

Canada – France
Interparliamentary Association



Association Interparlementaire
Canada – France

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the
Visit to Paris of the Executive**

Canada-France Interparliamentary Association

**Paris, France
4–8 December 2017**

Report

INTRODUCTION

From 4 to 8 December 2017, Denis Paradis, Chair of the Canadian branch of the Canada–France Interparliamentary Association (CFIA), travelled to Paris along with three members of the CFIA executive – Ramez Ayoub, François Choquette and Jacques Gourde – to meet the newly constituted steering committee of the French branch of the CFIA following the 2017 legislative elections. The Canadian delegates took the opportunity to meet Canada’s new ambassador to France, Isabelle Hudon, and to discuss three issues that are of interest to both Canada and France: youth exchanges between Canada and France, the *Canada–European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement* (CETA) and action on climate change.

The delegation was accompanied by Raphaëlle Deraspe, CFIA Advisor.

This report summarizes the steering committees’ decisions and discussions regarding future CFIA business, as well as the activities held during the trip.

FUTURE BUSINESS OF THE CANADA–FRANCE INTERPARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

On 6 December 2017, Denis Paradis and the three members of Parliament on the CFIA executive met with the steering committee of the French branch of the CFIA: Annie Chapelier, Chair of the French branch of the CFIA; Claudine Lepage, Chair of the France–Canada Friendship Group in the Senate; and Jean-Luc Lagleize, Chair of the France–Canada Friendship Group in the National Assembly, to discuss future business of the CFIA, specifically the location, dates and themes of the 46th annual meeting.

The Canadian and French parliamentarians decided that the 46th annual meeting would take place during the third or fourth week of April 2018 in Ottawa to give French parliamentarians an opportunity to observe the work of the Canadian Parliament. The two key themes selected are gender equality and LGBTQ2+ integration, as well as CETA and its environmental impact. Two spokespeople per country will present their country’s perspectives on each of these themes.

In addition, delegates agreed to conduct site visits in Montréal and Québec City to study these key themes, as well as the following two subjects:

- prevention of radicalization; and
- artificial intelligence.

WORK MEETINGS

During the Paris mission, the delegates met with Canada’s ambassador to France and her staff, the French ambassador for climate negotiations, the diplomatic advisor to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the president of the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce, the deputy managing director of Campus France, the leader of a CETA

parliamentary task force, and the European and international relations and co-operation team of France's Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research.

A. Meeting with Canada's Ambassador to France

The Canadian delegation began their Paris visit on 5 December 2017 with a meeting with Canada's new ambassador to France, Isabelle Hudon, and her staff (Guillaume Cliche and Vincent Klassen). In addition to meeting the new ambassador, the purpose of the meeting was also to hear about the issues facing the new French government and to learn about the embassy's priorities.

The delegates discussed a range of topics with the ambassador and her staff, particularly the new French government and the challenges posed by the small number of young Canadians who take part in exchanges in France. Much of the discussion focused on CETA and the concerns raised by some parties about its environmental impact, the cattle industry, health regulations and the dispute settlement mechanism. The delegates and the ambassador agreed that it would be useful to publicize CETA success stories, such as businesses that have benefited from the agreement, both to help Canadians better understand the Agreement's positive impact, and to help companies seize the new opportunities it offers. The ambassador gave the example of French sporting goods retailer Decathlon, which will soon open locations in Quebec as CETA came into force.

B. Meeting with the French Ambassador for Climate Negotiations

On 5 December 2017, the Canadian delegation and Annie Chapelier met with Brigitte Collet, the French ambassador for climate negotiations, and senior officials of France's Ministry for an Ecological and Solidary Transition. Ms. Collet explained that she leads a team whose members represent various French ministries, including the Ministry for the Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Her team was created for the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and has continued its work since then.

