

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

**Meeting of the Commission on Economic, Social and
Environmental Affairs of the Assemblée parlementaire de la
Francophonie and Economic Parliamentary Symposium**

Budapest, Hungary

From April 2 to 4, 2025

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) that attended the meeting of the APF Commission on Economic, Social and Environmental Affairs (CESEA) and the Economic Parliamentary Symposium held in Budapest, Hungary, from April 2 to 4, 2025, has the honour to present its report.

Led by the **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie**, Senator, the delegation also consisted of the **Honourable Suze Youance**, Senator. The delegation members were accompanied by Dominique Montpetit, Advisor to the Canadian Branch of the APF.

Approximately 15 parliamentarians from 13 branches attended the meetings. Representatives from a number of organizations related to the Francophonie were also in attendance.

ECONOMIC PARLIAMENTARY SYMPOSIUM

In conjunction with the CESEA meeting, the Hungarian Branch of the APF hosted an economic parliamentary symposium on April 2, 2025. The **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie** and the **Honourable Suze Youance** attended the symposium on behalf of the Canadian

Branch of the APF. The purpose of the event was to introduce parliamentarians to Hungarian businesses with expertise in certain areas of importance to the economies of francophone countries.

The Economic Parliamentary Symposium began with an opening ceremony, during which Katalin Csöbör (Member of Parliament, Hungary), Damien Cesselin (APF Secretary General) and Viktor Rehorsz (Director of Support Programmes, Hungarian Export Promotion Agency) made opening remarks.

The theme of the first workshop was “Innovative water management and water treatment: good business practices for water management.” Representatives of the following businesses gave presentations:

- [Aquaprofit](#);
- [Hungarian Water Partnership](#);
- [Pureco Kft.](#); and
- [Water & Soil](#).

During the discussion following the presentations, the **Honourable Suze Youance** asked the representatives of the four businesses about the process for partnering with foreign countries. The representatives answered that the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Hungary’s network of embassies support them in building international partnerships. The **Honourable Suze Youance** also asked the Pureco Kft. representative about where the company obtained the water resources for its foreign projects, particularly in places with limited access to water. The Pureco Kft. representative explained that the company

had water resources that it could purify and make available to communities where projects are carried out.

The theme of the second workshop was “Sustainable agriculture and food security: good business practices for sustainable agriculture and food security.” Representatives of the following businesses gave presentations:

- [Bábolna TETRA Kft.](#);
- [Agrofeed Kft.](#);
- [Vitafort Zrt.](#); and
- [Master Good Kft.](#).

During the discussion following the presentations, the **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie** asked the Bábolna TETRA Kft. representative whether the company’s competitors also used the genetic selection method he had described. The representative answered that his company’s genetic stock work on chickens was essentially the same as that done by other companies. The **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie** also asked the Vitafort Zrt. representative about the nutritional quality of camels’ milk. The representative answered that camels’ milk was high in fat and could become an important product for Africa.

The theme of the third workshop was “Electronic personal data records and security documents: good business practices for the recording of electronic personal data.” Representatives of the following businesses gave presentations:

- [ANY Security Printing Company PLC](#);
- [Nemzeti Útdíjfizetési Szolgáltató Zrt.](#);
- [4iG PLC](#); and
- [ACPM IT Consulting Zrt.](#).

During the discussion following the presentations, the **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie** pointed out how important it was to protect the personal data contained in documents, particularly in the type of secure documents created by ANY Security Printing Company PLC (passports, etc.).

COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

The delegation of the Canadian Branch of the APF attended the meeting of the APF CESEA on April 3 and 4, 2025.

The committee’s proceedings were chaired by Mame Diarra Beye (Member of Parliament, Senegal). The Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, László Kövér, gave the opening remarks, highlighting the Francophonie’s importance to Hungary.

The meeting of the CESEA began with a round table, with participants discussing the economic, social and environmental news in their respective branches. The **Honourable Suze Youance** represented the Canadian Branch of the APF during the round table. She discussed the trade dispute between Canada and United States, in particular, the tariffs imposed on both sides of the border. She also noted the significant impact of the global outbreak of the highly pathogenic avian influenza on Canada's poultry industry. Lastly, she informed CESEA participants that a federal general election had been called in Canada.

The **Honourable Suze Youance** also took the floor to discuss the devastating social and political situation in Haiti, especially in Port-au-Prince. In particular, she asked the APF to ensure that APF members take part in the eventual electoral observation missions organized for the upcoming election in Haiti. In response, the Secretary General of the APF, Damien Cesselin, stated that the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) automatically asks the APF to take part in electoral observation missions provided that the host state or government makes a request.

