



**Report
of the
Canadian parliamentary delegation
of the
"Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie" (APF)
to the
co-operation and development committee of the APF
Delémont, Jura
march 14 to 16, 2006**

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch that participated in the meeting of the Co-operation and Development Committee of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF), held in Delémont, Jura, Switzerland, on March 15 and 16, 2006, has the honour to present its report.

Report

Composed of the Honourable Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, Senator, the delegation was accompanied by Serge Pelletier, Deputy Executive Secretary to the Branch.

The following branches were represented at the meeting: Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central Africa, Congo, the French community of Wallonia-Brussels, France, Gabon, Macedonia, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Ontario, Québec, Romania, Switzerland, Syria and Val D'Aoste.

Also represented was the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie.

On Monday, March 14, before the proceedings began, His Excellency Libère Bararunyeretse, Ambassador and representative of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, addressed the delegates in Lafayette. He recalled the ties between the OIF and the APF and the objectives of the ten-year strategic framework adopted at the Sommet de la Francophonie in Ouagadougou, in 2004, objectives requiring close cooperation between the executive of the Francophonie and the parliamentary organization.

After adopting the agenda and the amended minutes of the Committee meeting held in Brussels on July 6, 2005, the new Chair of the Committee, Mahama Sawadogo (Burkina Faso) addressed the members. He hoped that the climate of curiosity and intellectual rigour that has characterized the Committee's proceedings in recent years would continue and called upon the members to continue thinking about the huge issue of underdevelopment and looking for ways to reduce its devastating effects on individuals and nations. He advocated a more equitable sharing of the world's wealth, not as a matter of charity but in the interest of justice. Mr. Sawadogo informed the members that there is now a link between the AFP Web site and the Médiaterre site, which pertains to sustainable development. He mentioned his attendance at an international seminar in Marrakech, in December 2005, which pertained to social responsibility for the environment and whose results could provide input to the thinking process of the Francophonie.

The Committee then considered a Draft Resolution on Privatization, which it reviewed at the Brussels meeting; numerous amendments were made to this resolution, which will be submitted to the Assembly in Rabat.

The first draft report reviewed by the Committee pertained to waste management in the Francophonie. The rapporteur, Marc Elsen (French Community of Wallonia-Brussels), summarized a very detailed background paper on the subject. After presenting an overview of the situation internationally and listing the various international conventions on waste management, the rapporteur summarized the answers to the questionnaires received by the fourteen branches of the APF, including the Canadian Branch. The rapporteur suggested that the Francophonie, as regards waste management and as reflected in the questionnaires completed, could be divided into three types: a) countries without a coherent policy; b) countries developing a policy; and c) countries with a well-established policy. Each type of country was then analyzed with respect to legislation, waste treatment, operators (public and private), promotion and funding. Finally, the rapporteur suggested that waste management is a concrete and promising area for

cooperation in the Francophonie that must be developed. A number of Committee members made suggestions to complete the document. Also discussed was developing a section of the report pertaining specifically to hazardous waste management. Senator Losier-Cool (Canada) wanted the report to emphasize educating the young. The rapporteur will present a report to the Assembly in Rabat that reflects the various comments and suggestions made, along with a draft resolution.

Senator Losier-Cool (Canada) presented a report on call centres as a development tool for the Francophonie. She noted that this was a background paper that would not be followed by a draft resolution. After describing the development of call centres as part of technological progress and the process of globalization/outsourcing, the Senator noted that there are currently many more call centres in the English-speaking world. She referred to the economic benefits of establishing call centres, both for the companies that export this activity to other countries and for the countries where the call centres are located. The call centres located in developing countries account for just one percent of call centres in the world. Among developing nations in the Francophone world, only Senegal, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritius currently have Francophone call centres. Growth opportunities appear to be limited, however, due to the lack of appropriate technological infrastructure. The Senator identified four decisive parameters for the establishment of call centres in Francophone host countries: 1) availability of affordable workers who speak French without an accent; 2) the degree of complexity of communications; 3) and extensive, powerful and secure telecommunications infrastructure; and 4) an attractive business climate. In many respects, a number of developing countries in the Francophone world do not meet these standards, except for Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal and Mauritius, which have good potential. Senator Losier-Cool concluded that in the short and medium term, only those Francophone countries with access to the market in France can hope to establish call centres. By way of recommendation, she suggested that: a) developed countries should resist the protectionism that hinders job creation in developing countries; b) companies wishing to establish call centres in these countries should be socially responsible towards workers; and c) developed countries should equip countries in Sub-Saharan Africa with fibre optic technology. There was great interest in the Senator's presentation and the Committee members made numerous comments and suggestions.

Jocelyne Caron, Deputy Chair of the Committee, and Mahama Sawadogo, Chair, as co-rapporteurs successively presented the draft report on the international trade negotiations under the auspices of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This draft report outlined the APF's efforts to formally become part of the WTO process further to the seminar on international trade organizations held by the Committee in Morocco in May 2004. The APF, on the recommendation of the Committee on Co-operation and Development, agreed to promote the provision of regular information/training to parliamentarians in the Francophonie on multilateral trade issues and to obtain observer status with the WTO. The draft report notes that the APF, despite its efforts, was not represented at the parliamentary conference on international trade held in Hong Kong in December 2005 due in part to a lack of funding. The draft report duly notes that, since the Nouméa session, progress has been made on various fronts: 1) talks have been held with the IPU to obtain accreditation for the next WTO parliamentary conferences; 2) the OIF undertook to help the APF hold training/information sessions for

parliamentarians; 3) the APF general secretariat agreed to locate internally the financial resources needed for representation at multilateral trade negotiations, even if it means increasing dues. Guy Fortier, advisor to the Committee, raised another difficulty. The WTO has shown a strong interest in providing information and training to Francophone parliamentarians but indicated that it would fund the participation of developing countries only and not that of developed countries, a policy that was criticized by the APF Secretary General. Overall, the Committee members were pleased with these developments and were in favour of the Committee being represented at the various bodies in question.

Senator Losier-Cool (Canada), rapporteur, presented a report on the Francophonie's contribution to the adoption of sustainable development strategies and the formulation of ecosystem and natural resource management policies. This is a follow-up report for the Committee as part of the Francophonie's ten-year strategic framework and its mission of developing cooperation on sustainable development and solidarity. At the APF session in Brussels in July 2005, Senator Losier-Cools presented a progress report on this topic. In the report presented in Delémont, the Senator stressed two coherent and complementary programs deriving from the ten-year strategic framework: a) adopting national strategies on sustainable development, encouraging closer regional ties and highlighting best practices; and b) developing national policies for the management of ecosystems, natural resources, water and energy by focusing on expertise, skills development and coordination. The Francophonie's energy and environment institute (IEPF) is in charge of these two programs, in partnership with various international and regional organizations, and with donor countries and various operators. The report lists the IEPF's objectives and its methods of implementing the two programs and also includes, in the appendix, concrete projects that are under way: energy information systems - Africa, city, energy (Bamako); symposia and science days as part of the project on mastering environmental management tools; the Médiaterre Web site (now linked with the APF site); and the development of national strategies for sustainable development in three developing countries. Ultimately, the IEPF would like to help Francophonie countries, especially developing ones, build their expertise in using tools to implement strategies, policies and national programs and sustainable development projects. The issues are to stress the importance of environmental policies in national decision-making processes, to develop the economic tools needed to promote these policies and to develop a network of specialists on environmental economics.