Ms. Collet stated that the Paris Agreement represents a tremendous success given its ambitious objectives, because for the first time, nearly all countries have agreed to take steps to limit temperature increases to less than 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to continue efforts to limit increases to 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement came into force in October 2016, less than a year after it was adopted. Although the Agreement is not universal, as 26 countries did not sign it, including some countries seen as major greenhouse gas emitters (such as Russia, Iran and Turkey), 70 countries did sign on. Ms. Collet also explained that, because the United States ratified the Agreement, they are bound by it until 2020. The U.S. therefore takes part in negotiations and is subject to certain binding provisions. The U.S. pledged to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 26% to 28% relative to 2005 levels by 2025.

In answer to a delegate's question, Ms. Collet said that Canada plays a "major policy role," in particular because of the Powering Past Coal Alliance launched at COP23 by Canada and the United Kingdom and the September 2017 Montréal Summit organized jointly with the European Union and China. However, she added that Canada has a

responsibility to cut its emissions, since it is the world's ninth-largest greenhouse gas emitter. She said she was encouraged by the fact that the French and Canadian environment ministers, Nicolas Hulot and Catherine McKenna, have an ongoing dialogue.

Ms. Collet also stated that it is crucial for COP24 to produce positive results and that more needs to be done now so that 2018 provides impetus. For instance, in September 2018, California will host a climate summit for non-state stakeholders, and on 12 December 2017, Paris hosted the One Planet Summit on climate change, bringing together politicians, business leaders and financial institutions to step up the fight against climate change and mark the adoption of the Paris Agreement.

The Canadian delegates asked about what France has done to combat climate change. Ms. Collet said that France released its climate plan on 6 July 2017. The plan seeks to mobilize all ministries for the duration of the current president's five-year term in order to ramp up both the energy and climate transition and the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The plan sets out a range of initiatives covering 23 priority areas, including a halt to oil and gas exploration by 2040 so that oil, gas and coal are no longer produced anywhere in France.

C. Meeting with the Diplomatic Advisor to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

On 5 December 2017, the delegates met with Maxence Brichoux, diplomatic advisor to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Lucas Pisani from the North America (Canada–Quebec) Directorate of France's Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Paradis said that he had met with Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, Secretary of State to the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, in Ottawa in fall 2017. He then introduced the members of the delegation and explained the Canadian parliamentarians' interest in CETA.

Mr. Brichoux said that because of CETA, the Canada–France relationship is more important than ever. He added that France needs Canada, since the Agreement has sparked a heated debate about cultural issues. He urged the Canadian parliamentarians to initiate a dialogue with their French counterparts to explain the Agreement. He also suggested that Canada's prime minister make a CETA-related visit to France, as this would have "a big impact," even though the Minister of International Trade will also be making an official visit to France. He went on to say that there are some genuine political sensitivities surrounding the Agreement and that these sensitivities give rise to irrational concerns in some minds. He believes that a great deal of explanation is needed to reassure various stakeholders and the public.

Mr. Brichoux said that there is some amount of misunderstanding about the Agreement opening agricultural quotas to partners who have different requirements than those in France. There is also some concern about the allocation of tariff quotas for European wines and spirits and cheese. Regarding cheese and the fact that tariff quotas have been allocated to a number of small producers, many are wondering who will benefit from the added value of European cheese: Canadian distributors or European producers? As for wines and spirits, they are marketed through a regional distribution

system, and there are fears that some products will be discriminated against under this system, which is often subject to a local distribution monopoly. That said, Mr. Brichoux believes that CETA must apply to all products, including cheese and wine-sector products.

He added that the three problem areas are agriculture and the health and climate aspects of the Agreement. The dispute settlement system is another source of concern for some and will be a major ratification issue. Mr. Brichoux then spoke about the “climate veto” – whose purpose would be to ensure that the measures taken to implement France’s climate commitments cannot in any way, including through arbitration tribunals, be attacked by an investor. He explained that France is in talks on this issue with the European Commission and hopes that the Commission will call on Canada to sign a declaration.

Mr. Ayoub said that there are a lot of unknowns and a good deal of uncertainty around CETA and that, to date, there has been little promotion of the Agreement’s positive impacts. Mr. Paradis recommended publicizing concrete examples of businesses that have benefited from the Agreement. He added that CETA and its environmental impact should be one of the study themes for the next annual meeting of the CFIA, which includes many French parliamentarians. Mr. Brichoux said that he fully supports the development of a campaign to raise awareness about businesses that have benefited from CETA. In closing, he reiterated both the need for Canadian parliamentarians to explain the Agreement and the need to convey positive messages.

As for when France will ratify the Agreement, Mr. Brichoux did not give a specific date. He did, however, say that the Agreement could possibly be ratified in late 2018.

D. Meeting with the President of the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce

On 5 December 2017, the delegates met with Daniel Jouanneau, President of the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce, former French ambassador to Canada and former consul general of France to Quebec. Mr. Jouanneau began by speaking about his former postings in Canada and then discussed CETA. He said that the parliamentary role will be more important than ever and that any contact with French parliamentarians is an opportunity to convey messages. The French government recently established a panel of experts and a group of National Assembly members to implement the Agreement.

He stated that the future of France–Canada relations seems promising and mentioned the common ground shared by Canada’s prime minister and the French president. He said that they have better chemistry than their predecessors and that France’s political landscape will remain the same for the next five years. He added that both Canada and its prime minister have a very good image internationally.

The French opposition has expressed its views on a variety of issues, including CETA, which is a major source of concern, despite promotion and awareness-raising efforts. He sees France as a stable and predictable economic and trade partner, something investors are well aware of.

Mr. Jouanneau then spoke about climate and climate change, explaining that this is a critical issue.

On the issue of agricultural trade, he stated that livestock producers fear for their livestock and that there has been a wave of suicides among French producers. He added that with respect to CETA, negative messages have been circulating about Canadian producers and growth hormones used in meat production. Canadian producers will need to comply with European standards and raise hormone-free herds. He explained that in Europe, cattle are traceable from gestation to the slaughterhouse. Another notable change he mentioned is that under CETA, public procurement by the provinces, including Quebec, is now open to European competition; previously only federal procurement was open to European competition.

He then spoke about the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce, which has 500 members throughout France and Canada. He compared this to the membership of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Canada (which has 1,500 members) and the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal (7,000 members).

The meeting concluded with Josiane Simon, Minister-Advisor for Trade and Economic Affairs and Senior Trade Commissioner with the Canadian Embassy in France, who explained that the embassy is working to compile a directory of companies that are benefiting from CETA in order to promote the Agreement's positive impacts.

E. Meeting with the Deputy Managing Director of Campus France

On 6 December 2017, the delegates visited the offices of Campus France to meet with Deputy Managing Director Thierry Valentin and staff members, including Nouredine Manamanni, Director, External and Institutional Relations; Sylvie Brulatout-Conway, Assistant Director, External and Institutional Relations; Yoann Le Bonhomme, Manager, Americas Department; Lise Lefèbvre, Manager, Americas Promotion; and Olivier Chiche-Portiche, Director, Geographic Coordination.

Mr. Valentin began by saying that their relationship with Canada was an ambivalent one, since it is challenging to persuade Canadian students to choose France for all or part of their higher learning, whereas many French students study in Canada. He said that he saw the Canadian parliamentarians' visit to France as an interesting opportunity to better understand the situation and help find ways to encourage Canadians to study in France. He added that since the most recent U.S. elections, many Mexican students have chosen to study in France.

Mr. Le Bonhomme then described Campus France, an agency created in 2012 following the merger of three entities pursuant to the *Loi n° 2010-873 du 27 juillet 2010 relative à l'action extérieure de l'État (Act No. 2010-873 of 27 July 2010 pertaining to activities of the state abroad)*. Campus France became the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Minister Responsible for Higher Learning. Its statutory mission is as follows:

- to enhance and promote the French system of higher learning and vocational training abroad, including the regular tracking of foreign nationals having

completed all or part of their program in the French educational system or the French-language instruction network overseas;

- to host foreign students and researchers, including by providing visa and housing assistance, support for universities, schools and other higher learning and research institutions, and territorial authorities;
- to administer bursaries, internships and other international student and researcher mobility programs; and
- to promote and develop the delivery of higher learning through new information and communication technologies.¹

France is the fourth most popular destination for international students, after the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia; in 2014, it hosted over 235,000 international students. He added that North American students are not as mobile as those in other regions. In 2015–2016, just over 2,000 Canadian students studied in France. According to 2014 data, France was the fourth choice of Canadian students after the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Mr. Le Bonhomme explained that Campus France administers several hundred contracts with various partners, including universities, schools, ministries and businesses both in France and abroad. As well, Campus France has 255 offices and branches located in 121 countries to encourage foreign students to study in France. These offices are located in educational institutions, embassies and Alliances Françaises. For example, there are three offices in Canada (one in the French Embassy in Ottawa and two more in the French consulates in Montréal and Toronto) and two branches (in the French consulates in Québec City and Moncton).

Mr. Ayoub asked the Campus France representatives about the fact that these offices and branches are located in the French embassy and consulates. Mr. Chiche-Portiche answered that Canada was an exception, and that the Alliances Françaises in Canada did not have the space to accommodate them. Mr. Le Bonhomme added that this was only the case in Canada and the United States; in other countries, these offices are located in Alliances Françaises and educational institutions.

Mr. Paradis explained that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages, which he chairs, had travelled to Western Canada as part of a committee study. During that trip, the committee found that there is a shortage of French teachers and that many children interested in learning French are chosen by lottery. He then addressed the small number of Canadian students in France, recognizing that a major factor was the lack of internships abroad, which are not compulsory for Canadian academic programs. Mr. Chiche-Portiche noted that some of the barriers preventing Canadian students from studying abroad are economic. He believes that those students who do not face economic barriers tend to choose to study in rather exotic locales, such as Brazil or Asia. He went on to say that Canada's favourable youth job market is also a

¹ Légifrance, [Loi n° 2010-873 du 27 juillet 2010 relative à l'action extérieure de l'Etat \(1\)](#). [Available in French only]

factor. Since many young people find work quickly, they tend to stay in Canada rather than study abroad. One representative also pointed out that Canadian students tend to study abroad during the summer and that France is not one of their top choices.

F. Meeting with the Leader of a Parliamentary Task Force on the *Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement*

On 7 December 2017, the delegates met with Jacques Maire, leader of a CETA parliamentary task force and member of the National Assembly; Marie Lebec, MNA and task force member; and Gaël Garreau, parliamentary assistant to Guillaume Kasbarian, MNA.

Mr. Maire said that Canada can count on France to ratify CETA, adding that the parliamentary task force will pursue the issue until CETA is ratified. A few months ago, the French government began the process to ratify the Agreement, and ratification has been debated in the French Parliament. He expressed the hope that the majority of parliamentarians will vote in favour the Agreement and that the issue of ratification will not cause a political crisis. He then noted that the Agreement is more important economically to Canada than to France.

Mr. Maire explained that the negotiation system within the Member States of the European Union has still not stabilized. He noted, however, that the new French government hopes to help strengthen Europe and develop trade. He quoted Pierre Marc Johnson, Quebec's chief CETA negotiator, who recently said that the purpose of free trade is to create prosperity, not to resolve inequalities, as instruments already exist to do that.

The Canadian delegates learned that an expert panel will be established to study CETA. This panel is being brought together in response to the report submitted by the independent CETA environmental, climate and health evaluation committee on 7 September 2017. This report (called the *Schubert Report* after the chair of the evaluation committee) made nine recommendations to the French government:

1. ensure ongoing transparency with civil society and a balance among regulatory co-operation bodies;
2. establish a monitoring committee;
3. complete the ratification instrument;
4. introduce labelling that provides information on production practices for animal products;
5. enhance controls and certification procedures for animal and plant products;
6. insist on the necessary reciprocity in future negotiations;
7. introduce a climate "veto" on investment protection;
8. offset the direct negative climate impacts [of CETA] by potentially introducing additional mechanisms in [CETA] or by means of a specific bilateral agreement between the EU and Canada; and

9. introduce incentives to limit shale oil extraction.²

Mr. Maire explained that the French government released its CETA implementation action plan on 25 October 2017. This plan is based on the following three principles and makes several recommendations:

- ensure exemplary implementation of the Agreement by enforcing certain controls to protect sensitive sectors;
- use complementary measures to the Agreement to promote bilateral (Canada–France) and multilateral (French initiatives at the European and multilateral levels) co-operation on climate issues; and
- give greater consideration to health and sustainable development issues (like those set out in the Paris Agreement) in trade agreements.

Ms. Lebec joined the discussion, explaining that the French public is more concerned about health and climate issues related to CETA than economic issues. She then said that Canada and France need to show leadership in this area and that she was surprised that Canada's image in France is as an aggressive country that does not always follow the rules.

Mr. Ayoub focused on the importance of demystifying and clarifying those aspects of the Agreement that the public is worried or concerned about. He pointed out that the Agreement is already in force and that any agreement is a living instrument that evolves over time. He added that it is important to have robust processes in place for this Agreement.

Mr. Maire said that France is in a period of economic recovery and that the country no longer produces the same goods and services. He added that labour shortages are affecting certain industries, making it difficult to export products affected by the shortages. French companies looking to export must register with the REX (Registered Exporter) system to obtain registered exporter status. Mr. Ayoub said that Canada needs to encourage its businesses to increase their exports to the European market.

Mr. Ayoub then asked about the timing of CETA ratification. Mr. Maire replied that the Agreement has not yet made it to the National Assembly and that it is still in the initial stage, namely the impact study. He stated that this type of study has been conducted at the European level, but not for France, and that such an impact study should be completed by June 2018. He would like parliamentarians to have access to a quantified impact study on the Agreement presenting key economic data. However, he noted that the French president would like to see the Agreement ratified quickly and properly, meaning in 2018.

G. Meeting with the European and International Relations and Co-operation Team of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research

² [Rapport au Premier ministre : L'impact de l'Accord Économique et Commercial Global entre l'Union européenne et le Canada \(AECG/CETA\) sur l'environnement, le climat et la santé](#), 7 July 2017, pp. 8–9. [Available in French only]

On 7 December 2017, the delegates met with four officials of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research: Nadine Van Der Tol, Head of Student Mobility and Higher Learning and Research for North America, European and International Relations and Co-operation; Vincent Honorat, Head of Community Affairs, European and International Relations and Co-operation; Clarisse Boudard, Department Head, European Union and Multilateral Organizations, European and International Relations and Co-operation, Secretariat General; and Jean-Luc Clément, Research Advisor.

Mr. Paradis began by thanking ministry officials for meeting with them and explained that they would like to gain a better understanding of student mobility between Canada and France. Ms. Van Der Tol said that only 1,400 Canadian students are enrolled in French universities for the current academic year. She explained that Canada's Mitacs program provides scholarships for academic research, some of which are reserved for studies abroad.

Regarding the European Union's ERASMUS+ Program for education, training, youth and sport for 2014–2020, which the Ministry administers in France, Mr. Honorat said that it has two integrated components: one for students and the other for educational institutions. He added that participating countries have already begun looking into funding and content for the program for after 2020.

Ms. Boudard explained that this program has an international dimension through which Canadian students can obtain funding to study in a European country. Mr. Honorat added that the program has funded close to 30 mobility projects for students going to study in Canada and for Canadian students studying in Europe. He said that a more popular program among Canadian students is the Erasmus joint master program, which offers integrated academic programs developed by a consortium of educational institutions. These programs are available in all disciplines and provide scholarships of up to two years to students from around the world with outstanding academic achievement; most of the program participants are non-Europeans. For example, there is a neuroscience consortium involving the University of Bordeaux (France), Laval University (Canada), the University of Coimbra (Portugal), the University of Berlin (Germany), the University of Göttingen (Germany) and VU University Amsterdam (the Netherlands).

