

Canadian Branch of the
Assemblée parlementaire
de la Francophonie



Section canadienne de
l'Assemblée parlementaire
de la Francophonie

Report of the Canadian Section of the "Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie"

Symposium on Contested Democracies

Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

September 15 and 16, 2022

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the APF, which participated in a symposium on the theme “Contested Democracies: Legitimacy, Populism and Polarization,” is pleased to present its report. The symposium was held in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg on September 15 and 16, 2022. The Canadian Branch was represented by Mr. **Joël Godin**, MP, member of the Canadian Branch and Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF).

Symposium on Contested Democracies

The symposium was organized by the Research Chair in Parliamentary Studies, in collaboration with the Europe Region of the APF. It aligned with the International Day of Democracy and the start of the academic year of the Master’s degree program in parliamentary studies at the University of Luxembourg. The two-day symposium brought together academics, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society. During this event, francophone parliamentarians discussed the state of democracy in French-speaking countries and presented initiatives to bring citizens and institutions closer together. Mr. Joël Godin spoke to the students of the Research Chair about the work of the committee he chairs on making parliaments accessible to citizens.

The symposium also covered the following topics:

- historical lessons to be learned from the first wave of European democratization;
- contemporary democracies facing democratic crises, as well as the rise of populism;
- potential ways to overcome distrust in the democratic system;
- citizen involvement in the climate transition in Luxembourg and the legislative impact of the Citizens’ Convention on Climate in France in 2019; and
- how parliaments in francophone countries communicate and interact with citizens.

Mr. Godin also had several bilateral meetings during this interparliamentary mission. He first met with the Parliamentary Secretary General of the APF, Mr. Bruno Fuchs, with whom he discussed the attractiveness of the French language and the APF’s political missions. He also visited the APF’s premises and met his associates, including Ms. Josée Thérien, who is on secondment from the Parliament of Canada. Mr. Thierry Deilhaes, Executive Secretary of the France-Canada Friendship Group, then welcomed him at the National Assembly for a tour of the Palais Bourbon. He also met with the Honourable Stéphane Dion, P.C., Canada’s new ambassador to France, to discuss La Francophonie in Europe and France–Canada cooperation, as well as the Embassy’s activities and its cultural centre in France to promote La Francophonie.

Lastly, Mr. Godin spoke with Mr. Yan Chantrel, French senator, about how parliamentarians can advocate for the French language. Mr. Godin referred to the current discussions on the bill to amend the *Official Languages Act* in Canada, while Mr. Chantrel

spoke about the activities of the France-Canada Friendship Group he chairs, including a symposium on developing French language content on digital platforms. The meeting concluded with a tour of the Palais du Luxembourg, home of the French Senate.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis Drouin, Chair
Canadian Branch of Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie

On behalf of
Joël Godin, Member of Parliament
Member of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie
ACTIVITY	Symposium on Contested Democracies
DESTINATION	Luxembourg City, Luxembourg
DATES	September 15 and 16, 2022
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Joël Godin
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 11.98
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 0.00
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 221.55
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 233.53