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OSCE PA

AP OSCE

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the 2009 Fall Meetings of the
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

**Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-
operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)**

**Athens, Greece
October 9 – 12, 2009**

Report

From 9 to 12 October 2009, six Canadian parliamentarians travelled to Athens, Greece to attend the 2009 Fall Meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE. The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino led the delegation, which included the Honourable Senator Jeremiah Grafstein, Mr. David Tilson, Member of Parliament, Mr. Peter Goldring, Member of Parliament, Mr. Todd Russell, Member of Parliament, and Madame Francine Lalonde, Member of Parliament. The delegation was accompanied by Maxime Ricard, Delegation Secretary, and Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor.

OVERVIEW OF THE OSCE

Established in 1975 as the “Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe” (CSCE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) was given its current name at the Budapest Summit in December 1994. The OSCE participating countries, currently 56 in number, are “all the European states, the United States and Canada.”¹ Eleven other states from the Mediterranean area and Asia joined as observers and are known as “Partners for Cooperation.” The organization is defined as a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. It is also recognized as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the *United Nations Charter*, which requires that participating United Nations Member States “make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council.”² However, the OSCE is not an international organization in the strict sense of international law, in that its resolutions are not legally binding on the signatory countries.

The OSCE’s 2009 budget is €158.7 million, a decrease from the 2008 budget which was €164.2 million. Approximately 75% of the OSCE’s budget is dedicated to 25 field missions and other field activities. The OSCE employs approximately 3,450 individuals, the vast majority of whom are assigned to field missions. One-quarter of the OSCE employees are seconded by the participating countries.

A. An Inclusive, Global and Cooperative Approach to Security

The OSCE’s unique character derives from its composition, which enables the United States and Canada to participate as full members in an organization that addresses European issues. The OSCE favours inclusive dialogue over selective admission. This enables it to keep communication channels open on key security issues between Western democracies and countries with less exemplary democratic records. It also promotes exchanges between the European Union and Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) that are not members of the Council of Europe. Whereas the foremost goal of the Council of Europe is to promote and defend democratic development and human rights, and to hold member governments accountable for their performance in these areas, the OSCE

¹ Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations, Helsinki, 3 July 1973, par. 54, http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1973/07/4136_en.pdf.

² Charter of the United Nations, Chapter VIII, art. 52, par. 2, <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter8.htm>. The Security Council may also use such regional arrangements to implement coercive measures it has adopted.

aims to foster the development of an expansive, conflict-free geographic area – from Vancouver to Vladivostok – regardless of the democratic characteristics of the participating states.

The OSCE's resolutions and activities stem from a comprehensive understanding of security that extends beyond the political-military model. In the *Charter for European Security*, adopted at the November 1999 Istanbul Summit, the heads of state and of government of the participating countries agreed to "address the human, economic, political and military dimensions of security as an integral whole."³ All forms of peaceful cooperation between the participating countries are considered as having the potential to reduce the risks of conflict in the region. The OSCE's cooperative approach is confirmed by the fact that all 56 states have equal status. Decisions are made by consensus rather than majority vote.⁴

B. Operational Capacity

After the end of the Cold War, the OSCE developed its institutions and operational capacities in response to particular and often urgent needs, and not as a long-term strategic plan. The 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe laid the foundations for the OSCE's institutional framework.

Field activities account for almost 75% of the OSCE budget. The fact that it has no missions in Western Europe or North America is a point frequently raised by the Commonwealth of Independent States to argue that, although it claims to be cooperative and egalitarian, the OSCE applies a double standard in its relations with the participating countries. The OSCE's reply is that its operations stem from commitments made in a consensual manner and at the invitation of the countries themselves.

The OSCE is led by a rotating "chairman-in-office" selected to serve a one-year term from among the foreign ministers of the participating countries. As the organization's senior diplomat, the chairman-in-office is supported by the Secretariat and its secretary general who are based in Vienna.

On 1 January 2009, Greece succeeded Finland as the chair of the organization. George Papandreou, Greece's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, has been Chairman-in-Office since 6 October 2009, replacing Dora Bakoyannis who was the previous Foreign Minister. Kazakhstan will succeed Greece as chair of the organization on 1 January 2010.

C. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is the parliamentary dimension of the OSCE. It was created by the OSCE (at that time the CSCE) in 1991 following the call set out by the participating States in the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe. Its primary purpose is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue on issues facing the participating

³ Charter for European Security, par. 9, in Istanbul Document 1999, Istanbul Summit 1999, http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1999/11/4050_en.pdf.

⁴ In extreme cases, the "consensus minus one" rule may be invoked, for instance when a serious violation of the Organization's principles occurs. However, this rule has been used only once, in 1992, against the former Yugoslavia, which was readmitted as Serbia and Montenegro after the elections in the fall of 2000.

