



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the Bureau Meeting and 41st Ordinary
Session of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*
(APF)**

**Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la
Francophonie* (APF)**

**Bern, Switzerland
July 6 to 10, 2015**

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch, which participated in the Bureau meeting of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) in Bern, Switzerland, on July 6, 2015, and the 41st Session of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* also in Bern from July 7 to 10, 2015, has the honour to present its report. Led by the Honourable **Paul E. McIntyre**, Q.C., Senator, International President of the APF and President of the Canadian Branch, the delegation was composed of the following parliamentarians: the Honourable **Michel Rivard**, Senator; the Honourable **Dennis Dawson**, Senator; Ms. **Marie-Claude Morin**, M.P.; Ms. **Francine Raynault**, M.P.; and Mr. **Marc-André Morin**, M.P. The delegation was assisted by Mr. François Michaud, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Branch, and Mr. Jean-Luc Bourdages, an analyst with the Library of Parliament and advisor to the Canadian Branch.

The following 51 branches were represented at the 41st Session: Andorra, Armenia, Belgium/French Community/Wallonia-Brussels (hereinafter Belgium), Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Catalonia, Cape Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Gabon, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Jersey, Jura, Laos, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mauritania, Moldova, Niger, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Switzerland, Chad, Togo, Tunisia, Valais, Valle d'Aosta, Vaud (Switzerland) and Vietnam. Also represented at the Session were the Payment Incidence Centre – West African Economic and Monetary Union and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa.

Francophone Youth Parliament

As a prelude to the annual business of the APF, its International President, the Honourable Senator **Paul E. McIntyre**, opened the 7th Francophone Youth Parliament, whose business took place from July 5 to 11, alongside the 41st Plenary Assembly of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*. On Sunday, July 5, the President gave an opening address before the young audience.

Bureau business

The Bureau of the APF met in Bern on July 6, 2013, chaired by the Honourable **Paul E. McIntyre**, Senator (Canada) and President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*.

Opening of the Bureau meeting

Bureau business began with opening remarks from Mr. Christian Levrat, acting president of the Swiss Branch. The President of the APF then awarded the Order of the Grand Officer of La Pléiade to Mr. Didier Berberat, State Councillor (Switzerland) and

Chair of the Committee on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communication (CECAC). He spoke briefly to the members of the Bureau in attendance. He recognized the CECAC's work and the unwavering support of the Canadian Branch and the Parliament of Canada which assigned an official as an advisor to the CECAC.

Mr. **McIntyre** reported absences and substitutions, after which the Bureau members adopted the agenda and the minutes of the Bureau meeting held on January 26 and 27, 2015 in Clermont-Ferrand, France.

APF membership

The Parliamentary Secretary General (PSG) and Member (France), Mr. Pascal Terrasse, said that the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* was made up of 83 branches, 51 of which were full members while 15 were associate members and 17 were observers. Two branches, the Central African Republic and the Syrian Arab Republic, are however currently suspended. The PSG said that the Djibouti and Guinea-Bissau branches will be able to be reinstated once they have paid back the arrears accumulated in recent years.

Activity report of the Parliamentary Secretary General

Member Pascal Terrasse, Parliamentary Secretary General, presented his [activity report](#) [in French only], in which he outlined the results of activities of the first half of 2015 based on the priorities he had set. Some of the areas addressed follow:

- He reported on evaluation missions carried out under action programs for branches that rejoined the assembly following the Ottawa session of July 2014, namely Madagascar and Mali. He invited the branches to participate in the francophone multilateral plans implemented by the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*.
- He welcomed the attention given to the theme of the economic Francophonie and referred to the participation in various international forums or seminars like the one on extractive industries in Abidjan.
- He expressed his satisfaction with the good and constructive relations with the new leadership of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), headed by the Secretary General of the Francophonie, Ms. Michaëlle Jean, and its Administrator, Mr. Adama Ouane.
- He also mentioned the success of the new APF website and its use by member branches to provide information they consider important for the francophone world to know.
- Recalling the rule of alternation of the Presidency of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* between the Americas Region and the Africa Region, the Parliamentary Secretary General emphasized his close collaboration with the two outgoing Canadian presidents and paid tribute to Senator **Andrée**