The delegates were pleased to learn that another European program Canada benefits from is the Jean Monnet Programme, which promotes education and research in European studies around the world. This year the program had a €3 million budget for a total of 16 countries. About a dozen Canadian projects were selected, and funding was provided to the following Canadian universities: Carleton University, the University of Victoria, McGill University, Dalhousie University and York University.

With respect to other educational exchanges between the two countries, the delegates learned that there are close to 300 inter-university agreements and that a growing number of students are enrolling in *cotutelle* programs (jointly supervised degree programs), an arrangement where a student has two thesis supervisors (one at a Canadian university and the other at a French university) and in some cases receives

two degrees, one from each participating university. Many Quebec students choose the *cotutelle* option.

Mr. Paradis explained that in Canada, education is a provincial, not federal, responsibility, which limits what members of Parliament are able to do to promote student mobility between France and Canada. However, he added that the Association will look at options to allow Canada to get more involved in funding programs such as ERASMUS+ in order to promote student mobility and to reduce economic barriers for young Canadians interested in studying abroad, particularly in France.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

While in Paris, the delegates attended a reception hosted by the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce and luncheons at the official residence of Canada’s ambassador to France and the National Assembly, along with members of the French branch of the CFIA.

A. Reception Hosted by the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce

On 5 December 2017 in the evening, the Canadian delegates were invited to a reception hosted by the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce at Paris City Hall. Since the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, was out of the country on business, her deputy made a few opening remarks. He welcomed everyone and then explained that the mission of City Hall is to extend hospitality and to work with various international stakeholders. He then spoke about the Canada–France relationship and what both countries have in common, such as the French language. He mentioned the strong spirit of co-operation between the City of Paris, Canada and the City of Montréal, which hosted the 1976 Olympic Games. Paris will be hosting the Olympics in a couple of years, in 2024, and he believes that this will be an opportunity to work together and to share knowledge and information with Canada.

Mr. Jouanneau then said a few words. He began by thanking the various partners and reception sponsors. He stated that the France–Canada Chamber of Commerce publishes a directory of all French companies that do business in Canada and vice versa. He said that the Chamber of Commerce will be monitoring the business component of the Paris Olympic Games very closely. He added that the Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to supporting the relationship between France and Canada and referred to Canada’s contributions during the two world wars. He stated that the countries share a deep, vibrant relationship, particularly because of Quebec, which he said is a major advantage. He was pleased to welcome Christine St-Pierre, Quebec’s Minister of International Relations and the Francophonie; Line Beauchamp, Quebec’s Delegate General to Paris; officials from the City of Montréal; and Isabelle Hudon, Canada’s ambassador to France, to the reception. He remarked that Ms. Hudon has had an impressive career and that she is the first woman to serve as Canada’s ambassador to France. He added that her term is beginning at a very auspicious time in the Canada–France relationship, in part because of the convergence of both countries’ economic policies. In closing, he stated that the Chamber of Commerce would promote CETA and work with businesses to help them benefit from the Agreement. He added

that he had had a very productive work discussion earlier that day with the four Canadian parliamentarians visiting Paris.

Ms. Hudon made a few remarks. She said that the energy between the mayors of Montréal and Paris was going to create a lot of work for officials and businesses in both cities. She acknowledged the presence of the Canadian and Quebec parliamentarians and various public figures, including Canadian and French Olympians. On the subject of CETA, she said that the embassy would work to promote the Agreement's benefits to businesses. She closed by saying that 2017 had been a particularly noteworthy year, as it was the year she was appointed ambassador as well as the country's 150th anniversary.

Ms. Hudon was followed by other speakers, including Minister Christine St-Pierre and the CEO of Canada's *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité* (economic development and employability network), Jean-Guy Bigeau. The guests then continued discussions regarding bilateral relations.

B. Meeting with Canada's Ambassador to France

On 6 December 2017, the French and Canadian branches of the CFIA were invited to the official residence of Canada's ambassador to France, Isabelle Hudon. Ms. Hudon thanked the guests for accepting her invitation and acknowledged the presence of Jacques Fournier, Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Quebec; Carole Bureau-Bonnard, Vice-President of the National Assembly; and the three chairs of the French branch of the CFIA, as well as Mr. Paradis. She stated that she was beginning her second week in Paris and that she was privileged to serve as Canada's ambassador. She referred to the Canada–France friendship as a natural one and spoke of the long-shared history between the two countries. She added that both countries benefit from this friendship, particularly with respect to economic issues such as CETA. She believes it is essential for the two countries to work together to ensure that the Agreement is a success, for example by promoting CETA's success stories. She said that the embassy team was ready to make every effort to help move the Agreement forward, adding that she was most impressed with her outstanding team. She concluded with the hope that discussions will be productive and that the Agreement will be ratified.

Mr. Paradis then said a few words, taking the opportunity to congratulate Ms. Hudon on her new role as ambassador. He also congratulated the three French chairs and welcomed the new members to the Association. He said he was very pleased with the mission, since the Association's next annual meeting is already scheduled for late April 2018 in Canada with very interesting themes. He wrapped up by noting that he will be working with the chairs of the French branch on growing the number of friendship meetings between the two countries.

Lastly, Ms. Chapelier congratulated the ambassador on her appointment and said that she was delighted to serve as chair of the French branch of the CFIA and to work with the members of the Canadian branch, including Mr. Paradis. She commented that, as a Franco-Canadian, this role was an embodiment of her two nationalities. She ended her remarks by explaining that the two themes selected for the 46th annual meeting will

promote two subjects that are important to her, including women's empowerment. She said that in this respect, Ms. Hudon is truly an inspiration.

C. Meeting with the Chair of the French Branch of the Association

On 7 December 2017, Annie Chapelier invited the members of both branches of the Association and embassy staff to the National Assembly. Ms. Chapelier welcomed everyone, particularly the Canadian delegates, adding that she was delighted with their visit. She added that the two countries have much in common, including a long history and a beautiful language. The CFIA is the French Parliament's oldest bilateral association and the only one representing both of France's chambers: the National Assembly and the Senate. She then remarked that she was born in Canada (in Windsor, Ontario), and raised in France. She stated that there are many issues that are of interest to both countries, such as the environment, gender equality, integration of the LGBTQ2+ communities, public safety and student exchanges. France and Canada share the same values, including human rights and democracy. She said that she feels strongly about developing and strengthening parliamentary diplomacy between the two countries in order to deepen their mutual understanding, and that she is honoured to serve as chair of the French branch of the CFIA. She ended her remarks by saying that Canada is a country for which France holds special affection.

Mr. Paradis then thanked Ms. Chapelier. He said that he was very pleased with the mission and the work they accomplished, particularly thanks to the productive meetings he attended. He said that he was already looking forward to hosting the Association's 46th annual meeting on Canadian soil, in the National Capital Region. He then extended greetings from the vice-chair of the Canadian branch, Claudette Tardif, who was unfortunately unable to join the delegation. He said that he was delighted to meet the new French parliamentarians joining the Association and thanked them for their warm welcome, ending his remarks with "Vive la France!"

CONCLUSION

The Canadian delegation's trip to Paris was a resounding success. In addition to meeting with the steering committee and several new members of the Association and planning future business, they also attended several meetings and held discussions on current topics of interest to both countries, such as CETA. At the end of the trip, a [press release](#) was issued by the Association and a [joint interview](#) was given by the chairs of the French and Canadian branches, Ms. Chapelier and Mr. Paradis. Both the press release and the interview were released on social media and posted on the website of the Canadian Embassy in France.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. Denis Paradis, M.P.

Chair, Canada-France Interparliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-France Interparliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Visit to Paris of the Executive
DESTINATION	Paris, France
DATES	4-8 December 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Denis Paradis, M.P. – Head of Delegation
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ramez Ayoub, M.P. François Choquette, M.P. Jacques Gourde, M.P.
STAFF	Raphaëlle Deraspe, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 24,455.77
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 12,112.08
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 4,547.65
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 344.42
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0
TOTAL	41,459.92