

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

40th Session of the APF America Regional Assembly

Québec, Quebec, Canada

From September 9 to 11, 2025

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF), which participated in the meeting of the 40th Session of the APF Americas Regional Assembly (ARA) held in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada from 9 to 11 September 2025, has the honour of presenting its report.

Led by **Marie-France Lalonde**, Member of Parliament and Chair of the Canadian Section of the APF, the delegation also included:

- **Martin Champoux**, M.P. and Vice-Chair of the Canadian Branch of the APF;
- **Joël Godin**, M.P. and Deputy Chair of the Canadian Branch of the APF;
- The Honourable **Victor Boudreau**, Senator;
- The Honourable **René Cormier**, Senator;
- The Honourable **Danièle Henkel**, Senator;
- The Honourable **Manuel Oudar**, Senator; and
- The Honourable **Suze Youance**, Senator.

The delegation was accompanied by Jean-François Lafleur, Deputy Administrative Secretary of the Canadian Branch of the APF, and Madalina Chesoi, Advisor of the Canadian Branch of the APF.

A parliamentarian from the Belgian Branch, Anne Lambelin, participated in the meeting as an observer in her capacity as Regional Delegate for Europe. She was accompanied by Fatmir Leci, Administrative Secretary for the Europe Region.

DINNER RECEPTION AND ONHWA' LUMINA ILLUMINATED PATHWAY VISIT

On the evening of 9 September 2025, delegates from the Canadian Branch as well as delegates from the other branches present were welcomed by Nathalie Roy, Member of the National Assembly, Chair of the Quebec Branch of the APF and President of the National Assembly of Quebec, at the Huron-Wendat Museum. The purpose of this visit was to expose delegates to the past and present realities of Wendat Nation land, which is located near Quebec City.

Delegates were able to visit the Ekionkiestha' National Longhouse and ask questions to the guides. Afterwards, they were able to discover Indigenous-inspired cuisine at the Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations. Finally, they learned about the history of the Huron-Wendat people by following the Onhwa' Lumnia illuminated pathway.

MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF BRANCH CHAIRS

On 10 September 2025, the Americas Region Conference of Branch Chairs (CPS) was chaired by **Marie-France Lalonde**, M.P. and Chair of the Canadian Branch. **Joël Godin**, M.P., also participated in the CPS as Deputy Chair of the Canadian Branch. In addition to Canada, eight other branches of the APF were present: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

This meeting was an opportunity to follow up on the work begun at previous CPS meetings, to review the work done during the last statutory meetings of the APF and to adopt the activity report from the Regional Delegate for the Americas.

The CPS then held a period of discussion on parliamentary news from the branches in the Americas. **Mr. Godin** shared the recent developments in the Parliament of Canada since the last CPS meeting. Since the virtual meeting in March 2025, the 45th Federal Election was held on 28 April 2025. Following the election, the Liberal Party of Canada, led by the Right Honourable Mark Carney, formed a minority government. The first sitting day of the 45th Parliament of Canada was on 26 May 2025. The Speaker of the House of Commons was elected on that day. The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia, a member of Parliament since 2024, was elected to this position. The next day, His Majesty King Charles III came to give the Speech from the Throne in the Canadian Senate. This was his 20th visit to Canada but his first as sovereign. Parliamentary business resumed quickly after that date until the summer adjournment on 20 June 2025. Despite the short period since the general election, Parliament passed four bills. **Mr. Godin** also said that the Government of Canada held six weeks of consultations during the summer, in 26 cities, in anticipation of the tabling of Budget 2025 that fall. Finally, he noted that since January, Canada has held the G7 Presidency for the seventh time. As a result, Canada hosted the most recent G7 Leaders' Summit in Kananaskis, Alberta, from 15 to 17 June 2025. The Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr. Scarpaleggia, hosted the 23rd Meeting of the Speakers of the Lower Houses of the G7 in the National Capital Region from 4 to 6 September 2025.

Under the chairmanship of **Ms. Lalonde**, parliamentarians discussed future activities in the Americas Region, such as Costa Rica's potential membership in the APF, closer ties with the Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques and the next host branches within the Americas Region. The Manitoba Branch of the APF will host the ARA in August 2026. The Canadian Branch of the APF is working to host the Bureau de l'APF in January 2027. In addition, delegates discussed the funds for the Americas Region and the APF's financial situation. Finally, they approved the revision of the statutes of the Americas Region, which had not been updated since 1993.

40th AMERICAS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Americas Regional Assembly was held on 10 and 11 September 2025. As Regional Delegate for the Americas, the Honourable Francine Landry, MLA and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick opened the meeting with welcoming remarks. On behalf of the Chair of the Quebec Branch of the APF and President of the National Assembly of Quebec, Chantal Soucy, Member of the National Assembly and Vice-President of the National Assembly of Quebec, also welcomed participants and

introduced the theme of the ARA: “Foreign interference and the mechanisms to guard against it.”

A. Capacity-building workshop

Ms. Soucy moderated the workshop on “Foreign interference in electoral processes and democratic institutions.” Participants were able to interact with Caroline J. Simard, Commissioner of Canada Elections, and René Ouellette, Director General at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. **Mr. Champoux, Senator Cormier and Senator Henkel** sought to better understand how to strengthen Canadian capabilities in the face of this threat. The speakers responded that it is important to work with our allies to counter foreign interference, while strengthening and modernizing the tools needed at the federal level to detect, prevent and counter foreign interference. Better digital education is also generally needed to counter disinformation and misinformation.

B. Presentation of work-family-life balance infrastructure

Participants had the opportunity to discuss work-family-life balance with members of the Quebec Branch of the APF and the measures put in place by the National Assembly of Quebec. For example, amendments to the *Code of ethics and conduct of the Members of the National Assembly* were adopted in 2022 to allow parliamentarians to take time off for parental leave, particularly during pregnancy, the birth or adoption of a child or when there is a need to act as a caregiver. In addition, since 2023, a drop-in centre and an unsupervised playroom have been made available to parliamentarians, political staff and administrative staff of the National Assembly.

C. Working sessions

On 11 September 2025, MNA Marilyne Picard moderated the first working session of the ARA. Participants explored the multiple facets of foreign interference in scientific research and the diasporas, with Michel Audet, visiting researcher at the Centre d'études et de recherches internationales de l'Université de Montréal, and David Morin, full professor at the Université de Sherbrooke. **Senator Oudar** asked what needs to be prioritized in terms of education to ensure that young people understand the issues of foreign interference and equip themselves to preserve the security of our society and ensure better social cohesion. According to the speakers, there are many possible solutions, but it must be remembered that many of them are political in nature. These include ensuring greater transparency with the public regarding these activities, providing more information and training at all levels of public education, strengthening public trust in institutions, and fostering social cohesion by addressing polarization and promoting respect for others. Societies that are the most difficult to penetrate through foreign interference are those that are tightly knit. They also mentioned that the big social media companies must assume greater responsibility for hate content, for example.

The second session of the ARA was moderated by Geneviève Hébert, MNA. Participants explored the influence of new technologies and digital disinformation with Luc Laliberté, professor of history and columnist, and Jean-François Godbout, professor of political science at the Université de Montréal, and an associate at Mila, the Quebec Artificial

Intelligence Institute. **Mr. Champoux** asked how to regulate artificial intelligence to counter foreign interference, while **Mr. Godin** sought to understand the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence. Speakers responded with examples of European Union (EU) regulations on artificial intelligence and encouraged international collaboration and science diplomacy, as mentioned in the first session. Researchers need access to data for their scientific research. They warned of a potential technological lag as a result of the federal government's approaches to how AI technology is developing.

D. Closing of the proceedings of the Americas Regional Assembly

Following the completion of the work, Ms. Landry presented her activity report, which detailed the highlights of the activities of the Americas Region for the period of April to August 2025.

Ms. Lambelin, Regional Delegate for Europe, reported on the work of the 36th Regional Assembly of Europe in Pristina in November 2024 on the dangers of hybrid warfare.¹ She also presented the hybrid warfare situation in Belgium, referring to the report of the Belgian Senate on this issue. Ms. Lambelin reported that her region's next meeting will be in November 2025 and will focus on the trade wars.

The parliamentarians also invited Jerry Tardieu, a former Haitian parliamentarian from 2016 to 2020. Mr. Tardieu discussed the current situation in Haiti, both the political crisis and the humanitarian crisis affecting more than 1.5 million Haitians. He asked that Canada and the APF continue their solidarity and speak for Haiti in international forums.

Finally, the branches confirmed that the next ARA meetings will be held in Manitoba in 2026, New Brunswick in 2027 and British Columbia in 2028. At the invitation of the Manitoba Branch of the APF, the parliamentarians adopted a motion to thank the Quebec Branch of the APF for its warm hospitality.

PANEL: THE FRANCOPHONIE OF THE AMERICAS

Parliamentarians and 34 young participants in the "*Penser et agir pour la démocratie*" training course, organized in partnership with the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques and the APF, with support from the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, attended a panel titled "*The Francophonie of the Americas: challenges and opportunities.*" The panel brought together four high-level speakers:

- Claire Deronzier, Senior Civil Servant and High-Ranking Official of the Government of Quebec, expert diplomat in residence at the École supérieure d'études internationales de l'Université Laval;
- Yves Frenette, full professor at the Université de Saint-Boniface;

¹ Hybrid warfare is [defined](#) as a military strategy that combines conventional and unconventional operations, including cyberattacks, disinformation, and asymmetric actions, to disorient an adversary without entering into open conflict. For more information, please refer to the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, [Report of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie – 36th Session of the Regional Assembly of Europe](#).

- Sylvain Lavoie, President and CEO of the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques; and
- Liane Roy, President of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

Clément Duhaime, former Quebec Delegate General in Paris and Administrator of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, moderated the discussions, which provided an overview of the state of La Francophonie in the Americas and helped identify avenues for enhanced outreach.

CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE INSIGNIA OF THE ORDRE DE LA PLÉIADE

The Canadian Branch was also able to attend the Ordre de la Pléiade insignia presentation ceremony on the evening of 11 September 2025, during which Ms. Roy decorated three individuals:

- Marie Eykel, actress;
- Stanley Péan, author and facilitator; and
- Zahra Kamil Ali, OIF representative for the Americas.

EXCHANGE ACTIVITY WITH “PENSER ET AGIR POUR LA DÉMOCRATIE ” TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

On 12 September 2025, **Senator Youance** spoke to the young participants in the “*Penser et agir pour la démocratie*” training course, which she met the day before during the panel on the Francophonie of the Americas.

The discussions focused on major contemporary issues related to democratic life, namely the health of our institutions, the interrelationships between politics and the media, cynicism and electoral disengagement, disinformation and types of influence.

CONCLUSION

Through its participation in the meeting of the 40th Session of the APF Americas Regional Assembly (ARA) held in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada from 9 to 11 September 2025, the Canadian Branch was able to fulfil its objectives:

- Defend and promote the interests of the Canadian Branch on the theme with other branches in the Americas Region.
- Foster the growth and development of the Parliamentary Francophonie in the Americas.
- Discuss topics of common interest with parliamentarians from the Americas Region, including those for whom this was their only annual participation in APF activities; and

- Maintain national and international connections between the Canadian Branch and the other branches attending, and promote the Francophonie's values.

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, M.P.

Chair, Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie