



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
of the “Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie” (APF)**

**to the**

**XI Meeting of the Heads of State and Government of  
Countries using French as a Common Language  
Bucharest, Romania  
September 25-29, 2006**

The Parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF), which attended the XI Meeting of Heads of State and Government of Countries Using French as a Common Language, which was held in Bucharest, Romania on September 28 and 29, 2006

## Report

The delegation was composed of Mr. Bernard Patry, MP, President of the APF.

At the first plenary session of the Summit, on Thursday, September 28, 2006, Mr. Bernard Patry, President of the APF, submitted the Opinion of the Assembly to the Heads of State and Government. This Opinion dealt with the theme of the Summit: "*Information technologies in Education*".

The speech given by Mr. Bernard Patry at the Summit and the Foreword to the Opinion of *the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* are appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard Patry, M.P.

President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*

Canadian Branch of the  
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

## Appendix I

**Speech given by Dr. Bernard PATRY, Member of the Canadian  
Parliament,  
President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*.  
Summit of La Francophonie - Bucharest (September 2006)  
(Translation)**

Mr. President of the Republic of Romania,  
Ladies and Gentlemen, Heads of State and Government,  
Secretary General,  
Ministers,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would first like to express my sincere thanks to the Romanian authorities for their warm hospitality, and congratulate them on the excellence of their preparations for this Eleventh Summit. My first words will accordingly be to note the extent to which we congratulate ourselves on having recently welcomed the Romanian Section of our Assembly to our Bureau.

Once again, our Assembly finds its expression in the context of this Summit. The courageous decision taken in Hanoi to endow the OIF with a parliamentary assembly has thus been reaffirmed.

It is my duty to voice the pleasure with which the APF has worked alongside Mr. Abdou Diouf, who has proven a partner attentive to the concerns of the parliamentary world.

The past two years have seen an increased recognition of the role of parliamentarians in the institutional framework of La Francophonie.

Thus, for the first time, our Assembly spoke during the general debate at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UNESCO General Conference. Our Parliamentary Secretary General, Senator Jacques Legendre of France, recalled the efforts of La Francophonie as a whole, and of its consultative assembly in particular, in favour of the adoption of the Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expression.

I cannot let this opportunity pass to recall the words of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, who at a meeting of the Heads of State and Government of La Francophonie held concurrently with the United Nations world summit in New York, paid tribute to the progress towards democracy in the Francophone world and

congratulated the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* for its role in this progress.

As you know, the APF suspends from its sections those delegations that represent the parliaments of countries whose constitutions have been overturned: in this regard, it is to some extent a pioneer in La Francophonie. In this context, when a parliament is dissolved or stripped of its powers, the section is temporarily suspended until a constitutional structure is reinstated that is in accordance with the fundamental principles on which our Assembly is based. Consequently, at our last meeting in Rabat, our Assembly took note of the satisfactory holding of the recent presidential and legislative elections and decided unanimously to lift the suspension of its Haitian section, as it had done in 2005 for its Central Africa section, and to dispatch a high level mission to the country.

The delegation that I had to honour to lead to Port-au-Prince three weeks ago was made up of Jacques Legendre, Parliamentary Secretary General of the APF, Michel Bissonnet, Speaker of the National Assembly of Quebec, Antoine Kolawole Idji, Speaker of the National Assembly of Bénin, and Bruno Bourg Broc, the Delegated President of the French Section.

The delegation held talks with President René Garcia Préval, Joseph Lambert, the Speaker of the Senate, Pierre Éric Jean-Jacques, Speaker of the Lower House, the Prime Minister, Jacques-Édouard Alexis, several other ministers, many representatives of civil society and the political parties, as well as the funding organizations working in the country.

The Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie today solemnly reaffirms its commitment to strengthening the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, and to playing the role of catalyst in bilateral cooperation between francophone countries for their mutual benefit, a role delegated to them by the Secretary General of La Francophonie, Abdou Diouf.

In this context, it proposes to redirect its cooperation program, where applicable to the benefit of the Parliament of Haiti and to assume the role of a link between it and all the parliaments of La Francophonie in light of the requests put to us by Haitian parliamentarians.

The first parliamentary mission to travel to Port-au-Prince since the recent parliamentary elections reaffirmed the willingness of all parliaments and parliamentarians in La Francophonie to accompany the leaders, civil society and the people of Haïti along the new democratic path that they have freely chosen.

I would draw your attention to our strong political determination to place the emphasis, in our choice of cooperative initiatives, against the background of a relative reduction in our resources, on parliaments that are emerging from crisis. We will accordingly next month organize a parliamentary seminar in the Central African Republic. Beginning early in 2007, we will undertake concrete steps in cooperation for the benefit of the Parliament of Haïti. I must not forget, however, my duty to table before you the Opinion

of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* on the topic of this summit, “Information Technologies in Education.”

The *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* is contributing to reducing the digital divide and working to share knowledge throughout the francophone world through its Noria cooperation program, funded by the OIF, which makes it possible to provide parliaments in the Southern hemisphere with faster circulation of parliamentary information through the use of information and communication technologies.

This is the reason why the APF decided two years ago to mobilize all its members in support of this issue. I would especially like to note the magnificent work of our two rapporteurs, Senator Joël Bourdin of France and Jacques Chagnon, member of the National Assembly of Quebec.

The parliamentarians wish to call upon the member States and governments of La Francophonie to redouble their efforts to achieve the goals of the “Education for All” program and to tackle the literacy divide. Despite the commitments made to “Education for All”, with less than a decade to go before the deadline of 2015, it is estimated that 28 countries will achieve none of the objectives set at Dakar. Sixteen of those 28 countries are members of La Francophonie.

► The APF notes and deplores a literacy divide compounded by a gender divide. It believes that we must maintain our active mobilization to fight against the literacy divide and achieve access to elementary education, gender equality and literacy.

The *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* will accordingly formulate a number of requests to heads of state and government. I will note here only the most important ones.

The principle of universality in elementary education should be implemented by guaranteeing access free of charge to elementary school for all children, with no disparity between the sexes.

The quality of education should be encouraged by investing in teacher training, specifically by drawing on ICT for distance learning.

The share of funding allocated to elementary education should be increased to 5% of official development assistance and priority should be accorded to funding projects in the countries of the South, where at least 5% of gross domestic product is invested in education.

However, we also need a responsible Francophonie, which ensures that its commitments in the area of universal education, and specifically elementary education, are reflected in its four-year programming cycle.

► The digital divide is equally important.

Your parliamentary assembly is asking you to fulfil the commitments you made in the context of the Global Summit on the Information Society, specifically with regard to

cultural and linguistic diversity; democracy, good governance and the search for peace; the strengthening of capacities and media.

Last and most importantly, in order to inject dynamism and coordinate the efforts of La Francophonie to cooperate in creating an equitable, diversified information society, the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* is asking the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* to create a new operator responsible for the implementation of the information society, in the same way as the other specialized agencies (such as TV5, AUF, AIMF) with a mandate to both develop national and regional strategies, democratize access to ITCs, enhance capabilities and promote La Francophonie on the Internet, in particular through the creation of digital content.

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

This Opinion constitutes a statutory obligation, but it is above all an opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which information and communication technologies can contribute to improving education, which is itself an indispensable precondition for balanced, sustainable development.

The APF is also aware that any sustainable development strategy must adopt an approach that is also focussed on all those involved; in particular, it attaches great importance to programs aimed at women and young people.

This is the significance of an appeal against violence against women and children that was adopted at the last Session in Rabat on the initiative of its Women Parliamentarians Network.

As for our young people, we must naturally prepare them for the roles that they will necessarily have tomorrow in the urban society.

It is in this spirit that we wanted a delegation of the Francophone Youth Parliament to be allowed to submit the results of their work to the heads of State and government present here. You accepted it and we thank you, on their behalf and our own.

Thank you.

## Appendix II

# Opinion of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* submitted on the Occasion of the XI Summit of la Francophonie on Information Technologies in Education

Bucharest (Romania) – September 28 and 29, 2006

FOREWORD (Translation)

*It is an honour for me, and I am aware of the responsibility that goes with it, to submit the Opinion of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie on "Information Technologies in Education" to the XI Summit of La Francophonie.*

The Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie is contributing to overcoming the digital divide and to working to share knowledge throughout the francophone world, thanks to its Noria program of cooperation, funded by the OIF, which provides parliaments in the Southern Hemisphere with a faster flow of parliamentary information by means of information and communication technologies.

*The parliamentarians of La Francophonie, who represent nations at different levels of development, know the extent to which information technologies have a determining impact on our daily lives, and especially in education.*

*This is the reason why the APF decided, two years ago, to mobilize on this issue all of its internal structures, in the front ranks of which are its committees, the women parliamentarians network, and the Francophone Youth Parliament. Each of the members of these bodies has contributed. Specifically, I would like to express my gratitude here to our Committee on Education, Communications and Cultural Affairs, the mandate of which includes examining issues related to education, communication and information technologies, and to pay tribute to the splendid work of our two rapporteurs, Senator Joël Bourdin of France and Jacques Chagnon, Member of the National Assembly of Quebec.*

*Defining the role of information technologies in education presupposed a process of reflection on the literacy, digital and cognitive divides across our world.*

*The holding of this XI Summit of La Francophonie for the first time in Central and Eastern Europe is an important symbol: this privilege devolved upon Romania, which is the first of the thirteen francophone countries in the region to be admitted to La Francophonie.*

*While this Opinion is a statutory obligation, it is above all an opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which information and communication technologies can contribute to improving education, which is itself an indispensable condition for sustainable, balanced*

*development. This is why the parliamentarians of the Francophone world felt it their duty to support and encourage this movement, for the benefit of current and future generations.*

Bernard PATRY

*Member of the Parliament of Canada*

*President of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*

The full text of the Opinion can be consulted on the website of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* using the link:

<http://www.apf.francophonie.org>



## Travel Cost

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Branch of the « <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (La présidence)</i> »	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	XIth Meeting of the heads of state and government of countries using French as a common language	
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Bucharest (Romania)	
<b>DATES</b>	September 25 to 29, 2006	
<b>SENATORS</b>		
<b>MEMBERS</b>	Mr. Bernard Patry, MP	
<b>STAFF</b>		
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>AIR</b>	<b>\$ 5,794.87</b>
	<b>GROUND</b>	<b>\$ 50.00</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 1,731.59</b>	
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 101.92</b>	
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 84.58</b>	
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	
<b>MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 7,762.96</b>	