Following the round table, CESEA members received presentations from the following two experts:

- Geoffroy Roux de Bézieux, President of the [Alliance des Patronats Francophones](#) [francophone employers alliance]. The Alliance des Patronats Francophones is the “first business network across the francophone world [TRANSLATION],” bringing together 40 professional organizations in 36 countries that represent the formal private sector in French-speaking countries. The alliance works to “strengthen ties between francophone businesses and economies in practical, operational ways [TRANSLATION].” Mr. Roux de Bézieux noted the key role parliamentarians play in that effort.
- Estelle Gillot Valet, Delegate General of the [Conférence Permanente des Chambres Consulaires et Organisations Intermédiaires Africaines et Francophones](#) [standing conference on African and French-speaking consular chambers and intermediary organizations] (CPCCAF). Established in Senegal in 1973, the CPCCAF works to “support the development of Africa's private sector through cooperation across its consular chamber network and to promote economic trade between those countries [TRANSLATION].” It brings together 82 consular chambers and intermediary organizations from 24 French-speaking countries, including 20 in Africa. The **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie** sought the CPCCAF's cooperation to inform the Canadian Branch of the APF's report, led by the Honourable Amina Gerba (Senator, Canada).

During the meeting, the **Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie** presented the second draft of the report on the promotion of francophone women's entrepreneurship for their empowerment, on behalf of the Honourable Amina Gerba (Senator, Canada), one of the CESEA rapporteurs. The first draft of the report was approved at the previous CESEA meeting, held in Montréal, Quebec, in July 2024.

Senator Mégie noted that the second draft of the report was strengthened through the addition of data and examples from APF branches. With respect to the data provided, some branches shared information on self-employed or independent workers, and others shared information on women-owned business rates. Some branches stated that they did not have gender-based data on entrepreneurship in their territory. **Senator Mégie** also informed parliamentarians that the issues facing women entrepreneurs most frequently reported by the APF branches that answered the questionnaire had to do with access to financing, work-life balance and gender stereotypes.

Since the first draft, the report had also been strengthened through the addition of examples of parliamentary measures and government programs for women entrepreneurs. The initiatives are generally aimed at improving women's skills and knowledge, increasing access to financing, facilitating market access and removing gender-based legal constraints.

Senator Mégie concluded her remarks by noting that Senator Gerba wanted to supplement the draft report by including more details and information on the challenges facing women entrepreneurs in French-speaking Africa and on the programs to support them. Accordingly, the Canadian Branch will send out its questionnaire again to give branches that did not respond an opportunity to do so.

During the meeting, the CESEA members were also briefed on the progress of three reports:

- The draft report on climate-resilient agriculture, presented by Carole Mallette (Member of the National Assembly, Quebec). After the presentation, the **Honourable Marie Françoise Mégie** was delighted to note that the draft report already contained information on Canadian agricultural programming. She pointed out that the Canadian Branch would remain available to the Quebec Branch to supplement the report.
- The draft report on circular economy, presented by Chantal Ahyi (Member of Parliament, Benin).
- The follow-up report on international trade negotiations through the World Trade Organization, presented by Carole Mallette (Member of the National Assembly, Quebec). In response to the United States President's announcement that he would impose tariffs as of April 2, 2025, parliamentarians at the CESEA meeting sought to point out that the situation created an opportunity for francophone countries to diversify their trading partners and form new partnerships. The **Honourable Suze Youance** took the floor to reiterate the importance of building solidarity among francophone peoples.

In addition, the CESEA participants heard from Axel Darut, the consultant responsible for developing the APF's body of legislative work on the elimination of plastic pollution. The APF Bureau approved the project in January 2025. The purpose of the project is to build a legal framework within the francophone world to support the reduction of plastic

pollution. This work will result in a tool kit for parliaments seeking to pass legislation on eliminating plastic waste.

The CESEA members concluded the meeting by discussing potential topics for future meetings. Meeting participants discussed the possibility of establishing a parliamentary platform to promote francophone entrepreneurship and of developing a body of legislative work on land issues with the help of the Association du notariat francophone [association of francophone notaries].

CONCLUSION

Through its participation in the CESEA meeting and the Economic Parliamentary Symposium in Budapest, Hungary, from April 2 to 4, 2025, the Canadian Branch was able to meet its objectives:

- present the draft report on women's entrepreneurship for their empowerment;
- contribute to the discussion among the CESEA members on the draft report;
- defend and promote the interests of the Canadian Branch of the APF with respect to human development, sustainable development and economic development;
- influence the CESEA's work, particularly the selection of future topics and the development of the body of legislative work;
- maintain international ties between the Canadian Branch and the other branches in attendance; and
- promote the values of the Francophonie.

Travel Expenses

Travel expenses associated with this activity can be found in the delegation's financial report. This report is available in the [Financial Disclosure](#) section of the Parliamentary Diplomacy website.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie-France Lalonde, MP
Chair, Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie