work and budget, and chairs the Evaluation Committee.

The afternoon session included a discussion of the “Future of Work.” Globalization, technological progress and demographic change are having a profound impact on OECD labour markets, affecting both the quantity and quality of jobs that are available, as well as how and by whom they are carried out. The Future of work offers unparalleled opportunities, but there are also significant challenges associated with these mega-trends. It was noted that it is important for policymakers to strengthen the resilience and adaptability of labour markets so that workers and countries can manage the transition with the least possible disruption, while maximizing potential benefits. Mr. Davies shared

experience from his province, outlining challenges, opportunities and the labor transition in general.

The last two sessions explored the Technology outlook on “The use of blockchain in the public sector” and on “Opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence (AI).” Ms. Angela Hanson, Policy Analyst, and Ms. Anne Carblanc, Head of Division for Digital Economy Policy, discussed the two emerging technologies, focusing on better understanding of how digitalization is affecting the economy and society across policy domains, undertaking related analysis, highlighting country specific examples, and moving towards best practices and other policy solutions.

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada is the Canadian lead for the OECD’s work on AI. Blockchain technology includes identifying and helping members implement appropriate policies and supporting international cooperation to promote best practices, establish legal certainty, prevent regulatory arbitrage, and raise awareness of the potential risks. The OECD is proposing to establish an OECD Centre of Excellence on blockchain technology.

## **8. Meeting with the Romanian Delegation to PACE**

On 11 October, the delegation met with Senator Titus Corlăţean, Chair of the Romanian delegation to PACE and Mr. Viorel Riceard Badea, a member of the Romania delegation. Senator Corlăţean highlighted Romania’s preparatory activities and preliminary list of priorities for its presidency of the Council of the EU: growth competitiveness and cohesion; a safer Europe, looking at security challenges such as migration, the Eastern border and cyber threats; a global role for the EU, including a focus on the European neighbourhood and enlargement; and European values, focussing on challenges to the foundation of the European project. In this latter context, he noted concerns about rising populism and xenophobia, including hate speech, in Europe. During its presidency, Romania hopes to focus on its specific interests, including the Balkan neighbourhood and the transatlantic relationship. Romania hopes to be able to involve non-EU countries in the conferences that it organizes, such as including speakers from Canada or Japan.

In response to questions from the delegation, Senator Corlăţean commented that Romania is often frustrated at how the country is perceived in the EU. He noted that Romania is somewhat fraught by internal divisions and that this political in-fighting weakens Romania in the eyes of outside observers. He commented that corruption is no longer as much of an issue as it once was in Romania – however, there has been an abuse of power within the judiciary in its approach to dealing with corruption. Nevertheless, Romania is ready for its presidency and has the full capacity to negotiate for real political and legal solutions to important files.

On the issue of migration, Senator Corlăţean acknowledged that most migrants to Europe are not coming to Romania; however, those that have arrived have successfully integrated. Romania is not necessarily interested in attracting immigrants in order to fill labour gaps.

Finally, with respect to Canada-Romania relations, Senator Corlăţean noted his country’s deep appreciation for Canada’s military presence in Romania as a supportive buffer



against Russian air movements over the Black Sea. He also highlighted the importance of enhancing economic and academic exchanges with countries like Canada. Mr. Bowman concluded the meeting by emphasizing Canada's good relations with Romania and its support for Romania's efforts to focus on rule of law initiatives as it moves heads into its presidency.

## **9. Lunch with the United Kingdom's Delegation to PACE**

The delegation held a lunch meeting with the United Kingdom's (U.K.) delegation to PACE: Sir Roger Gale, Chairperson, Mr. Nigel Evans, Lord George Foulkes, and Dame Cheryl Gillian. The lunch began with a discussion of recent events in Canada, including the elections in Quebec and the *United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement* negotiations.

The delegates then discussed progress with respect to Brexit negotiations, hearing a wide divergence of opinions on the benefits and drawbacks of Brexit expressed around the table. 85% of the agreement has been finalized – the current sticking point is the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and it is unclear how this point will be resolved. Other potential difficulties down the road will be the need to get the Brexit deal through a divided Parliament, and potentially dealing with independence movements in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Mr. Bowman pointed out that 40% of Canada's trade to the EU goes through the U.K. – as such, Canada has real hopes that trade flows will not be interrupted as a result of Brexit. He pointed out that although the U.K. appears to be considering adopting an enhanced version of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) in its future relationship with the EU, it is important to understand that the Canada-EU relationship is very different from the U.K.-EU situation. CETA might not be the best lens through which to view this future relationship.

The conversation concluded with a discussion of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization and Canadian concerns about overfishing and lack of regard to conservation issues. The Canadian delegation urged their U.K. counterparts to take these concerns up domestically.

## **10. Meeting with the Turkish Delegation to PACE**

The delegation's final meeting was with the Turkish delegation to PACE: the Chairperson, Mr. Akif Çağatay Kiliç, Ms. Sena Nur Çelik, as well as a diplomatic representative. The conversation began with a discussion of the progress made in terms of women's involvement in mainstream society in Turkey over the last 15 years. The number of girls in school and women in the workforce has increased dramatically due to gender sensitive policies and an enhanced focus on equality. Delegates discussed the evolution of approaches to women wearing hijab in both Turkey and recent debates on the issue in Canada. The importance of gender and cultural sensitivity with respect to migrant women was also raised. In response to questions about Turkey's approach to religion, Turkish delegates commented that although Turkey was once seen as a secular state, in fact, the state repressed religion and banned headscarves in places like universities. It could be said that Turkey is more secular now because the government safeguards religious rights and emphasizes the freedom to choose.

Delegates also discussed recent events in Turkey, including the detention of a great number of journalists and judges. Mr. Bowman expressed the concern that Turkey's reaction to attempted coup last year was excessive. Mr. Kiliç emphasized that the attempted coup posed a real threat to the country – Ms. Çelik was in the Parliament when it was bombed. In the wake of that coup attempt he oversaw the dismissal of thousands from their posts, noting that approximately 2,000 judges in Turkey were found to have been communicated with, and taken instructions from, third parties. He commented that Fethullah Gülen is currently based in Pennsylvania but has been trying to come to Canada, where he has bought land. In commenting on Turkey's security situation in general, he noted that Turkey's neighbours are largely failed states and that the country currently hosts approximately 3.5 million asylum seekers. This is not an easy situation, but Turkey has managed to maintain stability despite these difficulties. It was also pointed out that Turkey is a significant contributor to NATO and as a member of the Council of Europe, fully respects its values.

Delegates also discussed environmental issues and the need for cooperation across borders to mitigate the effects of climate change. Turkish delegates noted that Turkey is currently uses hydro power and is building nuclear reactors – the country needs to renew its energy infrastructure in order to focus on renewable energy.

The conversation concluded with Mr. Kiliç calling for Canada to take in more Yazidi asylum seekers. Mr. Bowman noted that Canada is happy to work with Turkey on migration issues in order to find a sustainable way for migrants to return home.

### **C. Canadian Interventions in Assembly Debates**

Mr. Scott Simms, Senator Rosa Galvez, Mr. Don Davies, Ms. Rachel Harder, and Mr. Nick Whalen participated in Assembly debates during the part-session, making nine interventions in debates and tabling two additional speeches on a range of broad topics. Links to the delegates' speeches are available on the PACE website.<sup>1</sup>

#### **1. Tuesday, 9 October 2018**

Mr. Scott Simms delivered a speech on “Strengthening the decision-making process of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning credentials and voting.”

Mr. Don Davies delivered a speech on “The treatment of Palestinian minors in the Israeli justice system.”

#### **2. Wednesday, 10 October 2018**

Mr. Nick Whalen was unable to speak, but tabled a speech on “Regulating foreign funding of Islam in Europe in order to prevent radicalization and Islamophobia.”

Ms. Rachael Harder was unable to speak, but tabled a speech on “Radicalisation of migrants and diaspora communities in Europe.”

Mr. Simms delivered a speech in the context of the current affairs debate on “The future of the Council of Europe.”

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Verbatim Records. [2018 – Fourth part-session](#).

Senator Galvez delivered a speech on “Private and family life: achieving equality regardless of sexual orientation.”

### **3. Thursday, 11 October 2018**

Mr. Simms delivered a speech on “The role of national parliaments in successful decentralization processes.”

Mr. Whalen delivered a speech on “Family reunification of refugees and migrants in Council of Europe member States.”

Senator Galvez and Ms. Harder delivered speeches on “Migration from a gender perspective: empowering women as key actors for integration.”

### **4. Friday, 12 October 2018**

Ms. Harder delivered a speech on “Deal-making in criminal proceedings: the need for minimum standards for trial waiver systems.”

## **PARLIAMENTARY MISSION TO ROMANIA, THE NEXT COUNTRY TO HOLD THE ROTATING PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

From 15 to 18 October 2018, the delegation participated in a parliamentary mission to the Romania, the country that will hold the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union from January to June 2019. During that mission, the delegation met with Romanian parliamentarians, government officials, the Minister Delegate for European Affairs, the Presidential Advisor on European Affairs, the Deputy Head of the European Commission’s Representation in Romania, Canadian companies in Romania, Canadian air forces stationed in Romania, a charity working with at-risk youth, and representatives from think tanks and civil society. In addition, the delegation was briefed by officials from Canada’s Embassy to Romania. The discussions held during these meetings pertained to Romania’s priorities for its upcoming presidency of the Council of the European Union; key issues in Canada-EU and Canada-Romania relations, including CETA and visas; and other important issues facing Romania and the EU, including threats to the rule of law, security and Brexit.

### **A. Briefing with Canada’s Embassy to Romania**

The delegation began its mission on 15 October with a briefing by His Excellency Kevin Hamilton, Ambassador, accompanied by Mr. Chris Duggan, Political Counsellor; Lieutenant-Colonel David Freake, Deputy Defence Attaché; Mr. Brad Niblock, Senior Trade Commissioner; and Ms. Ana Serafim, Political Counsellor. The ambassador provided the delegation with an overview of Romanian history and recent tumultuous political events that are linked to concerns about corruption in the country and in the political class. Through various attempts to use emergency ordinances to pass legislation that by-pass parliamentary procedure, this summer, Romania made changes to its criminal code and related legislation that observers are concerned will undermine the independence of the judiciary and the work of prosecutors. In addition, the chief prosecutor of the Anti-Corruption Directorate, which was widely accepted as making credible and tangible efforts to combat corruption, was fired in July. As a result of these

events, large protests against the government were held in August – these were the first anti-governments in a long time to become violent, and many accused the police of over-reaction when 450 individuals were injured and one person died following the protest.

The ambassador also highlighted the October referendum on the definition of a family that failed due to insufficient voting numbers – many have speculated that the referendum was held as a distraction for the issues of corruption currently faced by the government.

Mr. Duggan also emphasized the political turmoil in Romania in his presentation, commenting that voter apathy is a real problem in Romania, despite the number of protesters that took to the streets in August. He noted that one recently created reform-minded party, the Save Romania Union, has grown out from the grassroots level to challenge the more established parties. Nevertheless, despite political difficulties at home, Romania will likely be able to put divisions aside to adequately manage its presidency of the Council of the EU. This presidency will be an important one, encompassing a time span that includes budget negotiations, European Parliament elections, selection of the new EU leadership and finalization of the Brexit plan. Mr. Duggan said that the role of a presidency is to act as an honest broker in order to allow negotiations and debates to occur, with a high degree of stage involvement from Brussels. Romania's priorities are convergence and economic development, with a discussion of the two-speed Europe; security, including border security and the Schengen zone (which Romania has not yet been able to join due to political concerns among other member states); the EU as a global actor, including the Common Security and Defence Policy and migration; and EU common values, including social justice and democracy.

The ambassador continued with an exploration of the Canada-Romania relationship, noting that Canada has been vocal in its criticism of governance issues in Romania, including signing on to a joint statement about the recent criminal code amendments. Nevertheless, Canada-Romania relations are positive, particularly when it comes to defence and against the backdrop of Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggressive presence in the Black Sea. Romania is a committed NATO ally and Canada has now stationed military personnel and an Air Task Force with CF-18s to participate in joint NATO air policing missions in the country for the third time.

On trade, the ambassador commented CETA has proceeded through almost the entire parliamentary approval process, including all relevant committees, and now awaits a final vote in the Senate prior to ratification. He also highlighted the fact that the visa requirement for Romanians travelling to Canada has been an irritant in Canada-Romania relations for many years. While Romania has always viewed the visa requirement as a quid pro quo situation (with freer trade comes freer movement), Canadian officials do not operate on these terms and only recently lifted the visa requirement after approving the integrity of the migration system between the countries. Since the visa lift, the number of asylum claims and visa violations from Romanian citizens increased dramatically. Many claims were determined to be unfounded. Most such claimants were arriving from third countries – making it difficult for Romanian officials to control. As a result, Canada began to require biometric passports to qualify for visa-free travel. Canada continues to work with Romanian interlocutors to ensure the sustainability of the visa lift.

The briefing closed with a discussion of the situation of specific domestic and EU issues. On the issue of the Roma, it was noted that Romania has by far the largest Roma population in Europe and there is a great deal of segregation in the country. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that Roma communities can be mobile and suffer from a trust deficit with authorities, resulting in many not obtaining adequate documentation. With respect to the media, the ambassador highlighted that the media is generally quite free in Romania but is nevertheless very politicized – party views are represented by the various channels, which means that viewers often tune in to the station that already espouses their worldview. This can lead to skewed perceptions – as exemplified by the multiple different perspectives of the August protests portrayed by the various channels. Finally, it was noted that the migration issues facing much of the EU are not as much of an issue in Romania, as the country is not part of the Schengen zone and thus is not on the migration route.

## **B. Meeting with Minister Delegate for European Affairs**

The delegation then met with Victor Negrescu, the Romanian Minister Delegate for European Affairs. Minister Negrescu began with an overview of Romania's priorities for its presidency. Under the topic of convergence, he emphasized growth and sustainable outcomes, support for less developed regions, competitiveness and the importance of connectivity. With respect to security, he highlighted the importance of both technology and human resources to effective border security. With respect to the EU as a global actor, he noted the current trend of focusing on Africa and North Africa – particularly in light of current migration patterns. Romania also hopes to focus on the Western Balkans and the Eastern neighbourhood during its presidency. Finally, on the common values pillar, he emphasized a revived focus on human dignity. Romania aims to finalize as many goals as possible during its presidency, while also focusing on current events such as the European Parliament elections and the rise of more extreme, fringe parties in this context; the EU budget negotiations; and Brexit, including dealing with the financing implications of the U.K. leaving the EU. Minister Negrescu also highlighted the fact that Romania will host a summit on the future of the EU in Sibiu during its presidency. Ultimately, Romania hopes to focus on European values and emphasize the importance of cooperation between states during its presidency, playing an active role in helping states reach consensus.

In response to questions about some of Romania's particular strengths within its presidency priorities, Minister Negrescu emphasized the significant investment that Romania has made in terms of connectivity and border security. Romania has developed good telecommunications infrastructure in recent years and is currently working towards providing free wifi for all citizens. With respect to border security, he noted that despite the fact that Romania has met the technical requirements for joining the Schengen zone and that Romania now has one of the lowest criminality rates in the EU, there is still political resistance to Romania joining Schengen among some member states. Minister Negrescu saw the presidency as an opportunity to present Romania's culture, history and ability to contribute to the EU in a positive light to the other member states. The government also intends to organize events in every county in Romania, bringing the relevance of the EU home to individuals across the country. On the issue of how to

combat rising populism prior to the European elections, Minister Negrescu emphasized the importance of proactive engagement with citizens. Populist leaders are often popular because they are honest – to tackle this, political parties need to listen to what people want and clearly explain how they will try to address those issues.

Finally on visa issue, Minister Negrescu noted that as soon as the number of asylum claimants to Canada began to rise, Romanian authorities reacted to counter this trend and worked with Canadian authorities to eliminate the use of temporary passports. Cooperation between Canada and Romania on this issue is of key importance. He emphasized the positive feedback that he has received from the Romanian business community on both CETA and the visa lift. These are both positive elements in the Canada-Romania relationship.

### **C. Meeting with the Representation of the European Commission in Romania**

The delegation then met with Mr. Cristian Buchiu, Deputy Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Romania, as well as Ms. Monica Loloiu, Political Reporter Assistant, and Mr. Adam Paldyna, intern. Mr. Buchiu began with an overview of what the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU entails, noting that Romania is on the right track with its preparations for what promises to be a difficult presidency, given that it will encompass the budget negotiations, the elections for the European Parliament, and the finalization of Brexit. One measurement of success for a presidency is the number of files closed during a country's mandate. Romania aims to act as an honest broker during its presidency and that the hope is that they will be an active and constructive leader as well.

In response to questions from the delegation, Mr. Buchiu elaborated on one of the proposed pillars for Romania's presidency – common values. He noted that these values include good governance and respect for the rule of law, and that this is one area in which Romania may not be aligned with EU values. The EU releases an annual Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) report with respect to Romania. In general, these reports have always been positive, but there are indications that this year's report will be less so given the recent reforms to the criminal statutes, the judiciary, rights of the accused and curtailing of prosecutorial powers. Until there is more progress on the CVM criteria, Romania is unlikely to be admitted to the Schengen zone. That is the political reality of the EU. He also noted that the Venice Commission has been asked to provide an opinion on Romania's legal reforms.

In response to a question about equalization payments, Mr. Buchiu elaborated on the EU's cohesion policy, which deals with lack of convergence between member states. In the past, Romania has benefited from this budget aimed at helping the less developed regions within the EU. The proposed future budget for the EU includes cuts to the cohesion policy. Mr. Buchiu noted that the EU also adopted an investment support program in 2014, however, Romania has not necessarily been very efficient at absorbing these funds because companies in Romania are not big enough to propose projects that fit the program's goals.

With respect to foreign policy, Mr. Buchiu noted that EU enlargement will not happen during the mandate of Mr. Juncker, the current President of the European Commission; however, countries such as Serbia and Macedonia are quite interested and the

Commission is preparing to move forward on those files in the future. Mr. Buchiu also emphasized that the EU is very committed to multilateralism and the international trade system. He commented that Mr. Junker and U.S. President Trump had a good meeting earlier this year and hope to work together to find areas of mutual agreement on free trade.

The meeting closed with a discussion of voter turnout in Romania. Mr. Buchi said that turnout generally depends on the election – with higher turnout for presidential elections (approximately 60%) than for parliamentary and local elections (approximately 30%). Historically, voter turnout was higher because the country was hungry for democracy, but today voters are more disaffected.

#### **D. Lunch with Civil Society Groups**

During a lunch at the embassy, the delegation met with civil society to discuss governance issues with representatives from the Expert Forum, Initiativa Romania, the National Democratic Institute, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, and Friedrich-Nauman-Foundation. Representatives noted that Romania made good progress in combatting corruption until just a few years ago and there were a number of high-level convictions. However, recently politicians have begun to fear the scope of these convictions and are finding ways to block the anti-corruption initiatives. As a result, the anti-corruption agency has been demonized and targeted by the political class. Romanian society is also polarized, with the urban/intellectual v rural divide becoming more pronounced. In this context politicians tend to be short-sighted, handing out benefits to please voters rather than thinking about longer term projects such as infrastructure, education, health or economic reform. Corruption is a flashpoint in political discussions in the country and few of the existing parties offer a viable alternative to the current ruling party. In this context, representatives noted the importance of continued funding for civil society organizations that promote democratic values and civic engagement. It remains essential to nurture institutions and values of good governance in countries that have successfully joined the EU to ensure sustainability of democratic standards.

#### **E. Meeting with Officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

The delegation then met with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Viorel Ardelean, General Director, Ms. Theodora Hrib, First Secretary and Mr. Adrian Ligor, former chargé d'affaires for Romania to Canada. Mr. Ardelean began by highlighting important elements of the Canada-Romania relationship, including the countries' close cooperation on security and defence. He expressed a hope to enhance the already dynamic political dialogue between the countries, and further explore the potential for closer economic relations, emphasizing the importance of multilateralism for Romania. Canada and Romania currently have a small trade relationship but this can be boosted, perhaps by emphasizing Romania's strong IT and automotive sectors. Romania is now also relatively energy self-sufficient – it has become a minor energy exporter and is currently involved in the construction of a new pipeline. Today Romania is tackling the issue of emigration of its workforce, and has raised salaries in order to retain doctors and enhance industry competitiveness. Increased investment from Canada could assist with

this goal. Mr. Ardelean noted that the visa lift was an important moment in the Canada-Romania relationship.

With respect to the EU context, Mr. Ardelean noted that becoming a EU member state was a significant milestone for Romania, allowing the country to accelerate its modernization and make significant legal reforms.

On the issue of relations with Russia, Mr. Ardelean noted that Romania is concerned about increased militarization in the Black Sea since the annexation of Crimea. Romania has very few political meetings with Russia anymore, as the countries tend to disagree on most issues. However, technical cooperation and economic relations have been maintained.

## **F. Meeting with Dragos Pislaru**

The delegation closed its first day in Romania in a meeting with Mr. Dragos Pislaru, former Minister for Labour, Family and Social Protection, and an expert in labour-related issues. In response to questions from the delegation, Mr. Pislaru highlighted the fact that in past decades, unions in Romania lost stature because the government wanted to focus on creating a better investment climate, but that with changes to the labour code, unions are now starting to play a more prominent role again. Two unions in particular are well-connected to the international union movement and are well-versed in the arguments surrounding CETA and free trade more generally.

Mr. Pislaru enumerated what he saw as the problems with the current labour market in Romania. From a quantitative perspective, Romania's negative demographics are an issue – a falling birth rate and a rising death rate, combined with a poor health system and high emigration levels among high and low-skilled workers mean that Romania is not keeping pace with the rest of Europe. From a qualitative perspective, he noted that there is a skill mismatch to labour shortages in the country. Mr. Pislaru provided some historical context, noting that post-Communism, Romania went into survival mode and had a hard time shaking the fear generated by the previous regime. Individuals developed skills, but used them in an isolated manner – there was a lack of the social fibre that generates trust in society. Thus, there was talent but there was not the trust needed for individuals to work together and take full advantage of the opportunities that emerged. There is still a significant grey and black economy in Romania and Mr. Pislaru noted concern about trends that show poverty decreasing, but the gap between the haves and have nots increasing. To counter such trends and to focus on building trust in society, Mr. Pislaru has joined a Platforma Romania 100, a recently formed organization led by former technocrat Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș, whose aim is to transform Romania from the inside, with significant citizen involvement.

## **E. Meeting with the Joint Special Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate for the Coordination of Parliamentary Activities Necessary for the Preparation of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union**

The delegation began its day on 16 October at the Palace of Parliament in a meeting with members of the Joint Special Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate for the coordination of parliamentary activities necessary for the preparation of the presidency of



the Council of the EU. This committee is chaired by Senator Titus Corlăţean, whom the delegates had met with at PACE. The discussions began with a description of the bicameral legislative process in Romania and the composition of Parliament, including the representation of ministers, Senators, and national minorities.

Picking up from the discussion of Romania's presidency priorities begun at PACE, Senator Corlăţean emphasized Romania's dedication to the EU and to the transatlantic relationship, highlighting the importance of CETA and the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with Canada in this context. With respect to the timing of the parliamentary approval processes for these two agreements, he noted that SPA has now been fully approved and that CETA has been approved by the Chamber of Deputies and is now before the Senate. He said that there were initial difficulties surrounding the visa issue, but that these now appear to be resolved. Nevertheless, for EU member states, freedom of movement generally comes as a package along with discussions of trade – he hoped that agreements could be reached on Romania-Canada police cooperation so that the visa issue would not become a problem again. On the visa issue, members of the delegation and the ambassador emphasized since the spike in asylum claimants from Romania earlier this year, Romanian and Canadian authorities have worked closely together to ensure the visa is sustainable. The check and balance mechanisms currently in place appear to be working well. Regardless, the visa requirement is now lifted and CETA appears to be working well on the ground – the delegates hoped that Romanian parliamentarians would soon give their final approval to the agreement.

#### **F. Meeting with the Committees for Foreign Policy of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate**

The delegation then met with members of the Committees for Foreign Policy of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, chaired by Ms. Rozalya - Ibolya Biro and Senator Cristian Dumitrescu. Senator Dumitrescu began by emphasizing the importance of multilateral relations and Canada-EU cooperation in this regard. He highlighted the fact that Romanian foreign policy is closely aligned with that of the EU, as well as the importance of cooperation through NATO – Romania has met its commitment to spend 2% of its GDP on defence. In response to a question about external threats, one parliamentarian noted that Romania has always been the most pro-European nation in the region and now feels the weight of Russia's pressure through propaganda and its military presence in the Black Sea. There is some fear that Moldova might begin to lean towards more towards Russia after its coming elections and that this could destabilize the region.

Senator Dumitrescu also noted the challenges ahead as Romania takes over the presidency of the Council of the EU, including finalizing Brexit, the EU budget, and overseeing the European Parliament elections and the selection of the new president of the European Commission. In the context of the elections, he emphasized the risk presented by rising populism and political extremes.

With respect to Canada-Romania relations, Senator Dumitrescu expressed an appreciation for Canada and Romania's ability to work together on the visa problem, ultimately resulting in the visa lift. Canadian delegates highlighted the importance of

CETA ratification, as well as the symbolism of the values and ideals enshrined in the SPA. Another parliamentarian followed up on this theme, noting that post-Communism, Romania aspires to developing a system of values like that which exists in Canada, but that this takes time. The strong Canada-Romania relationship allows our countries to learn from one another and grow.

### **G. Meeting with the Committees on European Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate**

The delegation then met with members of the Committees on European Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, chaired by Mr. Angel Tilvar and Senator Gabriela Cretu. Mr. Tilvar began with an overview of how Romania's priorities for the presidency were developed and noted the importance of the European Parliament elections during that timeframe. He noted that in contrast to some other countries, Romania has no extremist parties and all political parties are pro-EU.

In response to questions about the Venice Commission's concerns about Romania's changes to its judicial system, one parliamentarian noted that post-Communism, Romania's legislation and legislative system had to be completely renewed, first in order to espouse a democratic system and then to join the EU. These changes were not perfect, and sometimes legislation has been abused in the name of democracy. Parliament is now fixing legislation, sometimes through emergency ordinance, in order to meet democratic standards. Senator Cretu emphasized that Romania takes democracy and the rule of law seriously – right now the challenge is to find the right balance between the government and the judiciary. This is a delicate topic post-Communism, for a country where prosecutors were often associated with severe intrusions against privacy and human rights. Mr. Ilie Barna, leader of the opposition Save Romania Union noted that the other parties have not convinced citizens that these justice reforms are necessary and expressed concerns that the ruling Social Democratic Party is controlled by the leader of the party (rather than the Prime Minister) who is using the state to further his personal goals. Mr. Tilvar noted the importance of such lively debate as part of the recipe for progress and a thriving democracy.

Mr. Tilvar also emphasized the importance of cultural and youth exchanges with Canada, and the ambassador noted that new direct flights from Romania to Canada, as well as the visa lift, will make such exchanges easier. Canadian universities have been coming to Romania to recruit, and a number of Canadians are currently studying and teaching in Romania. People-to-people ties between the countries are strong. Ms. Roxana Minzatu of the Social Democratic Party also emphasized the potential offered by Romania, which is facing record economic growth, low unemployment, and has good state aid for the private sector.

### **H. Lunch Meeting with the Canada-Romania Friendship Group**

The delegation then met with the head of the Canada-Romania Friendship Group, Senator Robert-Marius Cazanciuc, over lunch at the Palace of Parliament. Topics of discussion included Romania's justice and judicial system and the use of emergency ordinances, the role of the constitutional court, the legislative process and ways of

ensuring proper analysis of draft legislation, and current events and issues under discussion in Parliament in Canada.

### **I. Meeting with Telus International Europe**

The delegation then visited Telus International Europe, a multilingual contact centre, business process outsourcing and information technology outsourcing provider – and a Canadian company. Mr. Grégoire Vigroux, Vice-President of Marketing, gave the delegation an overview of the evolution of the company's expansion into Eastern Europe. The company aims to be a premium service provider with a focus on providing multilingual technical support – the Bucharest office provides services in 28 languages, serving customers across Europe. Employees are primarily Romanian, although approximately 10% of those in the Bucharest office come from other countries in Europe. Mr Vigroux also emphasize Telus' focus on corporate social responsibility – the Romanian office provides grants to NGOs and has built a centre for children near Bucharest. The delegation concluded the meeting with tour of the facilities.

### **J. Meeting with the Presidential Advisor for European Union Affairs**

The delegation then met with Mr. Leonard Orban, the Presidential Advisor for EU Affairs. Mr. Orban began by discussing the delays surrounding the approval of CETA in the Senate, explicitly linking this delay to Romania's concern that Canada may reintroduce its visa for Romanian citizens. He noted that the spike in asylum claims earlier this year was due to Romanians arriving from the United States rather than directly from Romania. Mr. Orban emphasized the need for the Romanian government to receive assurances from Canada that the visas will not be re-imposed. The delegates and Mr. Duggan emphasized that Canada is working closely with Romanian officials to ensure that this situation remains stable.

With respect to domestic issues, Mr. Orban noted that the President is a strong defender of the fight against corruption, an independent judiciary, and the rule of law. He commented that the recent legislative changes in Romania were a step back and that the President has requested that they be examined by the constitutional court. He noted that, unlike some other EU member states, the legislative changes are not motivated by politics but out of individual needs for protection from legal scrutiny. He also emphasized that the President was obligated to fire the chief prosecutor of the Anti-corruption Directorate following a decision of the constitutional court requiring him to follow the instructions that he had received from the Minister of Justice. The only other option in that scenario would have been to step down. Mr. Orban noted that one of the main challenges for politicians in Romania is to encourage citizens to vote – this is an important vehicle for effecting change. Nevertheless, Mr. Orban did not think that Romania's presidency would be affected by domestic issues – the country's vision is democratic and will focus on strengthening the fundamentals of the EU.

In response to questions about the finalization of Brexit during Romania's presidency, Mr. Orban noted that after the withdrawal date of 29 March 2019 there will be three potential ways forward. In one scenario, the main task will be to launch negotiations on future relations with the U.K and conclude specific sectoral agreements to put this into effect.

Alternatively, if no agreement is reached by 29 March, there will be a hard Brexit, and Romania's presidency will go into crisis management mode – the goal will be to facilitate the adoption of contingency plans to limit damage. A final scenario will see a prolonged transition period, which would allow for more time to sort out the issue of the border with Northern Ireland.

On the issue of Russia, Mr. Orban noted that Romania fully supports the EU's sanctions, which seem to be having an effect.

#### **K. Reception Hosted by the Embassy**

The second day closed with a reception hosted by Ambassador Hamilton and the Canadian embassy, where delegates continued conversations with many of the individuals that they had met throughout the mission, as well as some who had been unable to attend the meetings over the previous days.