Champagne and Senator **Paul E. McIntyre**, about which he said: “We formed a bold and creative team, with an exceptional bond of trust, and I could not have done anything without their ideas, their support and their enthusiasm. They continually spurred me on to do better.”¹

- Expressing readiness to welcome the new African presidency for the next two years, he took the opportunity to thank his team at the General Secretariat.
- In response to the statements by Senegal (security) and Belgium (increased affirmation of APF), the Parliamentary Secretary General called for a paradigm shift to financial and budgetary plans and agreed that security and terrorism issues must remain an everyday concern.

Parliamentary cooperation

The Parliamentary Secretary General Pascal Terrasse gave an update on the various cooperation programs of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*, beginning with the Noria project. He first addressed the issue of parliamentary seminars, including the one for the Senate of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), delayed beyond the first half of 2015, and the possibility of holding a seminar in Haiti in early 2016. He provided details about the modernization of the information systems in Côte d’Ivoire, Mali and Madagascar. The internship and training program for civil servants made it possible to provide fellowships to 11 officials. Lastly, the OIF provided 30,000 euros to finance the Programme international de formation parlementaire jointly implemented by the Quebec National Assembly, Laval University and the World Bank Group.

The Parliamentary Secretary General recalled the origin and objectives of the Noria project, with an activity budget of 190,000 euros for the year 2015. Seven branches benefitted: Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Madagascar, Mali, Greece, Senegal and Cambodia.

The representative of Belgium, on behalf of Ms. Françoise Bertieaux, President of the Network of Women Parliamentarians, reported her participation and that of the Network’s Vice President in the Annual Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2015. The Network was also represented at a seminar organized by IDEA International ² in Tunis in June.

In terms of multilateral cooperation, PSG Pascal Terrasse reported on the Initiative multilatérale de coopération interparlementaire francophone (IMCIF). He gave a detailed assessment of the initiative in Côte d’Ivoire, which was attended by the Quebec National Assembly, the State University of New York and USAID. The PSG outlined the Multilateral Program for Francophone Parliamentary Development for Madagascar (MultiDevMada) and the Multilateral Program for Francophone Parliamentary Development for Mali (PMDPF-Mali), both inspired by the IMCIF-Côte d’Ivoire. Lastly, he informed the Bureau of similar planned interventions in Haiti and Tunisia.

¹ Mr. Pascal Terrasse, Member (France) and Parliamentary Secretary General, [Activity Report \(in French only\)](#) (Bureau), Bern, Switzerland July 6, 2015.

² [Institute for Development in Economics and Administration](#).

Treasurer's report on the 2014 financial statements and update on 2015 programming

Treasurer Mr. Michel Wolter, Member (Luxembourg), presented the key features of the [2014 Financial Report and Statements \(in French only\)](#) and the report on the [2015 Programming Update\(in French only\)](#).

The Treasurer confirmed that the 2014 fiscal year ended with a surplus of 63,341 euros. Revenues were 2,040,062 euros (-3.6% of the forecast), while expenditures were 1,976,721 euros (-6.6% of the forecast).

Mr. Wolter reiterated the importance of the basic annual contribution from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (117,000 euros) as part of APF revenues, as well as the complementary contribution of the OIF (109,500 euros) to achieve specific APF missions.

In addition, the Treasurer's report presented for the first time (Appendix 2) branches' in-kind contributions in 2014. In this regard, the report highlighted Canada's contribution:

- 40th Session of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie and Bureau meeting in Ottawa from July 4 to 8 (5 days, 400 people);
- assignment of a parliamentary official to participate and intervene in the parliamentary seminar on "majority and opposition: legislator and watchdog" in Antananarivo, Madagascar, on November 14 and 15 and ensure the need identification mission of the National Assembly of Madagascar on November 17 and 18; and
- assignment of a full-time parliamentary official to the General Secretariat.

Although it is not necessary to consider a draft amended budget for 2015, the Treasurer informed Bureau members of the key updates to the 2015 programming in 2015 with regard to the activities of the various APF bodies.

The Bureau approved the financial statements for 2014 and took note of the updates to the 2015 programming.

Partnership agreements

The Member (France) and Parliamentary Secretary General, Mr. Pascal Terrasse, presented the draft partnership agreements reached during the year with the Association des secrétaires généraux des parlements francophones (ASGPF), the Association des ombudsmans et médiateurs de la francophonie (AOMF) and the State University of New York (SUNY/CID³). After brief discussion on the wording of some of the articles of the agreements, they were adopted by the Bureau.

³ State University of New York's Center for International Development.

Follow-up on the implementation of the APF 2014-2018 strategic framework

The Parliamentary Secretary General gave an update of the strategic framework for 2014-2018. He provided more information about the new *Jeunes Parlementaires* program, first introduced to the Bureau in Clermont-Ferrand in January 2015 with an aim to encourage young parliamentarians in their career development. He invited the various APF regions to select and nominate young parliamentarians for participation in the program.

Committee work

Mr. **McIntyre** invited Mr. Didier Berberat, State Councillor (Switzerland), to present the activity report of the Committee on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communication, which he chairs, as well as that of the Parliamentary Network for the Fight against HIV/AIDS, which reports to his committee. Mr. Berberat reported on the work of the Committee's last meeting in Libreville (Gabon) on April 20 and 21, 2015. He addressed issues regarding terrorism, the commodification of education (French Branch) and the cultural charter (Quebec Branch).

At the invitation of Mr. **McIntyre**, Mr. Salibou Garba, Member (Chad), presented as chair the report of the Committee on Development and Cooperation. He reported on the work of the Committee which met at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), on April 28 and 29, 2015. He referred to the draft report on "international climate change negotiations: challenges and opportunities in francophone countries" (French Branch) and the ensuing discussion on the status of negotiations in advance of the Climate Change Conference (COP 21) in Paris in December 2015.

Mr. Jacques Legendre, Senator (France), presented the report of the Political Committee on behalf of the outgoing chair, Ms. Michèle André, Senator (France). Mr. **McIntyre** warmly thanked her and acknowledged her long-standing work in the APF. Senator Legendre noted the work of the Committee on March 25 and 26, 2015, in Siem Reap, Cambodia, including statements on certain countries in crisis and on international terrorism.

Ms. Claudine Lepage, Senator (France) and Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee (PAC), standing in for the Chair of the Committee, Member Robert Aubin (Canada), presented the report. She summarized the main topics of discussion at the meeting in Antananarivo (Madagascar) on April 14 and 15, 2015, including parliamentary cooperation, electoral processes, human rights in the Francophonie, as well as a resolution on cybercrime.

Work of the APF's Network of Women Parliamentarians

The President of the APF, Senator **Paul E. McIntyre**, after having thanked Ms. Françoise Bertieaux (Member, French Community of Belgium/Wallonia-Brussels) for her years as chair of the Network of Women Parliamentarians, invited Ms. Maryse Gaudreault, Member (Quebec) and Vice-Chair of the Network, to present its activity report. She reported on the intersessional meeting in Val d'Aoste in February 2015, the

first day of which was devoted to the evaluation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to the post-2015 development framework. On the second day, discussions were held on the follow-up to the implementation of the CEDAW in the Francophonie and the follow-up to the Istanbul convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Reports from regional chargés de mission

The chargé de mission for Africa, Mr. Christophe Lutundula Pene Apala (Democratic Republic of Congo) presented the activity report of the Africa region. He mentioned that, at the last meeting in Yamoussoukro, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, on May 28, 29 and 30, 2015, the participants discussed many subjects, including the Declaration of the Brazzaville Parliamentary Conference on Climate Change; economic growth and the fight against poverty in francophone Africa; terrorism in Africa; and the social and political situation in francophone Africa.

Mr. Michel Samson, Member (Nova Scotia) and chargé de mission for the Americas, presented the region's activity report. He noted that the intersessional meeting of the Conference of Branch Chairs was held by videoconference in February 2015, with 10 of the 14 branches participating. Among the many topics of discussion, the members in attendance discussed funding arrangements for participation in the Francophone Youth Parliament. Mr. **McIntyre** thanked Mr. Samson for his lengthy participation in the work of the APF over the past 17 years. As to the *Jeunes parlementaires* program, Mr. Samson said that the Americas region had nominated Member Yvan Baker, of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and Jean Habel, of the National Assembly of Quebec.

Ms. Bougnong Boupoua, Member (Laos) and chargé de mission for the Asia-Pacific, presented the region's activity report. She noted the difficulties associated with the aging of the francophone population and budget constraints that restrict participation in meetings and seminars in other regions.

The chargé de mission for Europe, Mr. Jean-Paul Wahl, Member (Belgium/French Community/Wallonia-Brussels), presented the report of the Europe region. He told the Bureau members that the 27th regional assembly was held in Warsaw on September 29 and 30, 2014. Among the activities carried out by the member branches, Mr. Wahl spoke mainly of the region's action and cooperation program that provides training on the promotion of democracy and human rights.

Update on resolutions adopted by the APF

Mr. Pascal Terrasse, Member (France), presented his report on the monitoring of resolutions. He emphasized the importance of this exercise to evaluate the impact of the work, ideas and proposals of APF parliamentarians. He noted with regret that only seven branches—the Canadian Branch being one of them—of the 60 or so branches invited to submit their progress report responded to the request of the General Secretariat. Expressing hope that the APF networks and committees became more directly involved in the implementation and monitoring of resolutions, the Parliamentary Secretary General proposed that they consider the following questions when developing each of the resolutions:

- What parliamentary, government and civil society bodies should be informed about the APF's resolution?
- What steps could be taken by parliamentarians to make them aware of the text?
- How do parliamentarians think they will be able to use this resolution?
- What measures do parliamentarians think their parliaments will take after this resolution?

These questions should help formulate shorter, more concise resolutions that are focused on concrete and measurable actions.

Presentation of the APF's 41st Session in Bern

Mr. **McIntyre** invited Mr. Christian Levrat (State Councillor, Switzerland) to outline the order of business of the 41st Session. He reminded members that the Switzerland Branch had chosen two themes that it had long promoted: professional training and online education.

The Bureau members adopted the Session's agenda, including the item to make the former president of the APF, the Honourable **Andrée Champagne**, since retired from the Senate of Canada, an honorary member.

Honours awarded by the APF

Mr. **McIntyre** consulted the Bureau on the nominations to the Order of the Pléiade, which were adopted without objection. He invited the Chair of the CECAC, Mr. Didier Berberat (State Councillor, Switzerland), to present the process for awarding the 2015 Prix Senghor-Césaire. He pointed out that the recipients selected by the two juries were Souffleurs commandos poétiques (nomination made by the French Branch) and Édition Démiurge (nomination made by the Romanian Branch). The Bureau members supported these choices.

Regarding the APF Award for the Francophonie Games, Mr. Berberat presented the new rule proposed by his committee in keeping with the mandate conferred on him at the Bureau's meeting in Clermont-Ferrand, France. It was therefore proposed that the APF Award for the Francophonie Games be 2,000 euros, charged against the APF's budget and awarded to the gold medalist of a cultural discipline, selected by the APF, with input from the OIF.

Communications

The Parliamentary Secretary General, Mr. Pascal Terrasse, presented the new APF website that went live six months ago. He encouraged parliamentarians to contribute to the website so as to increase interaction among APF members. Lastly, he mentioned APF's Facebook and Twitter pages.

Other business

The APF President invited the Parliamentary Secretary General to speak about the organization's participation in the second Forum mondial de la langue française in Liège, Belgium from July 20 to 23, 2015. The APF chose to support a verbal jousting competition presented by a former Burkina Faso participant in the Francophone Youth Parliament.

Date and location of next meeting

The Parliamentary Secretary General said that the winter 2016 Bureau would be held in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Work of the Network of Women Parliamentarian

The APF Network of Women Parliamentarians met in Bern on July 7, 2015 under the chairmanship of Ms. Françoise Bertieaux, Member (French Community of Belgium/Wallonia-Brussels) and Chair of the Network.