On behalf of France, member at the National Assembly Jacques Brunhes (France) presented a report on official development assistance. Referring to the oppressive conditions in developing countries, Brunhes noted that the international community recognized at the start of the millennium the need to increase official development assistance (ODA). He doubted however that the funding parties will live up to their commitments or that the assistance promised would be sufficient to be effective. Duly noting that ODA had increased since 2002 and that a number of countries have promised to increase their assistance levels over the next decade, the rapporteur suggested that the projected increases should be moderated: the donor countries might encounter budgetary problems, compromising the level of assistance promised, and the actual resources effectively transferred to the recipient countries will be a mere fraction

of the total ODA. The rapporteur predicted that the millennium objectives would not be met by 2015 and that only the poverty-related objective would be attained, while all the others, including health, will fall short of expectations. At the UN Summit in New York in 2005, the rapporteur noted, the 150 countries present were unable to give an interim report on the millennium objectives. Focussing his analysis on the regional level, Brunhes expected that most regions in the developing world would make progress economically, although conditions in Sub-Saharan African would not change substantially.

With regard to the recent changes in the structure of ODA, the rapporteur noted that there had been an increase in assistance to performing countries, that the distribution of assistance among moderately advanced countries and countries with little income was stable, and that assistance to Africa has stagnated due to the difficulty of providing assistance to countries in conflict. A growing share of assistance goes to social programs (health and education) and good governance, while the share going to production sectors has dropped.

To increase the effectiveness of ODA, Brunhes suggested that the international community should eliminate the conditions imposed on recipient countries, especially the rigid models of structural adjustment advocated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund which, among other things, have led to an increase in poverty and unemployment, the collapse of the education and health systems and greater vulnerability of the most disadvantaged. The growth of African countries subject to the structural adjustment has been decimated, their weight in the world economy has become marginalized and their public finances battered. The rapporteur also expressed concern that even European Union funding parties are now adhering to the philosophy of Bretton Woods institutions by imposing obligations on recipient countries relating to “good governance” and the liberalization of trade.

The rapporteur advocated eliminating conditional aid, defined as requiring recipient countries to purchase goods and services exclusively from suppliers in the funding countries. Conditional aid weakens competition among suppliers, does not guarantee that the best technologies are used and leads to additional costs. The effectiveness of aid could be improved by developing progress indicators and objectives, both quantitative and qualitative, as recommended in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness adopted in March 2005.

Real progress has been made through the rescheduling and forgiving of debt. The rapporteur noted however that the forgiving of \$55 billion, as decided at the G-8 Summit in Gleneagles, represented just 2% of outstanding Third World debt. For a number of countries, the weight of the debt cancels out any hope of overcoming underdevelopment in the medium term.

In conclusion, Brunhes was delighted that the “trade, not aid” approach to development appears now to have been replaced by fighting poverty and promoting the health and education sectors. But the continuation of practices such as structural adjustment, conditional aid, the liberalization of trade and the good governance requirement still hampers development. Developed countries have a duty to show solidarity by providing development assistance to less developed countries. This assistance should be

reformed, increased, and provided without conditions, and the debt issue should be settled once and for all.

The Committee members made many comments on the report and offered suggestions. A number of them noted that the rapporteur paid scant attention to the responsibility of countries receiving aid as regards transparency and accountability. Some suggested that the components of ODA are akin to “political” assistance that supports corrupt and disputed regimes and that the report to be submitted to the APF session in Rabat should mention this. Others stated that the citizens of developed countries should be able to see the concrete effects of the aid provided through better information. For his part, the Committee Chair suggested that aid is not a question of charity but rather a duty based on justice.

Félix Onkeya (Gabon) presented a report on the contribution of the Francophonie to innovative sources of development funding. The report on development assistance presented by the rapporteur was essentially similar to the one by member Brunhes. The proposal is to study the suitability and effectiveness of new kinds of development assistance that have been put forward in recent years. Moreover, the rapporteur suggested that these innovative sources would need favourable conditions in order to be successful. They must be new sources of funding and not substitutes. They must be based on the principles of stability and regularity, address the underlying causes of hunger and poverty, be in the form of donations and be subject to transparent management in both the developed and developing countries.