States, issue recommendations for their own governments, parliaments and citizens concerning the OSCE's three spheres of action. Among its objectives are:

- To assess the implementation of OSCE objectives by participating States;
- To discuss subjects addressed during meetings of the OSCE;
- To develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts;
- To support the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions in OSCE participating States; and,
- To contribute to the development of OSCE institutional structures and of relations between existing OSCE Institutions.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is organised according to three General Committees representing the three "baskets" of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the areas of focus of the OSCE: the First General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, and the Third General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. Its work is also carried out by way of ad hoc committees, working groups, and special representatives and envoys. The Parliamentary Assembly also plays a key role in observing elections in the OSCE region and regularly sends parliamentary delegations on field missions.

It is managed by a Bureau and a Standing Committee. The Bureau comprises a President, nine Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, the Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur for each of the three General Committees, and the President Emeritus. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out and takes decisions by majority vote. The Standing Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly comprises the members of the Bureau and the 56 heads of delegation of the participating states. The Standing Committee guides the work of the Assembly, approves its budget and appoints the Secretary General. It uses the "consensus minus one" rule when voting on decisions, except in the case of the appointment of the Secretary General, which is done by a majority vote.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is administratively supported by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat who are located in Copenhagen. These were established and became operational in January 1993 soon after the creation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Today the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly comprises more than 300 parliamentarians who are appointed by their respective parliaments. Observers of the Assembly include parliamentarians from the OSCE's Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) and Asian Partners for Cooperation (Japan, Korea, Thailand, Afghanistan and Mongolia), and representatives from other parliamentary assemblies and security organizations, such as NATO.

Since its first Annual Meeting in Budapest in July 1992, members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and representatives of the Partners for Co-operation have convened several times a year to carry out the mandate of the Assembly. The Assembly itself meets in plenary at the Annual Session held in July and hosted by the

parliament of a participating State. The Annual Session is the most important event in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly calendar where the Assembly debates a number of OSCE matters and resolutions, receives reports, adopts the Session's declaration, and elects its officers. At the Fall Meetings in September, also hosted by the parliament of a participating State, the Assembly in plenary holds a conference on a topical issue.

The General Committees meet at the Annual Session to debate and adopt resolutions, and elect Committee officers; they also convene jointly and separately at the Winter Meeting in February in Vienna, where the OSCE's headquarters are located, to discuss and debate issues of importance, receive briefings by senior OSCE officials, and hear presentations by the Rapporteurs on their draft resolutions for the Annual Session.

The Bureau meets at the Annual Session as well as in April and December. The Standing Committee meets at the Annual Session, the Fall Meetings, and at the Winter Meeting.

The OSCE PA also convenes to discuss more specific topics either on the margins of these regular annual meetings or at other times. For instance, the Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean is held during the Fall Meetings of the OSCE PA, and the Economic Conference is hosted by the parliament of a participating State every second spring.

The Assembly's budget is approved at the Annual Session; the 2009–2010 budget, approved at the 2009 Annual Session, is €2.86 million, the same amount as in the previous year. In 2009–2010 Canada's budgeted contribution is C\$250,155.

The Assembly's budget covers most of the organizational expenses related to the Annual Session, Winter Meeting, Fall Meetings, Standing Committee and Bureau Meetings, official visits, the election observation programme, as well as the costs of the International Secretariat. Host parliaments of the Annual Sessions contribute significantly by providing considerable support. The Secretariat's office facilities are provided free of charge by the Danish Folketing.

João Soares (Portugal) has been president of the PA since July 2008, succeeding Göran Lennmarker (Sweden). Spencer Oliver (United States) has served as secretary general since January 1993. The Honourable Jerahmiel Grafstein, member of the Canadian Senate, has acted as vice-president since July 2007, having served as treasurer from 2001-2007. The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino, head of the Canadian delegation since February 2005, has been chair of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security since July 2009, having served as its vice-chair from July 2007.

2009 FALL MEETINGS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY⁵

For four days from 9 to 12 October 2009, almost 200 parliamentarians from 50 of the 56 OSCE participating States, together with representatives of the "Partners for Cooperation" states, including Algeria, Jordan, Egypt and Israel met in Athens, Greece

⁵ Contents of this report are drawn from OSCE Parliamentary Assembly 2009 Fall Meetings, Athens, Greece, 9-12 October 2009: Report published by the Secretariat and available at <http://www.oscepa.org/images/stories/documents/activities/3.Fall%20Meetings/Brochures%20-%20Fall%20Meetings/2009-FM-Athens-Summary-Report.pdf>

for three complementary events: an inter-parliamentary conference on “Energy Security and Environment,” the Mediterranean Forum of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and the Standing Committee Meeting.

A. Inter-Parliamentary Conference, “Energy Security and Environment”

1. Opening Plenary Session

At the opening session, the participants heard the following presentations:

- The President of the Parliamentary Assembly, João Soares, opened the 18th Annual Session. Touching on the conference’s theme of energy security and the environment, he noted that the OSCE includes some of the largest producers and consumers of energy in the world. Accordingly, the OSCE can play a key leadership role. He also emphasises the link between energy security, environment and peaceful relations among states. President Soares also noted the role that parliamentarians can play in continuing and deepening the dialogue on European security issues through what has been termed the Corfu process.
- The President of the Hellenic Parliament, Dimitrios Sioufas, emphasised the role that parliamentarians play in promoting peace and cooperation in the OSCE region. With respect to the theme of the conference, he noted the importance of cooperation in building sustainable thinking and commitment for the upcoming Copenhagen Conference and also for the long-term.
- The representative⁶ of Greece’s Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE, Spyros Kouvelis, Deputy Foreign Minister, provided an overview of the priorities and the challenges faced by the Chairmanship. These priorities include improving the strategic dialogue on European security issues, the situation in Georgia following the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Georgia, and strengthening of the rule of law.
- Head of the Hellenic Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Panayotis Skandalakis, focused on the relevance to the Mediterranean region of energy security and environmental issues, noting particular concern for rising water levels. He emphasised the role that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly plays in bringing long-term solutions of sustainable development to the problems of energy security and environment.
- Petros Efthymiou, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, noted the new political realities and social impact of climate change. He emphasised the importance of unified action and political commitment to combat climate change, particularly in terms of finding cost-effective preventative measures.

2. Session I: Regional Co-operation in Energy Security

During this session, the participants heard from the following presenters: Volodymyr Saprykin, Director of Energy Programmes of the Razumkov Centre for Economic and

⁶ Greece’s parliamentary elections immediately prior to the Fall Meetings resulted in a change in government. Consequently, Greece’s OSCE chairmanship positions were not yet permanently filled at the time of the Fall Meetings.

Political Studies of Ukraine; and Sergei Komlev, Head of the Contract Structuring and Price Formation Directorate of the Gazprom Export Company.

- Volodymyr Saprykin focused on the “energy triangle” comprising Russia, Ukraine and the European Union countries, the challenges of decreasing energy consumption and diversifying energy supply as they relate to technological and commercial feasibility, and the competing interests of the countries and companies involved. Nonetheless, he concluded that, assisted by legislative reform and the liberalisation of the Ukrainian gas market, future gas wars can be avoided.
- Sergei Komlev emphasised the important role that natural gas can play in addressing the energy concerns of many European countries, particularly as it is a clean fuel and highly competitive in terms of costs. In this respect, energy supply solutions should be left to market-based principles. He also addressed three perceived phobias relating to Gazprom, noting that Gazprom is not a tool of the Russian government, that Gazprom does not control Europe’s gas supply, and that Gazprom is a reliable supplier of gas, but Ukraine’s self-interests regarding paying market prices have distorted this image. In conclusion he called for the strengthening of cooperation between Europe and Russia in order to improve their economies and living standards.

3. Session II: Climate and Environmental Policy – The Road to Copenhagen

During this session, the participants heard from the following presenters: Senator Benjamin Cardin (United States), OSCE PA Vice-President; and Dimitris Varvargios, former Vice-Chairman of the Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection of the Hellenic Parliament.

- Senator Cardin emphasised the security-related effects of climate change, such as food scarcity and conflict in places where people are already struggling to cope. He also touched on the added challenges world leaders are facing in coping with climate change in light of the economic crisis, highlighting that economic solutions must be part of climate change solutions. He listed recent action taken by the U.S. Senate on climate change before committing to making the US a leader in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Dimitris Varvargios focused on the importance of international action and cooperation to deal with climate change as it has become a major threat to mankind. He summarised some of the consequences of climate change that are already being felt in terms of changes to water levels, economic refugees, and reduced biodiversity. He concluded that economic growth and climate change solutions are not incompatible, and that developing and developed countries must contribute to the solution.

4. Session III: Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security

During this session, the participants heard from the following presenters:

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan), OSCE PA Vice-President; Goran Svilanovic, Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities; Theodoros Pangalos, Vice-President of the Government of Greece and Chairman of the Political Committee

of the European Security and Defense Assembly; and Charalambos Tsoutrelis, former Professor of Mining Engineering and President of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Geology and Mineral Exploitation.

- In looking towards Kazakhstan's upcoming Chairmanship of the OSCE, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev discussed efforts by Kazakhstan to focus on the development of renewable energy sources and mentioned that nuclear energy should be considered an option. He emphasised the challenges Central Asia faces regarding water management. He also encouraged the review and development of a legal framework for water distribution and proposed that Kazakhstan host a research unit on water management.
- Goran Svilanovic noted his support for key resolutions adopted at the OSCE PA's Annual Session in Vilnius as they relate to the topic being discussed. He emphasised the importance of cooperation in the sustainable use of resources, which can also be a useful confidence-building measure among former disputants.
- Theodoros Pangalos looked at efforts which take place at different levels, i.e. local, state, national, regional and international, to address the different environmental concerns. He added that governments and parliaments have important roles to play in changing habits in order to obtain more sustainable living patterns.
- Charalambos Tsoutrelis focused on the particular challenges Greece was facing regarding ground water resources and possible solutions, such as irrigation and the registration of aquifers so that they may be more closely monitored, in order to ensure that the current situation does not become irreversible.

