

Section canadienne de
l'Assemblée parlementaire
de la Francophonie



Canadian Branch of the
Assemblée parlementaire
de la Francophonie

Report of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie

IX Jeux de La Francophonie

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

August 3 to 7, 2023

REPORT

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) has the honour of presenting its report on its parliamentary mission to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), from August 3 to 7, 2023. The Canadian delegation was composed of **Francis Drouin**, Member of Parliament, President of the APF and Chair of the Canadian Branch, and Julie Pelletier, Administrative Secretary of the Canadian Branch.

BACKGROUND

The Jeux de la Francophonie were established in 1987 during the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government of La Francophonie and alternate between countries in the Global North and the Global South. The Games are held every four years and are the largest institutional gathering of La Francophonie after the Sommet de la Francophonie and the Conférence ministérielle de la Francophonie. The goal of the Games is to promote the French language, bring together francophone youth and francophone nations, promote athletic, artistic and cultural exchanges, and help prepare the next generation through sports competitions.

The IX Jeux de la Francophonie were held in Kinshasa (DRC) from July 28 to August 6, 2023. This was a major event for the APF and La Francophonie, because while the Games traditionally take place every four years, they had not taken place since 2017. The Games were also taking place in the largest French-speaking capital city in the world. Traditionally, the APF, in collaboration with the Comité international des Jeux, awards the APF Award to an artist or athlete who has distinguished themselves in one of the disciplines. This edition featured 11 artistic disciplines (song, storytelling, digital creation, literature, creative dance, hip-hop dance, juggling, giant puppets, sculpture, photography and painting) and nine sporting events (track and field, para-track and field, basketball, cycling, soccer, judo, freestyle wrestling, African wrestling and table tennis).

JEUX DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Francis Drouin, attended the Games in his capacity as the international President of the APF. He presented the APF Award to Niger's Souley Soumaila Oumarou, who won gold in the men's long jump after jumping 6.45 m in the finals held on August 3, 2023. The award, which includes a development grant of €3,000, was announced during the closing ceremony on August 6, 2023, which was presided over by His Excellency Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the DRC.

While attending the Games, the APF President took the opportunity to visit the Village de la Francophonie and the Académie des beaux-arts de Kinshasa. He participated in a medal presentation ceremony after the judo competitions, where Canadian athletes were awarded one gold and one silver medal. He also attended a reception in honour of Canadian artists and athletes.

Mr. **Drouin** also took part in various meetings and gave interviews related to his attendance at this international event. On behalf of francophone parliamentarians around the world, he commended the Congolese people for their enthusiasm for the Games and the Congolese youth for their dynamic energy and called the event a resounding success. He also participated in a discussion about how sport has the power to change the world,

which was held at the Village de la Francophonie and livestreamed on the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie's YouTube channel. He was joined by Madina Tall, spokesperson of the Francophone Youth Parliament, and they both underscored the impact and importance that the values conveyed through sport can have for politics.

OTHER MEETINGS

Kinshasa

Other goals of the mission were to maintain and develop the APF's parliamentary diplomacy activities. To that end, President **Drouin** met with several Congolese officials to discuss ongoing tensions and crises in West and Central Africa. The APF President reaffirmed the importance of countering misinformation, called for respect for the territorial integrity of countries in the region, denounced institutional power grabs occurring in several French-speaking countries and reiterated the importance of ensuring that all parliamentarians can fulfill their duties safely. Prospective actions that could be taken to strengthen co-operation between the APF and the Congo-Kinshasa Branch were also addressed.

On August 2, 2023, the APF President was welcomed to Kinshasa by His Excellency André Mbata, First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and Deputy Chair of the Congo-Kinshasa Branch of the APF, who expressed his delight at the APF's presence at the Games. President **Drouin** invited the Congo-Kinshasa Branch to attend the APF's annual meeting and the next Francophone Youth Parliament, which will be hosted by the Canadian Branch in Montreal (Canada) in July 2024. The delegation also had a briefing on the geopolitical context in the DRC with Benoît Pierre Laramée, Canada's Ambassador to the DRC, and Chrystiane Roy, head of the Canadian delegation to the Games.

President **Drouin** also met with His Excellency Mboso Nkodia, Speaker of the DRC National Assembly, to discuss the forthcoming elections in December 2023 and the importance of ensuring that the Congolese people have transparent, free and inclusive elections. He also met with His Excellency Modeste Bahati Lukwebo, Speaker of the DRC Senate, and called on the DRC to continue dialogue with Rwanda in the conflict between the two countries. Lastly, Mr. **Drouin** met with Aubin Minaku Ndjalandjoko, a member and former speaker of the DRC National Assembly who served as president of the APF from 2015 to 2017. The two parliamentarians discussed challenges pertaining to registration of births in the DRC and the role that the APF should play in fostering co-operation amongst its members.

President **Drouin** also met with four representatives of the DRC government. He met first with His Excellency Christophe Lutundula Apala, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and former chargé de mission for the Africa Region of the APF until 2015. President **Drouin** asked Mr. Apala to support the APF's campaign for observer status at the United Nations, which would expand the APF's international influence. The APF President also had a meeting with His Excellency Jean Pierre Lihau Eboa, Minister Responsible for the Public Service, at which they discussed the modernization of the DRC's public service and the place of women within the public service. During his meeting with His Excellency Patrick Muyaya, Government Spokesperson and Minister of Communication and Media, President Drouin discussed the political environment in Eastern DRC, the forthcoming elections and the place of

young people in public life. Lastly, his discussions with Bestine Kazadi, the Head of State's personal representative to the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, centred on the challenges of organizing the Games and the Games' legacy for Congolese youth.

Brazzaville

The day after the Games ended, President **Drouin** travelled to Brazzaville, the capital of the Republic of the Congo, for meetings with senior parliamentary officials. He was welcomed by the Honourable Isidore Mvouba, Speaker of the National Assembly and Chair of the Congolese Branch of the APF, and by members of the Bureau of the Lower House. The members extended a warm welcome to the youngest president in the APF's history and applauded his dynamic energy and the Canadian francophone community's contribution to La Francophonie. They also made a plea for a Francophonie of the future that fully plays its role of strengthening democracy and peace. Mr. **Drouin** underscored the APF's desire to strengthen its ties with francophone African countries and discussed the APF's resources for strengthening parliamentary capacity and facilitating student mobility among French-speaking countries. During his meeting with His Excellency Roman Bouiti-Viaudo, Second Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. **Drouin** talked about the Congolese parliament's participation in the APF and expressed his desire for the Congo-Brazzaville Branch to actively participate in the plenary session of the APF scheduled for July 2024 in Montreal, Canada. At the end of his visit, Mr. **Drouin** had the honour of meeting with His Excellency Pierre Ngolo, Speaker of the Senate, to whom he affirmed the importance of making sure the Congolese (Brazzaville) Parliament has a voice at the APF and presented the project to develop a database of international climate change legislation.

By participating in these meetings, the Canadian Branch met its objectives, which were to fulfill its international and regional obligations, represent the APF during the Jeux de La Francophonie, and strengthen ties between various organizations in La Francophonie and between institutions and parliamentarians from French-speaking countries while advancing Canadian values and experiences that can be applied in these countries.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis Drouin, Member of Parliament
President of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie
Chair, Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Association Parlementaire de la Francophonie
ACTIVITY	IX Jeux de La Francophonie
DESTINATION	Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo
DATES	August 3 to 7, 2023
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	M. Francis Drouin
STAFF	Mme Julie Pelletier
TRANSPORTATION	\$22,514.08
ACCOMMODATION¹	[Enter Amount here]
HOSPITALITY	\$295.59
PER DIEMS	\$2,283.52
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$323.71
REVENUES²	(\$10,575.88)
TOTAL	14,841.02

¹ Accommodation was covered by the Comité international des Jeux de la Francophonie

² Some travel expenses were covered by the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie