



**Report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation regarding
its participation at the meeting of the Cooperation and
Development Committee of the *Assemblée parlementaire de
la Francophonie* (APF)**

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

**Midrand, South Africa
April 26 to 28, 2016**

Report

The parliamentary delegation from the Canadian Branch that participated in the APF Cooperation and Development Committee meeting held in Midrand, South Africa, from April 26 to 28, 2016, has the honour to present its report.

The delegation from the Canadian Branch was made up of **Francis Drouin**, MP, rapporteur with the Cooperation and Development Committee.

Representatives from the following branches also attended the meeting: France, Quebec, Congo and Senegal.

Committee business

A message from the Committee Chair

The Committee Vice-Chair, **Benoit Charrette** (Quebec), welcomed new Committee members and gave an update on Committee business conducted since the session in Bern in July 2015. The minutes and record of decisions from the Bern meeting were adopted by the parliamentarians in attendance. The Chair also shared the new topics that would be addressed in the coming years, including the green economy, youth employment in La Francophonie and biofuels.

Adoption of the minutes and record of decisions from the Bern meeting on July 8, 2015 in Bern, Switzerland.

Hearings

Presentation by the Pan-African Parliament on its activities *Speaker: Representative (Pan-African Parliament)*

The Pan-African Parliament, with which the APF signed a partnership agreement, presented its activities related to the economy and development.

Intervention on the Francophonie economy and on the Madagascar Summit *Speaker: Moncef Follain (IOF)*

Promoting the Francophonie economy is among the objectives of the International Organisation of La Francophonie and the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*. The two organizations actively support the role of sharing a language and values with a view to creating mutually beneficial partnerships and developing the strengths of each participant. The 1997 Hanoi Summit saw an increase in awareness of the importance of the economy along with language, culture and human rights. Their goal is to promote an effective francophone economic community that would create wealth and jobs, especially for youth.

Presentation and review of draft reports and resolutions on:

International migrations in the Mediterranean region *Rapporteurs: Stéphane Demilly (France), Ndoula Thiam (Mali)*

The co-rapporteurs noted that the migration patterns of many populations from Syria and other conflict zones are a humanitarian disaster that is having world-wide ramifications. The Committee meeting in Bern was an opportunity to review the draft reports of the French and Malian branches on international migration in the Mediterranean region and to enable parliamentarians to speak about the situation in their countries.

They said that the Committee provides a space conducive to dialogue, since the migrants' countries of departure and arrival meet there. Faced with the unprecedented increase of asylum seekers in the European Union and in other countries, parliamentarians are responsible for ensuring the safety of everyone, while promoting public policies to address the economic and social challenges created by this crisis.

Agricultural policy instruments in the Francophonie *Rapporteur: Benoit Charette (Quebec)*

Benoit Charrette noted that the Committee is re-examining the report drafted by the Quebec branch on this important topic. In fact, agricultural policies have a strong impact on food safety and are an integral part of sustainable development and ecosystem conservation. In addition, the agricultural sector provides jobs, but has seen many changes, including the mechanization of operations and the tertiarization of economies. Mr. **Charrette** argued that it is helpful for parliamentarians to discuss ways to improve the effectiveness and profitability of this sector while respecting the principles of sustainable development and working conditions for farmers.

Presentation and discussion on:

The Post 2015 International Development Framework: opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic growth in the Francophone world *Rapporteur: Francis Drouin (Canada)*

Francis Drouin presented a draft report related to the initial implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted on September 25, 2015, at a special UN summit. The SDGs, which replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), will guide global sustainable development efforts in the coming years.

Mr. **Drouin** noted that this set of 17 global goals are intended to put an end to poverty, tackle inequality and injustice, and address climate change by 2030. These goals are linked to the economic growth of countries because it has been established that economic growth helps reduce poverty. Discussing the implementation of SDGs is part of an attempt to understand the factors that encourage inclusive and sustainable economic growth in countries.

The report was well received by the other members, and Mr. Drouin invited them to share their ideas for the report, which will be presented in Madagascar.

Challenges and hopes of COP21 for Africa *Rapporteur: Sylvestre Ossiala (Congo)*

Sylvestre Ossiala made a presentation on climate change and its impact on Africa. He used the opportunity to point out that climate change has significant and very clear impacts on African development, and at the same time it presents complex and evolving challenges for the people and decision-makers of Africa. Therefore, it is becoming essential to step up the fight against climate change. Furthermore, he showed that the poorest countries and communities will be hard hit early by global warming because of lower resistance and greater dependence on climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture.

The agreement achieved at COP21 is generating much hope in the international community, particularly Africa, since its success is crucial to the sustainability of Africa's growth and development. Parliamentarians have a key role to play in the success of climate change policies in Africa and are responsible for ensuring that the commitments made at the Paris Summit are translated into public policy actions in their country.

Mr. **Ossiala**'s intervention is also part of the future Conference of the Parties, known as COP22, which will be held from November 7 to 18, 2016, in Marrakech, and will also focus on climate change.

Follow-up on international trade negotiations conducted under the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Rapporteur: Benoit Charette (Quebec)

Benoit Charette took the opportunity to highlight that the APF has been forging relationships with the WTO for over 10 years. His report focused on the period from July 2015 to the present. There are two parts to the report: the first on current affairs, the centrepiece being the ministerial conference in Nairobi, and the second on recent and upcoming activities for our Committee in connection with the work of the WTO.

Drafting the APF Opinion on the theme of the Summit of La Francophonie

The *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* is invited to participate in the work of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of La Francophonie. At that time, the APF issues an opinion and recommendations that are presented by the APF chair. In this way, the APF represents the interests and aspirations of the people of the Francophonie and participates in the institutional life of the Francophonie by providing a political perspective.

The theme of the Summit is in line with the concerns of our Committee because it promotes shared growth and, therefore, implementation of sustainable and equitable development that takes into account social equity, economic viability and environmental conservation. It also promotes responsible development, including a new reality for North-South relations and support for a sustainable development model that respects the environment and human rights.

For the upcoming Summit, the first draft of the document concerning the Antananarivo Declaration will be discussed to get the opinions and impressions of parliamentarians.

Intervention on growth as an economic development factor

Rapporteur: Sylvestre Ossiala (Congo)

Sylvestre Ossiala gave a presentation on growth and development, which he feels are two economic concepts in constant interaction. Economic growth acts as a lever for development, and development is based on growth and prolongs it by changing its nature and effects. The 1996 Human Development Report, published by the United Nations Development Programme, stated that “Human development is the end – economic growth a means.” These two concepts and their interactions must therefore be looked at together when standards and legislation are being created.

Discussions on future Committee work

Three topics have been suggested for study by the Committee: taxation, health-care systems and corruption.

In this period of slow economic growth and high unemployment, governments in the francophone world are looking for effective ways to stimulate growth and employment, while reducing inequalities. Studying the topic helps to identify taxation tools that governments can use to achieve these goals. Increasing tax revenues would give the governments more ways to invest in policies that encourage economic growth in the medium term, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, health and education.

Legislators play a vital role in a range of health protection strategies, including guaranteeing extended health coverage, fighting the marketing of substances harmful to human health, and promoting efficient and universal health-care systems. They must understand the new and contemporary threats, such as the rapid spread of chronic, non-communicable diseases, so that legislation can best address these new realities.

The devastating effects of corruption, especially on the development of States, public confidence in government and democracy, are well known and considerably weaken the efforts by parliaments and organizations that support international development by monopolizing resources. Lawmakers can play a role in these issues by promoting strict oversight laws and monitoring governments’ use of financial resources.

Participation by the Committee in recent international conferences

Global Parliamentary Conference (Washington, United States, April 10-12, 2016)

Co-organized by the World Bank Group (WBG), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and IMF, the Global Parliamentary Conference brought together some 200 parliamentarians from World Bank and IMF member countries, representatives from partner parliamentary organizations, and top officials from the World Bank and the IMF. The main topics were tackling inequality through growth and job promotion, climate change, transparency and governance, and the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

Update on resolutions

The Committee will draft an update on the two resolutions adopted in Bern, one concerning youth employment and the other concerning climate change.

Conclusion

- by presenting a draft report intended to encourage the exchange of information on factors to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth; and
- by ensuring Canadian participation during this Committee's meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joël Lightbound, MP
President of the Canadian Branch of the
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

Travel Cost

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Assemblée <i>parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
ACTIVITY	Meeting of the Cooperation and Development Committee of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
DESTINATION	Midrand, South Africa
DATES	April 26 to 28, 2016
DELEGATION	
	HOUSE OF COMMONS Mr. Francis Drouin
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 6,907.08
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 333.88
PER DIEMS	\$ 408.71
TOTAL	\$ 7,649.67