Participants adopted the draft agenda and the list of decisions of the Network's February 6, 2015 meeting in Val d'Aosta. The Chair, Ms. Françoise Bertieaux, then delivered her activity report since the intersessional meeting in February.

The members then heard the report of Ms. Chantal Guittet (Member, France) on women and the family. The report contained a brief resolution on discrimination against women in terms of marital status, which provoked discussion before being adopted.

Ms. **Marie-Claude Morin** (Member, Canada) presented the final report on the education of girls on behalf of the rapporteur of the Canadian Branch, Ms. Anne-Marie Day (Member, Canada). In line with this theme, the Chair of the Network, Ms. Bertieaux, and Ms. Cornelia Marinova (Member, Bulgaria) presented a draft contribution on girls dropping out of school in francophone countries in southeastern Europe, which may later be included in draft report on early school drop-out by girls.

Ms. France Gélinas (Member, Ontario) presented a report dealing with adult women's literacy. She suggested that, following the report's adoption, a questionnaire be sent to the branches to compile good practices in a single catalog.

Ms. Mila-Bellé Telou (Member, Togo) presented a draft report on women and information and communications technology (ICT). The Chair of the Network proposed splitting the report in two so that the first document dealt with science education and the second with integrating ICT in education.

Ms. Maryse Gaudreault (Member, Quebec) presented her report on the follow-up to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), after which the Chair insisted on the importance of disseminating the CEDAW texts to the respective parliaments of the APF branches.

Similarly, Ms. Chantal Guittet (Member, France) followed up on the progress of women's participation in francophone parliaments and ratifications of the Istanbul

convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Ms. Maryse Gaudreault (Member, Quebec) presented the Quebec National Assembly's new policy on workplace harassment prevention and management. The Network's Chair called on all parliaments to adopt such a policy.

Regarding the monitoring of actions by the APF's Network as part of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, Ms. Bertieaux noted that a legislative collection would be made available to parliamentarians and each branch would be asked to verify the accuracy of the document with regard to their respective legislatures. She then presented the declaration of intent on cooperation between the APF's Network of Women Parliamentarians and the Francophone Gender Equality Network signed in New York on March 11, 2015.

The Network members heard from Ms. Rachel Steinbach from the UNEP on the inclusion of gender in climate negotiations, which was the subject of a draft resolution and a question for Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of the Francophonie, at the Plenary Session. They then followed up on the declarations adopted at the intersessional meeting in Aosta in February 2015.

At the end of the meeting, Ms. Eyoum Minono Epoube (Member, Cameroon) took over from Françoise Bertieaux as Network Chair.

Work of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee

The Parliamentary Affairs Committee met in Bern on July 8, 2015, under the chairmanship of Ms. Claudine Lepage (Senator, France), Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, in the absence of its chair, Mr. Robert Aubin (Member, Canada).

After the adoption of the agenda and the minutes of the Committee's intersessional meeting in Antananarivo, Madagascar, on April 14 and 15, 2015, the Committee presented and reviewed the following draft reports:

- *“Parliamentary means of holding government accountable, including interpellation, in francophone countries”*; rapporteur: Mr. N'Guessan Kouame (Member, Côte d'Ivoire);
- *“Access to parliamentary information: bringing citizens and elected officials closer together”*; rapporteurs: Ms. Carole Poirier (Member, Quebec) on behalf of the CECAC and Mr. Fathi Derder (National Councillor, Switzerland) on behalf of the PAC;
- *“Youth participation in politics in francophone countries”*; rapporteur: Mr. Jean Rousselle (Member, Quebec);
- *“National Human Rights Institutions in francophone countries”*; rapporteur: Mr. N'Guessan Kouame (Member, Côte d'Ivoire);

- “*Undocumented children*”; designated rapporteur: Ms. Laurence Dumont (Member, France).

The members of the Committee heard from Mr. Laurent Dejoie, President of the Association du Notariat Francophone (ANF) and then Mr. Jean-Philippe Walter, Deputy Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Transparency in Switzerland and Vice-President of the Association Francophone des Autorités de Protection des Données Personnelles (AFAPDP).

As to parliamentary cooperation programs, the Committee members discussed the following subjects:

- francophone electoral missions with a presentation by Mr. Christophe Guilhou, Director, Peace, Democracy and Human Rights, OIF;
- the Noria project;
- parliamentary seminars and training workshops;
- Initiative multilatérale de coopération interparlementaire francophone (IMCIF) and multilateral francophone parliamentary development programs;
- The Francophone Youth Parliament and national youth parliaments, including presentations by members of the Francophone Youth Parliament.

The members then reviewed the APF’s draft conventions with outside institutions and heard from Mr. Albert Lourde, Chancellor of the Senghor University.

Work of the Political Committee

On July 8, 2015, the Political Committee met in Bern under the chairmanship of Senator Jacques Legendre (France), standing in for Senator Michèle André (France), Chair of the Committee.

After adopting the agenda and the record of decisions from the intersessional meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia on March 24 and 25, 2015, the Chair invited participants to go around the table and report on political events in the various branches. Senator **Michel Rivard** (Canada) outlined political events in the Canadian Parliament in recent months.

The parliamentarians then took note of the “*Report on political situations in francophone countries*”, presented by Ms. Célestine Oguewa Ba (Member, Gabon). Resolutions on the political situations in the following countries in crisis were adopted: Syrian Arab Republic, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso and Burundi.

The Committee adopted two resolutions from the previous meeting in Siem Reap on international terrorism and political transitions in francophone countries. These resolutions were subsequently adopted by the Plenary Assembly.

Mr. **Michel Rivard**, Senator (Canada) presented, on behalf of Robert Goguen, Member (Canada) and rapporteur for the Committee, conclusions on the work of the Canadian Branch on the *Strategy for a digital Francophonie*. On a motion by Senator **Rivard**, the members present adopted a *Declaration concerning the strategy for a digital Francophonie and the promotion of national strategies on open data and government transparency*.

Mr. André Drolet, Member (Quebec) and rapporteur, presented the final version of his report on “*Access to justice in francophone countries: the role of parliaments*.” A draft resolution underscoring the importance of implementing reforms in the judicial system to make it more gender sensitive was presented and adopted by the members.

The Committee then studied the draft of a normative document on parliamentary democracy. The first part of the document defined the basic principles to be adhered to by each APF branch in terms of respect for democracy, human rights and parliamentarianism. The second part of the document, which will be developed by the Belgium/French Community/Wallonia-Brussels Branch, will set out the measures and mechanisms the APF can use to ensure compliance with these principles.

Before concluding its work, the Committee members agreed on the question to be put to the Secretary General of the Francophonie, Ms. Michaëlle Jean, respecting the role of the Francophonie in the fight against terrorism.

Work of the Committee on Development and Cooperation

The Committee on Development and Cooperation met in Bern on July 8, 2015, under the chairmanship of Mr. Salibou Garba, Member (Chad). After adopting the agenda, Mr. Garba briefly addressed the members and then invited them to adopt the activity report and record of decisions from the Committee’s last meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on April 28 and 29.

As part of its work the Committee heard from Mr. Laurent Dejoie of the Association du Notariat francophone on property ownership in francophone countries as well as the contribution of the Francophonie on funding for sustainable development after 2015.

The Committee received three communications with resolutions on the following subjects:

- “International climate change negotiations: challenges and opportunities in francophone countries”; rapporteur: Mr. Stéphane Demilly (Member, France);
- “Intervention on climate change”; rapporteur: Mr. Sylvestre Ossiala (Member, Congo Brazzaville);
- “Agricultural policy intervention tools in the Francophonie”; rapporteur: Ms. Sylvie Roy (Member, Quebec).

Four other draft reports were agreed on and discussed:

- “Post-2015 international development agenda: cooperation opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic growth in francophone countries”; rapporteur: Mr. **Dennis Dawson** (Senator, Canada) on behalf of Pierre Dionne Labelle (Member, Canada);
- “International migration in the Mediterranean region”; rapporteur: Ms. Chantal Guittet (Member, France) on behalf of Mr. Stéphane Demilly (Member, France);
- “Monitoring international trade negotiations under the World Trade Organization (WTO)”; rapporteur: Ms. Sylvie Roy (Member, Quebec);
- “Youth employment”; rapporteur: Mr. Youssef Gharbi (Member, Morocco).

The meeting concluded with presentations by members of the Francophone Youth Parliament. Discussion also took place on the Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July 2015 and the United Nations summit on sustainable development goals in September 2015 in New York.

Work of the Committee on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communication

The Committee on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communication (CECAC) met in Bern on July 8, 2015, under the chairmanship of Mr. Didier Berberat, State Councillor (Switzerland).

The branches adopted the agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting in Libreville on April 20 and 21, 2015. Mr. Berberat presented his activity report and invited Mr. Jacques Mokako (Member, Democratic Republic of Congo) to present, as the rapporteur, that of the Parliamentary Network for the Fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The members heard from representatives of the Francophone Youth Parliament on the theme “*Is it still beneficial to train and study in French?*”

Several draft reports were reviewed and discussed by the Committee members:

- “*The promotion of human rights in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the Francophonie*”; rapporteur: Mr. Christian Levrat, (State Councillor, Switzerland);
- “*The digital Francophonie: developing francophone higher education online and encouraging universal access*”; rapporteur: Mr. Christian Levrat, (State Councillor, Switzerland);
- “*Access to parliamentary information: bringing citizens and elected officials closer together*”; joint rapporteurs: Ms. Carole Poirier (Member, Quebec) on behalf of CECAC and Mr. Fathi Derder (National Councillor, Switzerland) on behalf of the PAC;

- “*Monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*”; rapporteur: Ms. Carole Poirier (Member, Quebec).

The Committee then heard a presentation by Mr. Ma-Umba Mabilia, Director of Education and Youth, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, on the millennium education goals and future opportunities, and Mr. Yves Bigot, Director General, TV5MONDE, on the Francophonie television network.

Work of the Plenary Session

The *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* held a plenary session in Bern on July 9 and 10, 2015, under the chairmanship of the Honourable **Paul E. McIntyre** (Senator, Canada), International President of the APF and President of the Canadian Branch. Several dignitaries addressed the assembly during the official opening ceremony:

- Mr. Stéphane Rossini, President of the Switzerland National Council;
- Mr. **Paul E. McIntyre**, President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*;
- Mr. Claude Hêche, President of the Switzerland State Council;
- H.E. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary General of the Francophonie; and
- Mr. Didier Burkhalter, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

The work of the plenary continued in the hemicycle of the Federal Parliament in Bern where, having adopted the agenda and noted the composition of the Assembly, participants heard from the new Secretary General of the Francophonie, H.E. Michaëlle Jean. In her speech, the Secretary General addressed crises in the Francophonie, expressed concerns about education and science in French, and stressed the importance of cooperation in the Beijing Platform for Action 20 and the role of the Women’s Network. Several themes were addressed in exchanges with the Assembly, including the Economic Strategy of the Francophonie, terrorism, wars and the resulting migrations, electoral processes, the promotion of the French language in world affairs, and including gender in international texts.

The Assembly adopted the activity report of Mr. Pascal Terrasse, Member (France) and Parliamentary Secretary General of the APF, as well as the financial report of Mr. Michel Wolter, Member (Luxembourg) and Treasurer of the APF. It then ratified the partnership agreements adopted at the Bureau meeting and reached during the year with the Association des secrétaires généraux des parlements francophones (ASGPF),

the Association des ombudsmans et médiateurs de la francophonie (AOMF) and the State University of New York (SUNY/CID⁴).

With respect to monitoring the resolutions adopted at the 40th Session in Ottawa, the PSG said that only seven branches had reported on them and that it was now up to the committees to follow up on their own resolutions in order to identify the stakeholders the resolutions address.

