



## NEWS RELEASE

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 30, 2017

### **Canadian Parliamentarians conclude Bilateral Mission to the Gambia**

Banjul – Six members of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association concluded an important and productive bilateral mission to The Gambia today. The delegation was led by the Association’s Co-Chairs, the Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, and Robert Oliphant, M.P., and included the Hon. René Cormier, Senator, the Hon. Mike Lake, P.C., M.P., François Choquette, M.P., and Mona Fortier, M.P.

The delegation met with a broad range of officials and stakeholders to learn about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for The Gambia. This included meetings with several members of the newly elected National Assembly, including the Hon. Mariam Jack Denton, Speaker of the National Assembly. It also included a meeting with the Hon. Fatoumata Tambajang, Minister of Women’s Affairs overseeing the Office of the Vice President, and the Hon. Abubacarr Tambadou, Attorney General and Minister of Justice. The delegation also met with members of civil society, including journalists and human rights advocates, as well as representatives from the private sector. The delegation visited the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, and met with the United Nations Resident Coordinator in The Gambia.

“The Association decided to visit The Gambia to engage with parliamentarians and officials in the country’s first democratically elected government in 22 years. It has been a little over seven months since President Barrow was sworn into office following historic elections. As The Gambia transitions to a new era, the advancement of human rights and reconciliation, and the strengthening of the justice system will be of critical importance, said Senator Andreychuk.”

Mr. Oliphant stated, “Our meetings highlighted the many issues that The Gambia faces as it works to advance reconciliation, human rights and social and economic development. The importance of empowering women and youth and the need to address the unique challenges of those living in remote communities are key among them. Canada can play a meaningful role in supporting the new Gambia as it re-engages with the international community.”

**ABOUT:** Established in 2003, the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association promotes exchanges between African and Canadian parliamentarians and proposes initiatives aimed at fostering better mutual understanding of national and international problems.

In addition, the Association works to develop ties with regional parliamentary groupings and the Pan-African Parliament.

**-30-**

**For more information, please contact:**

Ms. Josée Therien, Association Secretary, 613-996-6075