Onkeya suggested four types of innovative funding sources:

1. Immediate cash mechanisms such as the International Finance Facility recently proposed by Great Britain, and special withdrawal rights;
2. International taxation mechanisms, such as the tax on financial transactions proposed by France, the tax on the arms trade proposed by Brazil, international environmental taxes on carbon and air transportation, the tax on the brain drain, sea fishing, the Internet and luxury products;
3. International solidarity mechanisms such as foreign workers transferring funds to their country of origin and socially responsible funds;
4. Other measures such as an international lottery and charitable aid.

The rapporteur stated that the four types of measures all had pros and cons and that the practical solution would be a combination of these various funding types. He analyzed in greater detail France’s proposed solidarity contribution on plane tickets, which takes effect on July 1, 2006, with the support currently of twelve or so countries including Chile, Spain and the United Kingdom. The money collected will be used to fight the HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria pandemics.

In conclusion, Onkeya noted that the innovative sources of funding for development aid had been discussed very little in the parliaments of the Francophonie. The APF is a prime forum for gaining greater familiarity with these sources and participating in the implementation of the multilateral agreements required to adopt these new measures.

Senator Losier-Cool proposed some amendments to the text so that it more fully reflects the role of women in development. The text should also call for greater participation of women in the aid organizations utilizing the new funding sources. Finally, the resulting text or resolution should encourage parliaments to give their members training and information in order to better understand the issues involved in ODA. A number of members noted that there is no reference whatsoever in the text to the "Tobin Tax," which was the starting point for various ideas relating to international taxation. The rapporteur duly noted the comments and will incorporate them into the report to be submitted at the Rabat session.

Member Marc Elsen (French Community of Wallonia-Brussels) presented a paper about the Francophone youth parliament (PFJ), whose fourth session will be held in July 2007. It will be structured in the same way as the third session held in Brussels in 2005, when the young delegates were divided into four committees corresponding to the APF Committees. The experience in Brussels showed that the young delegates would have liked greater involvement of APF parliamentarians. Moreover, the APF Bureau suggested when it met in Nouméa that each APF permanent committee should designate among its members a PFJ correspondent, who would work with the committee chair to select the working topic and help with the proceedings of the PFJ committees. These correspondents could be designated at the APF committee meetings in Rabat in June-July 2006.

Senator Losier-Cool, as acting co-chair of the APF women parliamentarians network, informed the Committee that she had written to the chair of each permanent committee to invite them to designate a woman parliamentarian from the committee to attend the network's proceedings at the Rabat session.

With regard to the Rabat session, the committee chair received a letter from the APF general secretary inviting him to prepare a report on issues relating to migration policies. The Committee designated member Daoudi Lahcen (Morocco) as rapporteur on the subject. The Committee also designated member Niankan Dabou (Mali) as rapporteur on the problem of desertification.

The Committee Chair informed the members that the Delémont meeting is the last one that Jocelyne Caron (Québec), Committee Deputy Chair, will attend as member.

Before concluding its proceedings, the Committee unanimously adopted a motion expressing heartfelt thanks to the Jura Branch and its President, Mr. Jeanbourquin, member, to Mr. Montavon, executive secretary, and to parliamentary staff.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, Senator
Member of the Executive Committee of the
Canadian Branch,
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

Travel Cost

NAME OF ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch, Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)
ACTIVITY	Meeting of the Co-operation and Development Committee of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)
DESTINATION	Delémont, Jura
DATES	March 14 to 16, 2006
NAMES OF SENATORS	Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, Senator
NAMES OF MEMBERS	
NAMES OF STAFF	Mr. Serge Pelletier
TRANSPORTATION (sometimes separated between ground and air)	AIR TRANSPORTATION \$9,260.00 GROUND TRANSPORTATION \$40.39
ACCOMMODATION	\$770.48
HOSPITALITY	\$0
PER DIEMS	\$423.88
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$238.50
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$4.95
TOTAL	\$10,738.20