



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation Respecting
Its Participation in the Meeting of the Education,
Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee of the
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)**

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

**Grand-Bassam, Ivory Coast
April 20 - 21, 2018**

Report

The Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (CAPF), represented by Mr. Joël Godin, M.P., took part in the meeting of the Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee (ECCAC), which was held in Grand-Bassam, Ivory Coast on April 20 - 21, 2018, under the direction of Mr. Didier Berberat (State Counsellor Switzerland), Chair of the Commission.

About 30 people from the four mainland regions of the Francophonie participated in the meeting. The following branches were represented: Belgium (Wallonia / French Community), Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Ivory Coast, Guinea, France, Morocco, Mali, Niger, Quebec, Switzerland and Togo.

Call to order

The member from Ivory Coast and delegation chair of the Ivory Coast Branch of the APF, Mr. Gnangadjomon Koné, got the meeting started in the presences of His Majesty Amon Tanoé, King of Bassam and President of the Ivorian National Chamber of Traditional Kings and Chiefs. The Chair of the committee began by thanking the President of the National Assembly of Ivory Coast, Mr. Guillaume Kigbafori Soro, and the services of the National Assembly for their welcome and hospitality.

Report on ECCAC activities

The Chair reported on the ECCAC's activities since the last meeting, which was held in Luxembourg in July 2017.

Report on the parliamentary network's activities in the fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria — Dr. Etienne D. Baritse (member, Togo), rapporteur

The rapporteur on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Dr. Etienne D. Baritse (member, Togo), reported on the network's activities since the last ECCAC meeting in Luxembourg on July 9, 2017. Dr. Baritse (member, Togo) announced that contact had been made with his government so that the Togo Branch could host the next network meeting in the fall of 2018.

Follow-up on the ECCAC resolutions adopted by the plenary assembly in Luxembourg

The Chair reminded the committee that the APF Bureau gave the branches the responsibility of following up on the resolutions. He reiterated that the Bureau and the ECCAC would like the branches to do more in this regard. The Chair sent an email to all sections on April 6, asking them to prepare a brief summary of the follow up that has been done.

The Chair turned the floor over to the members whose branches submitted updates prior to the meeting. Mr. Joël Godin (member, Canada), Mr. Claude Cousineau (member, Quebec) and Mr. Badirou Aguemon (member, Benin) each presented their updates.

Mr. Patrice Anato (member, France) presented the French Branch's update on the resolutions regarding the commodification of education, civic education and the prevention of violent extremism and radicalization. He explained that, on March 20, 2018, the President of France announced France's renewed commitment to the Francophonie.

The French Branch would like to establish a policy on hosting foreign students in the Francophonie. With regard to education in French, he also stated that, France is third most popular country in the world for international students and that the ECCAC should address the fact that the Francophonie does not have a policy on this issue.

Mr. Christian Levrat (State Councillor, Switzerland) said he was pleased with the progress that has been made over the past few years when it comes to preventing radicalization. He said that the fight against violent terrorism must go above and beyond intelligence gathering. He congratulated the APF for the small role it played in the broader and more comprehensive response to this issue. With regard to civic education, he announced the creation of an education portal on the Swiss government's website to introduce young people to democracy and how government works. He also indicated that a written update had been prepared and would soon be sent.

Finally, a member from Burkina Faso described the efforts his country is making to improve access to education. He added that civic education is important in preventing extremism. The branches that so desire were invited to submit a written update on the resolutions.

Study on remote knowledge transfer and distance education — Mr. Philippe Mouiller (Senator, France), rapporteur

Mr. Philippe Mouiller (Senator, France) explained that the emergence of digital technology has been the cause of major changes in education. He added that, although digital technology is transforming learning, it also poses many challenges, such as those related to training quality, certification, credential recognition, the technology itself (proper access to the Internet and required technology), and co-operation between stakeholders.

He continued by saying that the purpose of this study is to examine distance education practices and the impact of digital technology on higher education in the Francophonie. Mr. Mouiller would like to present a report and a best practices guide on this issue. Mr. Christian Levrat (State Councillor, Switzerland) mentioned the importance of developing co-operation among the various educational institutions and encouraging close collaboration between the various universities and institutions.

Study on the use of digital technology in teaching and schools — Mr. Claude Cousineau (member, Quebec), alternate rapporteur

The Chair explained the genesis of this study, which is complementary to that of Mr. Philippe Mouiller. He indicated that, in Luxembourg, Ms. Carole Poirier (member, Quebec) expressed an interest in undertaking a study on the use of digital technology in teaching and schools. At the time, she indicated that she wanted to identify the models being used by every APF member state. Mr. Claude Cousineau, speaking on behalf of Ms. Poirier, presented the preliminary report on this study.

Mr. Mohamed el Hafed (member, Morocco) talked about how important it is for the branches of the APF to share their experiences regarding the use of digital technology in schools.

Policies of the Ivory Coast government on occupational and technical training — Mr. Mamadou Touré, Secretary of State for Technical Education and Vocational Training for Ivory Coast

Following the minister's remarks, Mr. Philippe Mouiller (Senator, France) asked him about how teachers in Ivory Coast are reacting to his government's objective to bring occupational training in line with the needs of the private sector and to the financial nature of the education partnership between the *Agence française de développement* (AFD) and the Ivorian government.

Minister Touré explained that this major reform is shaking things up and that its primary purpose is to create a new opportunity to adapt training programs to the realities of the work world.

Mr. Badirou Agumon (member, Benin) asked the minister what support the Ivorian government provides for its citizens who want to start their own business. Mr. Mohammed El Hafed (member, Morocco) asked about the measures in place to help people integrate into the labour market.

In response to those two questions, the minister informed the commission that a system, designed in partnership with the European Union, has been in place since 2017 to track graduates. The data collected shows that only 14% of graduates have successfully entered the labour market nine months after completing their studies. Reforms have been put in place to improve this situation. The goal is to increase that number to 50% in two years.

Mr. Christian Levrat (State Councillor, Switzerland) asked about working with businesses. Minister Touré explained that he is trying to convince major corporations to invest in occupational training centres so that they will have access to a local labour force that is increasingly qualified to meet their needs. Mr. Joël Godin (member, Canada) asked the minister about measures and indicators to assess job training programs. Minister Touré assured Mr. Godin that this concern is at the heart of all of his department's actions. He added that all external partners, whether French or European, require some sort of assessment as part of the aid they provide.

Minister Touré concluded by saying that 77% of the Ivorian population is under the age of 35, a rate similar to that in most African countries. It also seems that the population of Africa will exceed that of China by 2050. He said that, given the high number of young people in Africa, he believes that African governments now have a duty to work together to put professional development training at the heart of their public policies.

African Development Bank's plan to assist with youth, employment and education in Ivory Coast — Mrs. Ginette Nzaum, Mr. Ilyes Bdiou and Mr. Baboucarr Sarr, representatives of the African Development Bank

The Chair introduced the representatives of the African Development Bank (ADB), which has its headquarters in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. He said that this international institution works in the areas of youth employability and education. Mr. Ilyes Bdiou (ADB) said that the primary focus of his remarks would be the education and employability of youth in Africa. He reminded the committee that the purpose of the strategy adopted by the Francophonie at the Dakar Summit in 2014 is to promote sustainable development, the rights of young people and the civic engagement of youth in their respective economies. The strategy of the ADB, a key player in the development of African countries, particularly

its francophone countries, includes five priorities: to industrialize Africa, to feed Africa by developing agriculture, to light up and power Africa, and to integrate Africa.

Since the development of human capital is at the heart of these five priorities, the ADB's strategy involves a 10-year plan, which covers the period from 2013-22 and is based on two main objectives: inclusive growth and green growth. The biggest challenge is a lack of funding, with an average of 4% of the GDP allocated to education and training. The objective here is to increase the literacy rate, reduce the digital divide, and reduce youth unemployment. The youth employability statistics that the ADB is working with show that:

- The population of young people will increase from 420 million in 2017 to 830 million by 2050;
- The unemployment rate in sub-Saharan Africa is 10.9%;
- 12 million young people enter the labour market each year, but only 3 million formal jobs are created;
- 65 million young workers are poor and earn less than \$2 per day;
- 38% of youth in sub-Saharan Africa are willing to move to another country.

The ADB's end goal is to create 25 million jobs. Resources must be allocated for business incubation, the creation of training centres that work closely with industry, and the provision of start-up and SME development programs in Africa.

The ADB's current portfolio (focused on francophone countries) in jobs and education involves the following:

- \$915 million US invested in youth employability and education;
- 14 francophone countries;
- 9 multinational projects, including francophone countries such as Tunisia, Togo, Senegal, Seychelles, Niger, Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, Gabon, Congo, Chad, the Central African Republic, and Algeria.

Some stakeholders believe that Africa is the continent of the future from a demographic, cultural and economic perspective. Others are wondering about mechanisms for supporting business creation projects in Africa and the loans available, particularly the procedure for obtaining these loans.

Study on student mobility in the Francophonie — Mr. Joël Godin (member, Canada)

The Chair introduced the third study being conducted by the ECCAC. Mr. Joël Godin (member, Canada) presented a proposal for a study on the mobility of students in the Francophonie in co-operation with the Guinea Branch. Mr. Godin (member, Canada) thanked the Chair for being open to undertaking a study on the mobility of students in the Francophonie. He presented the guidelines for the study, which will be carried out in co-operation with the other branches of the APF.

It is proposed that members review the guidelines for the study and keep in mind how important it is to work with the other branches. Mr. Daouda Camara (member, Guinea) committed to submitting in writing his branch's vision for student mobility. He added that student mobility occurs at a number of levels (regional, national and international), as well as along Africa's north-south and south-south axes.

Project to develop a memorandum of co-operation between the APF and the *Fédération internationale des professeurs de français* (FIPF)

The Chair presented the project to develop a memorandum of co-operation between the APF and the *Fédération internationale des professeurs de français* (FIPF) and explained the process that is currently underway with regard to that agreement. He committed to sending each branch a draft of the memorandum prepared by the APF General Secretariat and the FIPF in due time. A project update will be given on July 8 in Quebec City.

Discussion on the ECCAC's contribution to the opinion the APF will present at the Francophonie Summit in Yerevan on October 11 and 12, 2018 — Theme: Living Together

The Chair spoke about the next Francophonie Summit. As the Francophonie's consultative assembly, at each summit, the APF presents government opinions on the Summit's theme. To that end, the Chair encouraged the branches to respond to the questionnaire and send their input to the APF General Secretariat. That input will be taken account in the APF's draft opinion, which will be presented at the Quebec City meeting in July.

***La Lanterne magique*, Ivory Coast movie club for kids — Marie-Pascale Kouya, President; Frank Hervé Gnaly, Head of Cast; and Catherine Coulibaly, Cast Member**

Ms. Marie-Pascale Kouya (*Lanterne magique*) presented the mandate of *La Lanterne magique*, which is an organization that introduces children to the cinema and all facets of its history. The Ivory Coast government provides 60% of the funding for this project. Children between the ages of 6 and 12 are invited to watch nine films a year at a price that allows everyone to be a member of this unique club.

Ms. Kouya indicated that the organization produces a publication about African films. Children can prepare for movie and learn cinematographic terms by reading it themselves or with their families. The day of the movie, the children are welcomed to the cinema by two hosts who talk to them about the film. Mr. Franck Hervé Gnaly explained that his role is to prepare the children to watch the movie. Before the movie begins, there is a short presentation, a 10-to-15-minute skit, to explain the film to the children and capture their imaginations.

Ms. Kouya got the inspiration for this project while on a trip to Switzerland, where she discovered the concept for the *Lanterne magique*. The organization began its activities in Ivory Coast in 2016 and an average of 550 children attend each viewing. Viewings are also organized in underprivileged neighbourhoods. Parents and partners are welcoming the organization's initiative.

On another note, Ms. Kouya talked about the organization's next set of challenges, which include finding financial partners, doing more to promote the organization in schools, and

obtaining financial support from the Ivory Coast department of national culture and education.

Mr. Claude Cousineau (Quebec) commended *La Lanterne magique* and asked whether the Ivory Coast department of education would consider taking full financial responsibility for the organization. Ms. Koya answered that the department was taking the matter under advisement. Chair Berberat invited the cultural communities of other African countries to set up similar organizations in other parts of francophone Africa.

Mr. Cousineau also pointed out that the organization reaches a lot of children. He believes that an administrator is needed to seek out additional funding. He proposed that a foundation be set up to support this and other similar organizations.

The Chair pointed out that the cost of admission (2,000 CFA francs per child) is an accessibility issue. He also believes that private or public funding must be found. He hopes that this meeting will help the organization to get funding from the Ivory Coast government.

Ms. Kouya indicated that one of the organization's objectives is to make the viewings accessible to children. The organization has already been given funding to organize viewings in underprivileged neighbourhoods outside Abidjan. What is more, the organization has had a lot of success in schools, and children come from all over to attend the films shown by *La Lanterne magique*. No admission is charged to NGOs that bring several dozen children. Finally, Mr. Jean-Charles Luperto (member, Belgium) expressed a desire to invite the organization to the Festival de Namur.

Education system in Ivory Coast and its impact on child labour — Mrs. Chantal Kouadio-Ayérou, National President, and Mr. Falle Tcheya, Chair of the Board of Directors of the *Réseau ivoirien de défense des droits des enfants et des femmes* (RIDDEF)

Ms. Chantal Kouadio-Ayérou (RIDDEF) indicated that her organization is concerned with human rights, more particularly the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children in Ivory Coast. The debate centred on Ivory Coast's education system and its impact on child labour.