#### **L. Meeting with Kinetricks International and Kinetricks Nuclear Romania**

The delegation began its final day of meetings on 17 October with representatives from Kinetricks International and Kinetricks Nuclear Romania. Mr. Sorin Patrascoiu, General Director, Kinetricks Nuclear Romania, and Mr. Andrew Roberts, Business Development Manager for Kinetricks International provided the delegation with an overview of Kinetricks' work in Canada and Romania. Kinetricks is a Canadian nuclear lifecycle management services company with 20 facilities in six countries, employing over 1,000 highly technical staff. The company expanded into Romania in 2017, taking over an existing company on the ground. Kinetricks' CANDU delivery centre in Bucharest provides engineering services for CANDU reactor clients in Canada (Ontario Power Generation and Bruce Power) and around the globe. The aim is to further build this expertise to become the engineers of choice for Nuclearelectrica, the company that operates the nuclear power plant located in Cernavoda, Romania (which the delegation saw in person later that morning). The refurbishment of units 1 and 2 in Cernavoda is expected by 2026, allowing for a further 30 years of operation. Kinetricks is also working with a Chinese company for financing and hopes to have unit 3 ready for 2030 and unit 4 some time that decade. Other clients include the Nuclear Agency and for Radioactive Waste Romania, Kinetricks providing support for setting up a final radioactive waste repository and implementing a long term strategy for radioactive waste and spent fuel. Kinetricks Nuclear Canada provides support for Romania-based projects, contributing its specialized expertise. In response to questions about nuclear waste, Mr. Patrascoiu said that institutional waste (e.g. from hospitals) is stored in a former mine, while operational waste and spent fuel are stored on site. Some waste can be incinerated and other waste decontaminated.

#### **M. Visit to Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base**

The delegation then travelled to Constanta near the Black Sea to visit Canadian military personnel stationed at the Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base. Canada sent approximately 135 personnel and five CF-18 Hornets to participate in NATO air policing with the Romanian air force from September to December 2018 as part of its contribution to NATO's Operation REASSURANCE in Eastern and Central Europe. A similar Canadian

contingent was stationed in Romania in late 2017 and in 2014. The delegation was greeted by Canadian personnel, led by the Canadian Air Task Force Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Colonel Timothy Woods, who provided a briefing with respect to the NATO Enhanced Air Policing Mission and gave the delegation a tour of the facilities.

#### **N. Visit to the Nightingales Children's Project**

The delegation closed its mission with a visit to the Nightingales Children's Project in Cernavoda. The delegation and the ambassador were greeted by Mr. David Savage, the Charity Director, and Mr. Ben Wells, the Project Coordinator, who gave them a tour of the charity's school, workshop, candle shop and café. Mr. Savage first arrived in Romania from the U.K. in the early 1990s to work in an orphanage. He went on to build a school with accommodation for children with HIV and mental and physical disabilities. Soon students from all over the region were attending the school, but there was concern about the future that awaited many of these at-risk youth. Mr. Wells described the more holistic approach that Nightingales adopted to work with these youth moving forward, providing counselling and capacity-building tutorials, strengthening relations with families, and running a café and craft shop where youth can work, make and sell their own goods. Mr. Wells has also started a successful football team to further involve the boys in the community, and some youth do maintenance jobs around the charity. Many of the youth that the charity has worked with are now working abroad, and when they return, Mr. Savage and Mr. Wells provide financial counselling so that they can use the money that they have earned wisely. He indicated that perhaps 65% of the youth that they work with are from the Roma community, as it is particularly difficult for Roma youth to find jobs in the community due to entrenched discrimination.

Today the coffee shop at the charity pays for itself and the hope is that one day it will be able to support the entire charity. Mr. Savage emphasized that the charity's funding is limited – they have private donors in the U.K., but most funding from larger organizations like UNICEF has dried up because Romania's orphanage crisis of the 1990s is no longer considered a pressing issue – today the children are older and many see Romania as a success story since it joined the EU. However, many of the youth are still at risk, and their charity's goal of finding them viable alternatives and skill sets that they can use in the community and abroad remains just as relevant and needed. The visit ended with Ambassador Hamilton announcing new support for the organization on behalf of the Canadian government to support their work.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Scott Simms, M.P.

Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Mission to Romania, the next country to hold the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and its participation at the Fourth Part of the 2018 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Bucharest, Romania and Strasbourg, France
<b>DATES</b>	October 8 to 18, 2018
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	The Hon. Rosa Galvez, Senator The Hon. David Wells, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Scott Simms, M.P. Mr. Don Davies, M.P. Ms. Rachael Harder, M.P. Mr. Nick Whalen, M.P.
STAFF	Mrs. Guyanne Desforges, Association Secretary Ms. Josée Thérien, Association Secretary Ms. Laura Barnett, Analyst
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 51,588.88</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 25,732.20</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 3,660.23</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 12,137.33</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 458.28</b>

**MISCELLANEOUS /  
REGISTRATION FEES**

**\$ 10.00**

**TOTAL**

**\$ 93,586.92**