5. Closing Session

President Soares closed the inter-parliamentary conference by noting that long-term sustainability, energy security and environmental solutions must be viewed hand in hand. He emphasised the interdependence among producers and consumers of energy and that all must agree to continue to dialogue in order to search for improved solutions and manage market manipulations. He noted as well that strong political action is necessary, even in the midst of an economic crisis, in order to ensure long-term sustainability. In particular, he highlighted that reviving the global economy is linked to energy security and better environmental policies. He concluded that long-term sustainability is based on a future of energy diversification and the political will for alternate sources of energy.

B. Mediterranean Forum

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's annual Mediterranean Forum was chaired by Alcee Hastings (United States), OSCE PA Special Representative for Mediterranean Affairs. In his opening remarks, Congressman Hastings reported on the seminar he hosted on OSCE Mediterranean Partner Engagement in July 2009 in Washington in order to renew the foundation upon which the partnership is based. He highlighted the following four elements that favour such a renewal: the need to overcome the fatigue that has resulted from the multiplicity of frameworks, greater ownership by the Partner states of the dialogue process, the need to increase funding for exchange programmes

for diplomats and civil service from Mediterranean Partners, and the Mediterranean Dimension's possible influence in the Middle East peace process.

Elsa Papadimitriou, Vice-President of the Hellenic Parliament, summarised recent efforts on the part of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the Mediterranean area. She emphasised the role of inter-parliamentary assemblies in generating solutions in areas such as economic and environmental cooperation in order to arrive at a more prosperous region.

Professor Sotiris Roussos, OSCE Chair-in-Office Personal Representative for the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, reported on some positive measures coming out of the Mediterranean region. But he also noted that unemployment remains a problem that can only be addressed through improved trade and economic stimulation. He called on the European countries to increase their levels of development to meet those in other regions such as South America. He called for three elements to ensure the future of the Partnership: flexibility in the areas chosen for activities, visibility of the process, and the realisation of tangible results.

The keynote address to the Mediterranean Forum was made by Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE. He briefed the Parliamentary Assembly on recent developments relating to the OSCE Mediterranean dimension. He explored ways to reinforce the Mediterranean dialogue through an enhanced parliamentary dimension and by reforming the working methods of the Contact Group in Vienna. He also noted that the deepening and enlarging of the Partnership needed to be balanced.

1. Session on Trade and Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean

This session was chaired by Senator Jerry Grafstein (Canada). He offered remarks relating to the importance of economic cooperation in promoting peace and stability in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. He emphasised that, given the large percentage of youth who are unemployed in the region, job creation is the key to fostering peace in the Middle East.

Miltiadis Makriyannis, Head of the Department for European Regional Cooperation and Partnerships of the Hellenic Parliament, echoed Senator Grafstein's remarks in noting that political and economic solutions are necessary and interlinked in the context of peace and stability in the region. To this end, greater involvement of the private sector as well as joint ventures of small and medium sized enterprises in the agriculture, energy, shipbuilding and tourism sectors may have particular benefits.

Yiannis Stournaras, Professor of Economics, University of Athens, Research Director of the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research, noted that there are great prospects of cooperation and economic growth in the Mediterranean, considering that one-third of the global trade and one-quarter of the oil reserves are located in the region. He pointed to the importance of enhancing cooperation in the area of technology, transport, culture and energy by introducing and implementing necessary reforms to support economic growth. This reform effort also needs to be focused on the respect for human rights.

C. Standing Committee

President Soares, Chair of the Standing Committee, began with an overview of his upcoming activities, including preparations for Kazakhstan's 2010 Chairmanship of the OSCE and his heading up of the PA's observation of Ukraine's January 2010 presidential elections.

The Standing Committee also heard the report of the Assembly's Treasurer, Robert Battelli (Slovenia), who indicated that finances remain within the approved budget for the 17th year in a row.

OSCE PA Secretary General, Spencer Oliver, reported that the Secretariat's books were audited and that no problems were found by the external auditor. He also gave special recognition to long-serving Assembly members, including Jerry Grafstein, who are soon leaving the Assembly.

Reports were also presented of recent election observation missions, including the presidential election in Kyrgyzstan and the parliamentary elections in Moldova. The head of the Assembly's mission to the parliamentary elections in Albania reported on his follow-up visit to that country.

The Standing Committee also heard reports from various Special Representatives of the OSCE PA, including from President Emeritus Goran Lenmarker (Sweden) on Nagorno-Karabakh and Special Envoy to Georgia, and Kimmo Kiljunen, Special Representative for Central Asia. Roberto Battelli (Slovenia), Special Representative on South East Europe, and Walburga Hapsburg Douglas (Sweden), the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Parliamentary Team on Moldova, reported on their planned activities. The Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs, Alcee Hastings (United States), reported on a seminar he had hosted in Washington in July 2009 about the Mediterranean dimension. The Special Representative on Gender Issues, Tone Tingsgaard, updated Members on the gender balance in the OSCE, and reported on her participation in OSCE activities. There was also discussion during the meeting on the importance of reappointing a Special Representative on Migration.

The Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, presented an overview of the OSCE draft budget, expressing his hope for its timely adoption notwithstanding the difficult financial circumstances facing many countries.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

The sessions of the Fall Meetings were attended by members of the Canadian delegation. Their individual activities are listed accordingly:

- Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Head of the Delegation:
 - held a bilateral meeting with the President of the Parliamentary Assembly and met with the Kyrgyzstan delegation as a follow-up to the July 2009 election observation mission which he headed.
- Senator Jerry Grafstein:
 - chaired a session of the Mediterranean Forum and made opening remarks to that effect;

- During the Closing Session, on the occasion of the Fall Meetings being his last OSCE PA meeting due to his upcoming retirement, Senator Grafstein was lauded by Secretary General Oliver for his longstanding service and commitment to the OSCE PA.
- Mr. David Tilson, M.P.:
 - Mr. Tilson participated in subsequent debates on the following topics:
 - During the Session on Energy Security, he spoke about Canada's recent domestic initiatives in promoting energy security.
 - During the Session on Climate Change and Environmental Policy – The Roadway to Copenhagen, he spoke about Canada's domestic, continental and global contributions in reducing carbon emissions.
- Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P.:
 - Mr. Goldring participated in subsequent debates on the following topics:
 - During the Session on Climate Change and Environmental Policy – The Roadway to Copenhagen, he spoke on the effect on the Arctic region of climate change
 - During the Session on Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security, he spoke about the need for diversifying fuel sources and the role of technological development in managing energy supply
- Madame Francine Lalonde, M.P.:
 - During the Session on Climate and Environmental Policy – the Road to Copenhagen, Madame Lalonde spoke about the role that technology can play in balancing resource exploration such as development of the oil sands with environmental protection efforts, as well as about the role that provincial and other sub-national governments can play in finding solutions to these issues.
- Mr. Todd Russell, M.P.:
 - During the Session on Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security, Mr. Russell spoke about the need to respect the rights and cultural demands of aboriginal communities as part of efforts to address climate change solutions.

The Fall Meetings of the OSCE PA addressed many topics which resonate with Canadians. The Canadian delegation distinguished itself with its high quality and frequent participation by all members; this was acknowledged by many other delegations. The Canadian delegation to the OSCE PA is certainly respected by its fellow delegates.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino.,
Director

Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation
in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	2009 Fall Meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
DESTINATION	Athens, Greece
DATES	October 9 – 12, 2009
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Honourable Consiglio Di Nino, Senator The Honourable Jerahmiel Grafstein, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P. Mr. David Tilson, M.P. Mr. Todd Russell, M.P. Mrs. Francine Lalonde, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Maxime Ricard, Association Secretary Mrs. Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$28,303.79
ACCOMMODATION	\$9,624.34
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$4,945.02
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$246.29
TOTAL	\$43,119.44

Appendices

1. OSCE participating States
2. Speaking Notes for Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein – Session on Trade and Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean
3. Speaking Notes for Mr. David Tilson, M.P. – Regional Cooperation in Energy Security
4. Speaking Notes for Mr. David Tilson, M.P. – Climate and Environmental Policy
5. Speaking Notes for Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P. – Climate and Environmental Policy
6. Speaking Notes for Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P. – Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security
7. Speaking Notes for Mr. Todd Russell, M.P. – Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security

Appendix 1

OSCE participating States

With 56 States from Europe, Central Asia and North America, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) forms the largest regional security organization in the world.

Albania

- Admission to the OSCE: 19 June 1991
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 16 September 1991; signature of Charter of Paris: 17 September 1991

Andorra

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 April 1996
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 10 November 1999; signature of Charter of Paris: 17 February 1998

Armenia

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 17 April 1992

Austria

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Azerbaijan

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 20 December 1993

Belarus

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 26 February 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 8 April 1993

Belgium

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 April 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992

Bulgaria

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Canada

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Croatia

- Admission to the OSCE: 24 March 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992

Cyprus

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Czech Republic

- Admission to the OSCE: 1 January 1993

Denmark

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Estonia

- Admission to the OSCE: 10 September 1991
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 14 October 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 6 December 1991

Finland

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

France

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Georgia

- Admission to the OSCE: 24 March 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 January 1994

Germany

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Greece

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Holy See

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Hungary

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Iceland

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Ireland

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Italy

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Kazakhstan

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 23 September 1992

Kyrgyzstan

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 3 June 1994

Latvia

- Admission to the OSCE: 10 September 1991
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 14 October 1991; signature of Charter of Paris: 6 December 1991

Liechtenstein

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Lithuania

- Admission to the OSCE: 10 September 1991
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 14 October 1991; signature of Charter of Paris: 6 December 1991

Luxembourg

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- Admission to the OSCE: 12 October 1995

Malta

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Moldova

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 26 February 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 29 January 1993

Monaco

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Montenegro

- Admission to the OSCE: 22 June 2006

- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 September 2006

Netherlands

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Norway

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Poland

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Portugal

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Romania

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Russian Federation

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

San Marino

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Serbia

- Admission to the OSCE: 10 November 2000

Slovak Republic

- Admission to the OSCE: 1 January 1993

Slovenia

- Admission to the OSCE: 24 March 1992

- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 8 March 1993

Spain

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Sweden

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Switzerland

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Tajikistan

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 26 February 1992

Turkey

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Turkmenistan

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 8 July 1992

Ukraine

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 26 February 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 16 June 1992

United Kingdom

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

United States of America

- Admission to the OSCE: 25 June 1973
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 1 August 1975; signature of Charter of Paris: 21 November 1990

Uzbekistan

- Admission to the OSCE: 30 January 1992
- Signature of the Helsinki Final Act: 26 February 1992; signature of Charter of Paris: 27 October 1993

Appendix 2

Chair Remarks by Senator Jerahmiel Grafstein

Session on Trade and Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean

Fellow Colleagues,

I am very honoured to be chairing this session on Trade and Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean at this year's OSCE PA Mediterranean Forum. As you know, I have a very strong and longstanding interest in both the Mediterranean and in trade and economic issues. I have attended many meetings of the Mediterranean Forum; I also attended the special hearing organized by Mr. Alcee Hastings, the Special Representative for Mediterranean Affairs, this past July in Washington; and, as you know, I was honoured that the Parliamentary Assembly adopted two of my supplementary items on Mediterranean Free Trade and included them in the Astana and Lithuanian Declarations. So, to Chair a panel that allows me to marry these two subjects together is certainly a welcome responsibility.

You may remember that I chaired the Mediterranean Forum last year when the Fall Meetings were held in Toronto. We had a very successful discussion, due in large part to the high level representation of several Mediterranean Partners, such as Algeria, Israel, Jordan and Morocco. This year's Forum has not been disappointing. I look forward to an engaging and enlightening discussion.

At this time, I would like to invoke the Chair's prerogative to say a few words about some of these issues. I ask for your indulgence as I do so, given that this is my last opportunity to speak to you on these issues and I want to be sure that I am leaving you with a good understanding of what is at stake.

First, I think it is fair to say that this audience fully appreciates the positive effect that economic development and prosperity can have on peace and stability. Many of us have either personal or national experiences of this relationship; indeed, this is part and parcel of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the basis behind the inclusion of the Second Basket, "Co-operation in the Field of Economics, of Science and Technology and of the Environment." And I know this audience appreciates the importance of the Mediterranean region as, again, the 1975 Helsinki Final Act established in the section, "Questions relating to Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean."

This appreciation I believe is also behind many of the recent initiatives that have been undertaken by our participating States, in one forum or another. We of course have the Barcelona Process, now the Union for the Mediterranean, under the stewardship of the European Union. We also have the US Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative launched in 2003. And, speaking as a Canadian, Canada has a free trade agreement with Israel (concluded in 1997) and with Jordan; this agreement, which includes related Agreements on Labour Cooperation and the Environment, was just signed at the end of June 2009). Canada also has Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection (FIPA) agreements with Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan; is currently negotiating FIPAs with Tunisia and Bahrain; and is in the process of signing a FIPA with Kuwait.

While these initiatives have mostly been bilaterally, and some measures have even stalled recently, they are steps in the right direction and they cannot but have a positive effect in the short, medium and long-term for the Mediterranean region, particularly if they ultimately result in a free trade region in the Mediterranean.

Imagine what can be achieved if a Mediterranean Free Trade area can be established: the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in manufactured products and the liberalization of service trade. Because of technology transfers, increased investment, economic development and reform that follow from the types of initiatives our governments are exploring, jobs would be created for the growing number of young people in the region, the number of women in the workforce would increase, the business climate would be improved – particularly for small and medium-sized businesses, the region's science and technology capacity would be developed, and a knowledge-based society would be established. Ultimately, the prosperity gap between countries north and south of the Mediterranean would be closed.

We still have a long way to go. We only need to look at some recent statistics to see the realities of the region. While the region has certainly experienced economic growth rates since 1981 (for instance 2.4% between 1981 and 1990, and 3.1% between 1991 and 2000), the high levels of population growth have diminished their economic significance so that between 1980 and 2004 per capita real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) only increased by 0.5% per year for Arab countries. The high price of oil has certainly been a windfall, but not entirely given its vulnerability to demand and strong global economic performance. As a result, the global downturn and financial crisis is projected to slow the region's economic growth rate to 3.3% in 2009. Recovery in the region is only expected to occur in 2010 when economic growth rate is projected to increase to 4.3%. Moreover, other sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing, have suffered at the expense of the dominance of the oil industry.

Unemployment rates might have been decreasing before the financial crisis, but were, and still are, unacceptably high. In 2005 the unemployment rate in the Middle East and North Africa was 10.8%; among Arab countries, it was 14.4% about 60% of the population in Arab countries is currently under the age of 25. The United Nations estimates that the population of Arab countries will reach 395 million by 2015 ... in just 6 years ... compared to 317 million in 2007. These demographics can't but affect the region's economic and resource potential and sustainability. According to the 2009 Arab Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Program, Arab countries will need about 51 million new jobs by 2020.

The labour market in the MENA region is notable for its low female labour force participation rate, which increased from 28% in 2000 to 31% in 2005 but, by 2007, was 26%, substantially lower rate than the world average of 40.3%.

