

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

XVIIIth Summit of La Francophonie

Djerba, Tunisia

November 18 to 20, 2022

Report

The delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) during the XVIII Summit of La Francophonie was led by **Francis Drouin**, M.P., Chair of the Canadian Branch and International President of the APF. Julie Pelletier, Administrative Secretary of the Canadian Branch, accompanied the delegation.

The APF delegation, in addition to Francis **Drouin**, President, was composed of Bruno Fuchs, Member (France), Acting Parliamentary Secretary General of the APF; Damien Cesselin, Administrative Secretary General of the APF, and three Advisors, Jessica Malamba, Sébastien Jobert and Bachir Dieye.

Planned for 2020, then postponed because of the health crisis, the XVIII Summit of La Francophonie was held in Djerba, Tunisia, from November 18 to 20, 2022. The delegation also participated in preparatory meetings in Paris, France, from November 14 to 15, 2022.

THE SOMMET DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

43rd Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie

As in the past, the Summit was preceded by a session of the Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie on November 18, 2023, attended by ministers from the 88 member states and governments of La Francophonie. **Bruno Fuchs**, the Acting Parliamentary Secretary General, represented the APF during this event. He spoke about the vital importance for francophone countries to be able to meaningfully reach out to young people and to foster multilateral cooperation. He also addressed administrative and financial issues involving the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF). For her part, the Secretary General of the OIF, Louise Mushikiwabo, presented the work of her organization in 2022 and the strategy of La Francophonie to support the French language.

The XVIII Conference of Heads of State and Government

On November 19 and 20, 2022, the francophone heads of state and government discussed the priorities of La Francophonie and addressed the issue of digital technology, the theme of the Summit. On the first day of the proceedings, **Mr. Drouin**, in his capacity as International President of the APF, advocated for the aspirations for the francophone community of the 91 parliamentary and interparliamentary branches of the APF. The President pointed out that political crises have continued to shake francophone countries in recent years, and he took the opportunity to reiterate that francophone parliamentarians are determined to find lasting solutions to end these crises, in accordance with the values and ambitions of the populations they represent. He reiterated that La Francophonie could rely on parliamentary diplomacy to engage in effective mediation in order to find lasting solutions to end these crises. He also presented the *Avis de l'APF sur le numérique* [APF's opinion on digital space], the result of several years of work on the subject. He called for connectivity in the francophone community to be enhanced as a necessary prerequisite to meet contemporary challenges. In particular, he spoke of the rapid spread of misinformation and its negative impact on young people's trust in democratic institutions. He also emphasized the importance of having strategies to counter

cyberviolence against women. In conclusion, Mr. **Drouin** stressed that close collaboration between the two political pillars of La Francophonie—the OIF and the APF—is indispensable.

Also taking place during the XVIII Summit was the adoption of the *Djerba Declaration*, the re-election of the Secretary General of La Francophonie, Louise Mushikiwabo, and the designation of France as host of the next Summit in 2024.

Other major documents were also adopted at the Summit, including the *Cadre stratégique de la Francophonie* [Strategic framework of La Francophonie] for 2023–2030, recognizing the APF’s specific role within La Francophonie; the *Résolution sur les situations de crise, de sortie de crise et de consolidation de la paix dans l’espace francophone* [resolution on crisis situations, ending crises and peacebuilding in the francophone community], the *Déclaration sur la langue française dans la diversité linguistique de la Francophonie* [Declaration on the French language in the linguistic diversity of La Francophonie] and the *Règlement relatif à la procédure d’adhésion ou de modification de statut d’un État ou gouvernement auprès de l’OIF* [Regulations on the procedure for accession or modification of the status of a State or government to the OIF].

Other activities held alongside the Summit

During the Summit, President **Drouin** also participated in several related activities. On behalf of the APF, he visited the Village de la Francophonie, where he promoted the role and work of parliamentary diplomacy to young people and focused on their vision of La Francophonie. He was also involved in the programming of the Pavillon de la Francophonie, in an exchange with the two co-spokespersons of the Francophone Youth Parliament, Madina Tall and Federico Borre. Broadcasted live on YouTube, the interview was hosted by Mourad Zeghidi and focused on civic engagement and the expectations of francophone youth. Mr. **Drouin** gave a second interview on TV5MONDE’s newscast with Ousmane Ndiaye, Editor-in-Chief for Africa, and Jean-Lou Blachier, President of the Groupement du patronat francophone, on the economic potential of La Francophonie. The interview focused on the importance of increasing North-South economic partnerships and the interest in building relationships between the business community and francophone youth.

The delegation also had the opportunity to meet with several political figures and interest groups present at the Summit. The delegation spoke with the President of Burundi, Évariste Ndayishimiye, on the APF’s future activities and relations with the Burundian Parliament. A discussion took place with the President of Niger, Mohamed Bazoum, regarding the situation in the Sahel and the potential for cooperation between the parliaments in the region and the APF. The group also met with Bestine Kazadi, personal representative of the Head of State of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to discuss holding the Games of La Francophonie in Kinshasa and environmental issues in the Congo Basin. With Sylvie Baïpo-Temon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Central African Republic, possibilities for cooperation with the Central African Branch of the APF were discussed.

Lastly, President **Drouin** had an informal meeting with the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, and Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of

Canada, and their accompanying delegation composed of representatives of Canadian civil society, including Véronique Maillet, Executive Director, Société nationale de l'Acadie; Nancy Juneau, President, Fédération culturelle canadienne-française; Liane Roy, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne; Lynn Brouillette, President and CEO, Association des collèges et universités de la Francophonie canadienne; Luc Allaire, Secretary General, Comité syndical francophone de l'éducation et de la formation; Marguerite Tolgyesi, President, Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française; and Nour Enayeh, President, Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne.

MEETINGS AS PRESIDENT

Francis Drouin was elected President of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie on July 8, during the 47th annual session of the APF in Kigali (Rwanda). In this role, he is responsible for positioning the organization as a key player with other francophone bodies and international partners, such as the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and Summits of La Francophonie.

On November 14 and 15, 2022, Mr. **Drouin** conducted in Paris several meetings as the new president of the APF, which allowed him to discuss La Francophonie's challenges, the APF's activities and its role at the Summit of La Francophonie.

Welcomed to the French National Assembly by Thierry Deilhes, Administrative Secretary of the France-Canada Friendship Group, Mr. Drouin met with French senator Yan Chantrel to discuss the political situation in France since the June 2022 legislative elections and the Senator's recent visit to Canada, on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Canada–France Inter-Parliamentary Association.

President **Drouin** then met with the President of the National Assembly, Yaël Braun Pivet, first woman to hold this position. The constructive role of the French National Assembly as a pillar of the parliamentary Francophonie was highlighted, as well as the leadership role that parliamentary diplomacy could play in the stabilization of francophone Africa. Mr. **Drouin** concluded the discussion by inviting the President, who is also the President of the French Branch of the APF, to the APF 2024 Plenary Session in Montreal and mentioned the possibility that the French Branch could host the 50th Annual Session in 2025.

A discussion at Paris City Hall with Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris and President of the Association internationale des maires francophones (AIMF), focused on the potential for cooperation between the APF and the AIMF and the role of the French language in sport in anticipation of the 2024 Olympic Games, which Paris will host.

Mr. **Drouin** spoke with the Honourable Stéphane Dion, P.C., the new Ambassador of Canada to France about La Francophonie's place in Europe and cooperation between France and Canada. Specific initiatives carried out by the Embassy and its Cultural Centre in Paris to promote La Francophonie were mentioned. President **Drouin** also had a courtesy call with His Excellency Mr. Vijayen Valaydon, Ambassador of Mauritius, where the challenges of the island and the role of President of the Groupe des ambassadeurs francophones de France in promoting the values of La Francophonie were discussed.

The delegation also had a virtual briefing with Pasquale Salvaggio of Global Affairs Canada on the political situation in the Central African Republic and the country's bilateral relations with Canada. The conversation also addressed the challenges of the francophone countries of West Africa and the security situation in the Sahel.

Lastly, in preparation for his participation in the Summit of La Francophonie in the following days, Mr. **Drouin** was able to meet with the APF's interim parliamentary secretary general, Bruno Fuchs, Member of the French National Assembly, and Damien Cesselin, the Administrative Secretary General, and the APF's general secretariat team. Together, they discussed upcoming APF activities, including their respective roles at the Summit of La Francophonie, as well as how to improve the APF's impact and enable it to influence and educate other major international bodies such as the OIF and the United Nations. He also had an exchange with French senator Christophe-André Frassa, President of the APF Political Commission. Senator Frassa spoke about his committee's activities and in particular the results of the recent meeting of the Working Group on the Reforming of the APF Constitution held in Paris on November 3 and 4, 2022.

Through its participation in these meetings, the Canadian Branch has achieved its objectives of fulfilling its international and inter-parliamentary obligations, maintaining international ties with various partners of La Francophonie, and defending Canadian values and interests.

Respectfully Submitted,

Francis Drouin, M.P.

President, Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie
Chair, Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie
ACTIVITY	XVIII th Summit of La Francophonie
DESTINATION	Djerba, Tunisia
DATES	November 18 to 20, 2022
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Francis Drouin*
STAFF	Julie Pelletier

TRANSPORTATION	\$ 10,556.31
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 164.80
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,786.39
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 179.97
REVENUES*	\$ (3,161.58)
TOTAL	\$ 9,525.89

** Some expenses for the President of the APF were covered by the APF.*