



Inter-Parliamentary Union

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the Steering Committee of the Twelve Plus
Group**

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Horta and Terceira, Portugal

March 24-26, 2019

Report

1. Introduction

Article 25 of the Statutes and Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) permits its members to form geopolitical groups. These groups play an important role in the functioning and activities of the IPU.

There are six formally recognized geopolitical groups: the African Group (52 members), the Asia-Pacific Group (36 members), the Arab Group (21 members), the Eurasia Group (9 members), the Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (25 members) and the Twelve Plus Group (47 members). Each group decides on working methods that best suit its participation in the activities of the Union and informs the Secretariat of its composition, the names of its officers, and its rules of procedure.

Canada belongs to the Twelve Plus Group and the Asia Pacific Group. Canada only submits candidatures for vacant positions within the Union through the Twelve Plus Group.

2. Background on the Twelve Plus Group

The Twelve Plus Group was formed in 1974 (as the Nine Plus Group) by IPU members from the European Community (EC). Its purpose is to coordinate the action and policy of its member Groups and, where possible, to arrive at common positions on IPU matters. The word “Plus” was intended to indicate the openness of the Group to new members of the EC as well as other like-minded nations, such as Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Today, the Group has 47 members, including Central and Eastern European countries.¹

The Twelve Plus Group holds meetings on a regular basis during the IPU’s spring and fall Assemblies. These meetings provide a venue for the Group’s members to discuss the functioning of the Assembly and related meetings. Members also use these meetings to discuss administrative and substantive matters of consequence to the future activities of the Union.

The Chair of the Twelve Plus Group is elected for a term of office of two years. The Chair is advised by a Steering Committee of representatives from approximately seven to nine member countries and normally meets in the weeks prior to an IPU Assembly. The Steering Committee appoints a Vice-Chair among its members by consensus.

According to the Guidelines of the Twelve Plus Group, the Steering Committee shall include: the two most recent predecessors of the current Twelve Plus Chairperson (as long as they are members of their national IPU delegation); members of the Twelve Plus Group serving on the Executive Committee; further members, invited by the Chairperson on account of their particular abilities or merits, who could benefit the activities of the Twelve Plus Group as a whole.

¹ See <https://www.ipu.org/about-us/members/geopolitical-groups> for a breakdown of geopolitical group membership in the IPU.

3. The Meeting of the Twelve Plus Steering Committee

The Canadian Group of the IPU is represented on the Twelve Plus Steering Committee because it holds a seat on the IPU's Executive Committee, as well as other elected positions within the IPU. The Canadian parliamentarian in attendance was Senator Salma Ataullahjan.

The agenda for the meeting included substantive, procedural and institutional questions that would be considered by the Twelve Plus Group, by the IPU Executive Committee, and by the IPU membership more broadly at the 140th IPU Assembly (Doha, Qatar, 4-10 April, 2019) and beyond. The purpose of the meeting was to debate and make recommendations concerning these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. David McGuinty, P.C., M.P.

President

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
ACTIVITY	Steering Committee of the Twelve Plus Group
DESTINATION	Horta and Terceira, Portugal
DATES	March 24-26, 2019
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Salma Ataullahjan, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	N/A
STAFF	N/A
TRANSPORTATION	\$3,378.77
ACCOMMODATION	\$379.00
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$438.96
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$4,196.73