The Assembly then adopted the draft reports, declarations and resolutions presented on behalf of the standing committees and the Network of Women Parliamentarians. The declarations and resolutions that were adopted dealt with the following matters:

- a. The Digital Francophonie Strategy;
- b. The situation in Burkina Faso;
- c. The situation in Central African Republic;
- d. The situation in Syria;
- e. The situation in Burundi;
- f. International terrorism;
- g. Political transitions;
- h. Access to justice;
- i. Prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS;
- j. The cyberattack against TV5 Monde;
- k. The inclusion of culture in the post-2015 SDG;
- l. Access to parliamentary information to bring citizens and elected officials closer together;
- m. The destruction of heritage sites in Syria and Iraq;
- n. Climate change;
- o. Youth employment;
- p. Means of parliamentary scrutiny;
- q. Undocumented children;
- r. Discrimination with regard to the marital status of women;

⁴ State University of New York's Center for International Development.

- s. Violence against women and girls as a result of armed conflict;
- t. The consideration of gender in climate talks.

The second day of the Plenary Session began with a general debate on the theme: *Encouraging universal access to quality training: a priority challenge for the Francophonie*. Mr. Didier Berberat, State Councillor (Switzerland) and Chair of the CECAC, presented the Swiss model, where two thirds of young people opt for professional training after their mandatory education, which has proven to be profitable for businesses. Mr. Gabriel Migy of BOBST spoke to the Assemblée about training young apprentices in real-life situations, while Ms. Célestine Bâ Oguewa discussed professional training in the woodworking trades, a collaboration between Gabon and Switzerland. Two examples of long-distance training were then presented, the first by the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie, which offers digital tools for francophone higher education and the second by the École polytechnique de Lausanne on an introduction to urban planning in African cities. Lastly, 17 branches participated in the general debate. Mr. **Michel Rivard**, Senator (Canada) spoke on behalf of the Canadian Branch. He explained the role of the federal government in the area of education and training, emphasizing federal support in delivering professional training for youth between 15 and 30 years of age through the Youth Employment Strategy, and described the program streams.

Following the general debate, the regional chargés de mission presented their activity reports to the APF. The APF took note and ratified the multilateral francophone parliamentary development programs for Madagascar and Mali. The Assemblée also approved the Canadian proposal to make the Honourable **Andrée Champagne**, retired senator (Canada), an honorary member of the APF, on which she served for numerous years as President of the Canadian Branch and International President.

After confirming elected positions within the organization, Mr. **McIntyre** delivered his speech marking the end of the Canadian Branch's presidency of the APF and introduced his successor, Mr. Aubin Minaku, Member and President of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Before adjourning the meeting, Mr. Minaku announced that the 42nd Session of the APF would be held in Antananarivo, Madagascar, from July 8 to 12, 2016, at the invitation of the Malagasy Branch. The Plenary Assembly concluded its work and then joined the 7th Francophone Youth Parliament, whose participants presented the resolutions adopted during their session.

Conclusion

Through its participation in this annual session, the Canadian Branch achieved its goals of meeting its international obligations, representing the Canadian Branch's budget interests, actively participating in discussions with the Secretary General of the OIF, obtaining approval for the Branch's nominations to the Order of La Pléiade, strengthening international ties and representing Branch interests.

In addition, the Bern Session had a special significance as it marked the end of the two-year Canadian Branch's presidency, the first year under the leadership of the Honourable **Andrée Champagne**, retired Senator (Canada), and the second under that

of the honorable **Paul E. McIntyre**, Senator (Canada). Finally, two of the three rapporteurs of the Canadian Branch filed a final report, one before the Political Committee on the *Strategy for a digital Francophonie*, the other before the Network of Women Parliamentarians on the *Education of girls*. The two reports were approved at the plenary session.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. Paul E. McIntyre, QC, Senator
President of the Canadian Branch of the
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

Travel Expenses

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
ACTIVITY	Bureau Meeting and 41st Ordinary Session Meeting of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
DESTINATION	Bern, Switzerland
DATES	July 6 to 10, 2015
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Paul E. McIntyre, Q.C. Hon. Michel Rivard Hon. Dennis Dawson
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mrs. Marie-Claude Morin Mrs. Francine Raynault Mr. Marc-André Morin
STAFF	Mr. François Michaud Mr. Jean-Luc Bourdages
TRANSPORTATION	\$29,011.70
ACCOMMODATION	\$15,554.63
PER DIEMS	\$5,828.58
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$270.00
MISCELLANEOUS /REGISTRATION FEES	\$133.19
TOTAL	\$50,798.10