Ms. Kouadio-Ayérou (RIDDEF) indicated that Ivory Coast has experienced many crises that have affected how education system works. She talked about how the term "child" is defined in international law and Ivory Coast's binding legal obligations regarding children's rights. She also talked about the states' obligations following the ratification of various conventions on the rights of the child.

In that regard, she quoted article 11(3) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which states: "State Parties to the present Charter shall take all appropriate measures with a view to achieving the full realization of this right and shall in particular: (a) provide free and compulsory basic education; (b) encourage the development of secondary education in its different forms and progressively make it free and accessible to all".

Ms. Kouadio-Ayérou also reminded committee members that article 10 of the Ivory Coast Constitution states that: "School attendance is compulsory for children of both sexes, under the conditions determined by law. The State and public communities ensure

the education of children. They create conditions conducive to this education. The State ensures the promotion and development of general public education, technical education and professional training as well as the expansion of all sectors, according to international standards of quality and in relation to the needs of the labor market.”

She also indicated that, as a result of its international commitments, Ivory Coast included education in its Constitution and committed to creating conditions to make education accessible to all children of both sexes. However, according to an NGO that specializes in child labour around the world, an estimated 21% of children in sub-Saharan Africa are forced to work and therefore do not have access to an education.

The statistics from the various occupational sectors show that the shortcomings in the education system need to be addressed. Parental poverty is one of the contributors to child labour and the one of the reasons why children are not going to school. Parental illiteracy is another contributor, since children’s education is considered less important.

Ms. Kouadio-Ayémou (RIDDEF) identified the following problems with the system that may aggravate the phenomenon of child labour:

- Limited space in schools, with disparity among the regions;
- The distance students have to travel: 10% have to travel over three kilometres, which is a discouraging factor;
- Class size: According to education department statistics, there is an average of 68 students per class, while the standard class size recommended by UNESCO is 33 students per class;
- The educational and academic qualifications of teachers;
- The employment rate of graduates: According to a report published by the World Bank in January 2017, only 26% of Ivorians between the ages of 25 and 34 who graduate from high school are employed.

Ms. Kouadio-Ayémou (RIDDEF) proposed some solutions. She suggested that the government enhance the quality and performance of the school system by making school free for all children without discrimination, increasing the budget for education, and setting up a free canteen in every school. Obviously, she felt there was a need to dismantle child labour networks. Finally, she indicated that the law regarding school and the applicable penalties must be enforced.

Mr. Christian Levrat (State Councillor, Switzerland) talked about the line between acceptable work and exploitation. He asked about how much work children have to do in the cocoa fields and mines.

Mr. Mohammed el Hafed (member, Morocco) stated that it can sometimes be good for children to help their families when there is a lack of cultural or sports activities in which to participate. Sometimes this can help parents and children draw closer and find a mental balance. He was concerned about how full the classrooms are.

Ms. Kouadio-Ayérou (RIDDEF) stated that, when it comes to raising awareness about child labour and promoting education and training, a distinction must be made between work the child does to help the family and work that exploits the child and hinders his or her development. The organization focuses on raising awareness among parents about what it is doing but also about the duty of children. When a child is in school and all the conditions are met, then the child has a duty to work.

Mr. Falle Tcheya (RIDDEF) came back to the crux of the issue of child labour in African countries. There is a need for a paradigm change when it comes to family needs and education. School should inspire hope and parents should see sending their children to school as an investment. Families need to be proud to send their children to school in the short term in the hopes of seeing results in the long term.

It is very difficult to get people to understand the need to protect the rights of each child. As such, that must be the first priority with obedience and the duty of the child being secondary. With regard to child labour in mines, safety concerns mainly relate to clandestine mining. Human rights violations in this sector have been identified by various NGOs. The Chair wrapped up the discussion on this topic by thanking the association and congratulating it on the ties it has created with Ivory Coast parliamentarians.

Date and location of next meeting

The Chair advised that the next meeting of the ECCAC is scheduled for July 8, 2018, in Quebec City.

Respectfully submitted,

Darrell Samson, M.P.

President of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (CAPF)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie(CAPF)
ACTIVITY	Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)
DESTINATION	Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast
DATES	April 20 - 21, 2018
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Joël Godin, M.P.

STAFF

TRANSPORTATION	\$6,488.96
ACCOMMODATION	\$571.20
PER DIEMS	\$577.24
MISCELLANEOUS	\$204.77
TOTAL	\$7,842.17