Moreover, much of the Arab population lives below the poverty line, with about 20.37% of the population living on less than \$2 dollars a day in 2005.

I want us to understand that the issue is as much about promoting intra-regional trade and investment as it is about trade and investment relations between the region and Europe, North America. For instance, between 2000 and 2007, during the period of high oil prices, the region's total merchandise trade increased from 48% to 57% of GDP, much of which occurred between the Mediterranean countries and countries in other regions. This situation can partially be attributed to uneven tariff barriers across countries, relatively high non-tariff trade barriers and the existence of service trade barriers. Looking at investment, between 2000 and 2006, investment in the region, originating primarily from within, had increased five-fold from 4.7 billion dollars to 26.4 billion dollars. But the financial crisis has led to sharp reductions in capital flows, with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt having been identified by the World Bank as particularly vulnerable to adverse capital movements.

The 2009 Arab Human Development Report concluded that human development in the region is so stubborn because of the fragility of the political, social, economic and environmental structures.

We have heard during this Forum from some very esteemed and knowledgeable individuals about the commitment the OSCE pays to the Mediterranean, and this is a testament to the importance of the issues concerned and the rewards at stake. I ask that this work and the OSCE's commitment continue.

As parliamentarians, we have a particular obligation to our citizens to shape policies that take their best interests at heart. But we also have an obligation to future citizens. With that in mind, I am passing the torch to the next generation. I am forever humbled and enriched by all that I have learned from you, my fellow parliamentarians, over the years and wish you all the best in your endeavours.

Appendix 3

Address by Mr. David Tilson, M.P.

Regional Cooperation in Energy Security

Fellow parliamentarians,

I welcome this opportunity to highlight a few points about regional cooperation in energy security from a Canadian perspective and in doing so I hope to contribute to our discussions.

To begin, it strikes me, particularly at a forum such as this with 56 countries present, that energy security varies in its meaning and significance according to whether a country is an energy producer or consumer, as well as according to its specific regional dynamics.

In this respect, Canada is in a unique position. We are richly endowed with hydrocarbons, renewable energy sources such as hydro and wind power, and we are also a leader in the nuclear energy industry primarily due to our uranium production. Accordingly, we are the world's sixth largest energy producer and the fifth largest energy exporter. Notably, 99% of our energy exports go to the United States. It becomes clear, therefore, that a market based approach to energy issues is central to our prosperity and economic development.

Our search for energy security, therefore, reflects our profile. Specifically, as an energy supplier, Canada is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the availability of our resources to our markets. This means first and foremost adopting policies that encourage their sustainable and efficient use. On the domestic front, Canada has encouraged energy efficient practices through a variety of programs, including the 3.8 billion dollar ecoEnergy initiatives which include home retrofit grants and funding for renewable power projects.

Programs such as these have advanced energy conservation as well as generated considerable savings in energy costs.

For Canada, energy security also means ensuring the integrity of the infrastructure supplying the energy, that it is not compromised either maliciously or accidentally. Due to the highly integrated character of North America's energy system, we are especially sensitive to our obligations and are making great strides with the US to advance our common interests in this respect.

Energy is critical for the economic and social development of us all. It follows, therefore, that continued international and regional dialogue is needed to further support efficient energy markets and to ensure that environmental impacts are taken into account in policy-making. I look forward to our discussions on this topic.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix 4

Address by Mr. David Tilson, M.P.

Climate and Environmental Policy

Fellow parliamentarians,

I welcome this opportunity to share my concerns about climate change and my hope that a low carbon future can be achieved.

I believe we are already moving in that direction, and Canada has been an important partner, engaging other countries globally and continentally in order to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020 and to put us on the path to achieve reductions by 60-70% by 2050.

Whether it is internationally through the Copenhagen negotiation process or continentally through the Clean Energy Dialogue between Canada and the United States,

we are working to achieve these goals constructively and responsibly. In the Clean Energy Dialogue, for instance, we are collaborating with an important economic partner to accelerate the development and deployment of clean energy technologies.

Indeed, Canada is a leader in clean energy technology. And we are aggressively demonstrating our leadership by committing over 3 billion dollars for large, commercial scale carbon capture and storage projects whose technology can ultimately be shared globally. We have also demonstrated our leadership by helping to found, - together with some fellow OSCE participating states such as the US, the United Kingdom, and Norway, - the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute to advance this important area of clean energy technology.

Many of the measures that will help us to achieve our goals domestically, continentally and globally will require investments from public sources. But we must also recognise that private sector investments have an important role to play.

For this reason, our plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions need to be carried out in such a way that encourages economic prosperity and a healthy private sector.

Canada is already emphasising the value of drawing links between the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and economic prosperity by making more than 2 billion dollars in green investments in environmental protection, economic stimulation and technology transformation as part of its response to the economic downturn. In addition, we are engaging in public-private partnerships that are designed to leverage private investments and reduce the commercial costs of carbon capture and storage.

As we near the December conference in Copenhagen, let us draw inspiration from each other. Let us also remember that while Copenhagen may indeed be important in the short-term, real progress will be measured by results in the long-term.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix 5

Address by Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P.

Climate and Environmental Policy

Fellow parliamentarians,

I welcome this opportunity to share my concerns about climate change and the Arctic. While Canada is one of a few Arctic participating States of the OSCE present at this meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly, I know that the Arctic and the effects of climate change on this region are not far from all of our minds.

The Arctic is particularly vulnerable to climate change and the changes are already evident. The sea ice is retreating at an alarming rate, and this is adversely affecting ice-dependent marine mammals and the Arctic's rich biodiversity. At the same time, more open water means that the temperature of the water increases, thereby contributing to the acceleration of global warming.

Canada recognises its responsibility in balancing the potentially lucrative development opportunities that are opening up because of a warming Arctic with stewardship of the region's resources. To this end, it has, among other initiatives,

Supported International Polar Year research which focuses on climate change impacts, especially the human dimension;

Committed to the establishment of a world class Arctic research station to be on the cutting edge of environmental science and resource development; and,

Established northern research as a priority of university granting councils.

At the April 2009 Arctic Council meeting, Canada played a leading role in the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment and the Arctic Oil and Gas Assessment. These assessments help us to best manage the environmental, social, economic and human health impacts of current and future oil and gas activities in the Arctic.

Canada continues to work with other countries of the Arctic and internationally, such as at the G8 meeting in L'Aquila, Italy in July and in Copenhagen in December, in order to protect the Arctic's heritage for future generations and to achieve an effective international protocol on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Whether we are dealing with its affects in the Arctic or here in the Mediterranean region, climate change is an international problem that needs international solutions. I encourage all of us as parliamentarians to advance the global effort and promote an effective and fair agreement in Copenhagen.

In closing, I want to congratulate our hosts for appreciating the importance of this topic and for providing parliamentarians an opportunity to discuss the issue and share recent initiatives.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix 6

Address by Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P.

Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security

Fellow parliamentarians,

I welcome this opportunity to say a few words about this topic, specifically about the relationship between sustainable economic development and our responsibility to protect the environment.

As some of you may know, I am a parliamentarian from Alberta, Canada, a province enriched with invaluable natural resources such as oil and gas. Indeed, Canada is the world's sixth largest energy producer and fifth largest energy exporter. As such, its experiences in balancing supply challenges with the environmental impacts of energy production hold important lessons.

Indeed, the oil industry in Canada is a leader in energy innovation in part because of growing public concerns about climate change. In this respect, the widespread implications of the development of the oil sands in Alberta need to be taken into account.

For instance, the emphasis on research and development of cleaner fossil fuel technologies as well as their application is an important element not only of the global response to climate change, but also of the oil sands industry in Canada. Indeed, Canada is a world leader in Carbon Capture and Storage. Under its ecoEnergy Technology Initiative Program, the government recently accepted proposals from companies in Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan that will demonstrate how carbon capture and storage can be used to reduce emissions associated with oil sands related operations. The government also recently announced a 3 billion dollar financial commitment towards carbon capture technologies, which includes the creation of a new Clean Energy Fund.

Programs such as these build on those carried out by the provincial governments. For instance, the Alberta government contributes revenues it gathers from oil sands producers to a technology fund that in part is devoted to the development of carbon capture.

If diversification is key to optimal utilization of natural resources for human security, I believe it is important to examine more closely the role that technology and oil sands development can play. Managed responsibly and the right way, oil sands development can be part of the long term solution to energy security concerns and to mitigating climate change. And Canada looks forward to helping to find a new global partnership to advance carbon capture and storage technologies.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix 7

Address by Mr. Todd Russell, M.P.

Optimal Utilization of Natural Resources for Human Security

Fellow parliamentarians,

I want to begin by congratulating our hosts for organizing a most interesting meeting, the first which I have attended of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. I look forward to following the work of the Parliamentary Assembly and making whatever contribution I can to help it fulfill its mandate.

Over these last two days, we have been debating a number of critical issues and challenges relating to energy security, climate change and how we use the earth's natural resources. Sometimes we agreed, and sometimes we did not. But always I heard a level of concern being expressed, which for me strikes a personal chord. I am a member of parliament from Canada's province of Newfoundland and Labrador. This northern maritime region embodies much of what is at stake at Copenhagen. But we are not just talking about the province's rich natural resources, current and potential. We are also talking about people. And I for one want to be sure that, in our discussions either here or at Copenhagen, we are not forgetting about the marginalized groups in our societies who also have a contribution to make. I'm referring to aboriginal and indigenous groups, the impoverished, the disabled. In some cases, it is their standard of living and way of life that are being affected, for good or for bad, by the effects of climate change and that will be affected by whatever action is agreed upon among our governments. As a member of an aboriginal community, I know that we are looking for progress at Copenhagen.

In closing, I am encouraged by the passion in our discussions. As the aboriginal community I belong to says, sometimes the mind is confused, but the heart speaks true. I believe this is what has been guiding our exchanges. I look forward to more such opportunities.