

Canada - Africa
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada - Afrique

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its Bilateral Visits to Ethiopia and Senegal
Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Dakar, Senegal
October 9 to 14, 2011**

Report

The Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association was represented by the Honourable Mauril Bélanger, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair of the Association; Mr. David Christopherson, M.P., Vice-Chair of the Association; Mrs. Lois Brown, M.P., Vice-Chair of the Association; the Honourable Terry Stratton, Director of the Association; the Honourable Jim Munson, Senator, Member of the Association; and Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Member of the Association. The delegation was assisted by Mr. Maxime Ricard, Executive Secretary of the Association, and Mr. Michael Dewing, Advisor for the Association.

OBJECTIVES

The Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association undertook bilateral visits to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Dakar, Senegal from October 9 to 14, 2011. The visits had the following objectives:

- to strengthen bilateral relations and parliamentary cooperation;
- to engage parliamentarians on democracy, governance, economic issues, and the role of the media;
- to consult parliamentarians and election officials on the progress of free and fair elections;
- to strengthen relations with regional organizations, most particularly the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS); and
- to acquaint the delegates with the situation in each country and with Canada's activity in the region, through contacts with parliamentarians, government officials, civil society groups, and businesses.

In addition, the visit to Addis Ababa, which is home to the AU, provided the opportunity to meet with officials of the AU Commission (the AU secretariat) to discuss the workings of the organization and learn about Canada's contribution to it. Specifically, the delegates intended to:

- learn about the AU's peace and security efforts;
- learn about the AU's efforts to resolve conflicts, particularly in Somalia, Sudan and North Africa;
- learn about the status of the AU's regional integration and economic development objectives; and
- learn about the AU's efforts in the areas of women, gender and development.

To meet these objectives, the delegation met with Ethiopian and Senegalese parliamentarians and government officials, AU officials, representatives of political parties, Canadian officials, business representatives, journalists, and members of non-governmental organizations. It also made site visits to development projects.

Key Issues

Ethiopia is the second-most populous country in Africa and one of the most powerful countries in the Horn of Africa region. Since the restoration of civilian rule in 1991, it has faced challenges reforming the economy and institutionalizing democracy. In addition, there are longstanding ethnic and religious tensions. While it is making progress in reducing poverty, much remains to be done. Ethiopia is actively involved in the region, particularly in Somalia and Sudan.

Senegal has been a beacon of stability in West Africa. There is, however, a certain amount of uncertainty in the lead-up to the February 2012 elections. While the capital Dakar is quite developed, the rest of the country remains poor. The energy supply is limited and there are high levels of unemployment among its large population of young people. Senegal actively participates in peacekeeping in Africa and elsewhere.

Ethiopia and Senegal are involved in the main pan-African organizations and their respective regional organizations. Both are members of the AU. In addition, Ethiopia is a member of both the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). COMESA is a 19-member regional economic community based in Zambia. IGAD is a seven-member regional economic community based in Djibouti; with the exception of Somalia, all its members are also members of COMESA. For its part, Senegal is a member of ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). ECOWAS is a 15-country regional economic community whose mission is to promote economic integration. WAEMU, which is made up of the eight francophone members of ECOWAS, promotes regional monetary and economic convergence.

Canada has good relations with the two countries, both of which are CIDA countries of focus. Ethiopia is the third-largest recipient of Canadian official development assistance. As well, during the summer of 2011 Canadians donated over \$70 million to provide assistance to the drought-stricken areas of East Africa, including Ethiopia. This amount was matched by the Government of Canada. As of 21 October 2011, total assistance for this crisis from the Government came to \$142.75 million.¹ Senegal and Canada cooperate through the Francophonie and on peace and security. Their forces work together in the United Nations Mission in Darfur.

Trade between Ethiopia and Canada is modest but growing. In 2010, Canadian merchandise exports were nearly \$176 million, while imports from Ethiopia were approximately \$15 million. Canadian trade with Senegal is also modest. In 2010, Canada exported about \$26 million and imported only \$1 million.

During its visit, the delegation engaged parliamentarians and other participants in the political process on questions such as the conduct of free and fair elections, the role of parliamentarians, freedom of the press, and human rights. In addition, it explored

¹ Canadian International Development Agency, News Release, "Minister Oda updates on East Africa humanitarian crisis," 21 October 2011,

matters relating to commerce and opportunities for enhanced Canadian engagement with these two countries.

Another of the delegation's goals was to add to the Association's understanding of the role of African regional organizations in promoting integration. As was the case on earlier trips, the delegation was interested in seeing how Ethiopia and Senegal cooperate with their regional partners through organizations such as COMESA, IGAD, ECOWAS and WAEMU.

Much of the focus of the visit to Addis Ababa was on the AU and its role in continental integration. Launched in 2002, the AU is active in the area of peace and security, but has not had as much success in the area of economic integration. The organization has limited capacity and relies on external sources for much of its funding. For instance, its new headquarters building, which is nearing completion in Addis Ababa, was financed by China.

The delegation was interested in learning about developments in the debate over the desirability of bringing about the union of all African countries immediately versus a step-by-step approach based on regional organizations. The delegation was also interested in learning about cooperation between the United Nations (UN) and the AU in areas such as Darfur.

ETHIOPIA

A. Background

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a land-locked country in eastern Africa. With a population of 91 million people, it is Africa's second-most populous country. Africa's oldest independent country, Ethiopia can trace its history back some 2,000 years. With the exception of the Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941, it was never colonized. Emperor Haile Selassie ruled from 1930 until 1974, when he was deposed by the armed forces. The military set up a totalitarian socialist government known as the Derg (or Committee). Initially popular, it conducted campaign of "red terror" in which thousands were killed, leading to the rise of a number of rebel groups.

In 1991, the Derg was overthrown by one of these groups, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), under the leadership of Meles Zenawi. A new Constitution was instituted, and when the first multiparty elections were held in 1995, the EPRDF won a landslide victory and Meles became prime minister. The EPRDF went on to win elections in 2000, 2005, and 2010.

In the summer of 2011, Ethiopia was affected by the severe drought in the Horn of Africa. Some 4.5 million Ethiopians required humanitarian assistance and a number of camps were set up in Ethiopia to accommodate refugees from Somalia.

Although Ethiopia is democratic, opposition parties are weak. In 2005, they accused the government of electoral fraud, and a number of people were killed during anti-government protests. In 2009, a bill was passed prohibiting foreign aid agencies from working in the areas of human rights. During the 2010 elections, opposition parties accused the government of harassment and only two opposition members were elected to the 547-seat House of People's Representatives. An election observer mission from the European Union – in which Canada participated – concluded that the election fell

short of international standards and that measures were “necessary to increase the participation and capacity of opposition parties.”²

Ethiopia is an ethnically diverse country, with over 77 ethnic groups, and has had to deal with uprisings in some areas. Eritrea became independent in 1993 following a referendum and rebel groups have been active in the Ogaden region.

The economy of Ethiopia is based on agriculture. It accounts for about 45% of gross domestic product (GDP) and 85% of total employment. The sector is vulnerable as a result of frequent droughts, poor cultivation practices, and inadequate infrastructure.³ Though Ethiopia is one of the world’s poorest countries – about 40% of the population lives on less than \$1.25 per day⁴ – it has one of the fastest growing economies in Africa.

Ethiopia is making impressive progress in addressing poverty. It is on track to achieving six of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The government is working to increase food security and improve basic services in areas such as health and education. Still, the macroeconomic situation is precarious and the country is experiencing double-digit inflation. Ethiopia remains vulnerable to shocks, such as the recent drought.⁵ It also has one of the world’s highest birth rates with approximately 43 births per 1,000 people (compared with roughly 10 births per 1,000 people in Canada). Life expectancy at birth is about 56 years. Maternal mortality is high – at 470 deaths per 100,000 live births (compared with 12 deaths per 100,000 live births in Canada). Infant mortality has improved but still remains high – 77 of every 1,000 children die before the age of one (compared with 5 deaths per 1,000 in Canada).⁶

Ethiopia is an active player in African and world affairs. In its immediate neighbourhood, Ethiopia’s relations with Eritrea have been tense. A border war raged from 1998 to 2000, when the two sides signed the Algiers Peace Agreement. There is an uneasy peace along the border and both sides keep large numbers of troops stationed along it. Relations with Somalia have also been tense. Ethiopia views the instability in Somalia as a security threat and is wary of Somali claims over the Ogaden region. Ethiopian troops have made periodic incursions against Islamist militants in Somalia.

Ethiopia’s relations with Sudan are good. Sudan is the source of most of Ethiopia’s oil. As a result, Ethiopia closely monitors the situation in South Sudan. It has also participated in peacekeeping operations in the disputed Abyei region between Sudan and South Sudan, as well as in Darfur. Ethiopia has peaceful relations with Djibouti, which serves as Ethiopia’s main port. There has been tension between Ethiopia and

² European Union Election Observation Mission, “Final Report: House of People’s Representatives and State Council Elections,” May 2010, http://www.eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/final-report-eueom-ethiopia-08112010_en.pdf.

³ Central Intelligence Agency, “Ethiopia,” *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html>.

⁴ Canadian International Development Agency, “Ethiopia,” <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/ethiopia>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “Ethiopia,” *The World Factbook*, op. cit.

Egypt regarding the River Nile, which has its source in the Ethiopian highlands. On the River, Ethiopia plans to build the Grand Millennium Dam – a 5,000-megawatt hydroelectric power project.

Ethiopia has generally good relations with the West, which sees it as a bulwark against radical Islamic groups in the Horn of Africa region.

In recent years, Ethiopia has developed closer ties with China. China has made important economic investments in Ethiopia and is becoming an increasingly important trading partner.

Canada has generally good relations with Ethiopia. Ethiopia closed its embassy in Ottawa in 2010, but it has a consulate in Toronto. Ethiopia is a CIDA country of focus under the Aid Effectiveness Agenda and is the third-largest recipient of Canadian official development assistance. Programming focuses on food security, children and youth, and public institutions. Canada closely monitors the human rights and governance situation in Ethiopia. Trade between Ethiopia and Canada is modest, but growing and Canadian companies are involved in mining and oil and gas exploration.

B. The African Union

Addis Ababa is home to the AU, and most African countries and UN agencies have representatives there.

In 2000, the Libya's Colonel Muammar Gaddafi spearheaded a move to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) with the AU. Founded in 1963, the OAU worked to eradicate colonialism and to promote unity and solidarity among the newly liberated African states. Among other things, it opposed apartheid in South Africa. The AU, which was launched in 2002, is intended to be more economic in nature, similar to the European Union.⁷

The AU is made up of all the African countries, with the exception of Morocco. Its aims are to:

support unity, solidarity and peace among African states;

promote and defend African common positions on issues of shared interest;

encourage human rights, democratic principles and good governance;

advance development in member states by encouraging research and by working to eradicate preventable diseases; and

promote sustainable development and political and socio-economic integration, including co-ordinating and harmonizing policy between the continent's various regional economic communities.⁸

The AU's main organs are:

⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, *African Union (AU)*, 2010, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9003949>.

⁸ Europa World Online, *African Union (AU)*, http://www.europaworld.com/entry/int-org_au.

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government. It meets at least once a year to determine priorities and common policies.

The Executive Council. Composed of the ministers of foreign affairs of member states, it determines the issues to be submitted to the Assembly and co-ordinates the policies, activities and initiatives of the AU.

The Permanent Representatives Committee. Composed of permanent representatives to the AU, it prepares the work of the Executive Council.

The Commission. The permanent secretariat of the organization, it is composed of the chairperson, the deputy chairperson, and eight commissioners.

The Pan-African Parliament (PAP). Comprised of five deputies (including at least one woman) from each AU member state, the PAP currently has only advisory and consultative powers.⁹

Canada sees the AU as an important partner and its support has “focused on institutional development as well as the delivery of its peace and security mandate on the continent.”¹⁰ CIDA’s assistance to the AU “focuses on strengthening the capacity of a selected number of regional institutions to stimulate economic growth and increase food security.”¹¹ Canada’s Ambassador to Ethiopia is also the permanent representative to the AU.

C. Meetings

1. Visit to an Agricultural Project

The delegation travelled to a farm at Debre Zeit Ada’a on the outskirts of Addis Ababa to learn about a CIDA-supported project known as Improving Productivity and Market Success of Ethiopian Farmers (IPMS). The five-year project is being implemented by the International Livestock Research Institute on behalf of the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The project aims to improve agricultural production through market-oriented development, such as growing the kind of chick peas for which there is greater demand. This involves the adoption of appropriate technologies, the sharing of knowledge by farmers, strengthening the farmers’ capacity to innovate, and promoting proven alternatives.

At the project site, the delegation visited a Farmer Training Centre, where it learned about improved varieties of crops and saw the resources available to farmers for learning and sharing information. Thanks to better farming practices, the farmers in the area have increased their milk production and their revenue. They are using this revenue to send their children to school.

⁹ Europa World Online, *African Union – Organization*, <http://www.europaworld.com/entry/wb02062.io.txt>.104.

¹⁰ Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, *Canada and the African Union*, July 2008, http://www.international.gc.ca/ssa-ass/region/african_union_africaine.aspx?lang=eng.

¹¹ Canadian International Development Agency, *Pan-Africa Regional Program*, <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/NAD-37101441-KVQ>.

The delegation then visited a local dairy farmer. It learned that he has increased his income from nearly nothing to roughly \$400 per month. Traditionally, the farmer sold milk to his neighbours. Now, he and other farmers are organized into groups which are linked to private and cooperative processing factories. Selling is more organized, sanitary procedures are improved, and there is less wastage.

The delegation proceeded to a farmer cooperative to witness a new dairy cow synchronisation process for artificial insemination. This involves bringing a large number of cows together and having them checked by a veterinarian. Those that are ready are given a hormone shot to make them ready for artificial insemination in a couple of weeks. Using this process, the veterinarian can breed some 500 cows over a two-week period, a ten-fold increase. The delegation was told that this was an example of how work on the ground level can address key problems.

2. Meeting with African Union Commission officials

The delegation held a roundtable discussion with H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, the African Union Commission Chairperson; H.E Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security; and H.E Dr. Maxwell Mkwezalamba, Commissioner for Economic Affairs.

Dr. Ping recognized that Canada has always been a strategic partner for Africa. He noted Canada's active contribution to development and to peacekeeping efforts.

Dr. Ping then talked about the AU's four strategic pillars. The first is peace and security. Recalling the Rwandan genocide and the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dr. Ping stressed the need to prevent such events from reoccurring. He noted that the international community intervened in two recent crises: Côte d'Ivoire and Libya. He also talked about two conflicts in which the AU is currently involved. These are Somalia, where piracy can be seen as a threat to world peace, and the Sudan, where the AU and the UN are working together in a hybrid mission on Darfur, a unique initiative.

A second pillar, known as shared values, revolves around governance, democracy, and human rights. Dr. Ping talked about the restoration of democracy in all but one of the four countries where coups d'états had recently occurred (Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Niger and Madagascar). He said the AU is working with its partners to address governance issues. He also talked about the challenges of imposing sanctions and said the AU needs the help of the international community to enforce them.

On the subject of the third pillar – development, integration and cooperation – Dr. Ping said you cannot have peace and security without development.

Regarding the fourth pillar – institution and capacity building – Dr. Ping said that the AU needs to improve its capacity and remarked that the number of people employed to run the AU – about 1,000 – was not enough. He also noted the organization has budgetary problems, which are addressed by external assistance. To illustrate the AU's financial difficulties Dr. Ping gave the example of the \$500 per month that is paid to AU soldiers compared with the \$1,800 per month that is paid to UN soldiers.

In discussion with the delegation, Dr. Ping gave examples of cooperation between the UN and the AU. In Somalia, because the UN was reluctant to become involved, the AU was obliged to intervene. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the UN intervened

before the AU was created. The UN now has some 20,000 troops there. In Sudan, the AU intervened early and the UN has joined the AU in a hybrid mission. Dr. Ping went on to talk about some of the challenges relating to cooperation between the UN and the AU, such as their different approaches regarding intervention in African countries. In particular, he discussed the concerns some African states had regarding the UN intervention in Libya, which some saw as having gone from a humanitarian mission to one of regime change.

The AU officials went on to explain about the African Standby Force (ASF), which is intended to be an African military force. They said there is a comprehensive architecture in place and that five regional brigades would be set up. The ASF would follow UN norms regarding humanitarian conduct and the treatment of civilians. The AU is also considering a maritime force to deal with piracy and to protect fishing areas.

Dr. Mkwezalamba, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, discussed integration. He said the AU is working closely with the eight regional economic communities (RECs). He hoped an action plan would be adopted at the next AU summit in January 2012. The action plan would be in line with the AU strategic plan and would cover areas such as trade, macroeconomic coordination, peace and security, and social affairs. He identified a number of challenges facing the RECs, including the shortage of financing, the non-implementation of protocols, and the lack of infrastructure.

Dr. Ping concluded the meeting by pointing out that in 20 years, Africa would have a population of over one billion people. He said there are opportunities for foreign investors and Brazil, China and Australia are heavily involved on the continent. At the same time, he recognized that Africa's 54 countries have to work to reduce the barriers between themselves. This involves improving infrastructure, harmonizing laws, protecting investors and integrating markets. Noting there are two approaches to integration – the top-down approach and the approach that would use the RECs as building blocks – he said that these approaches could be combined.

3. Meeting with the Deputy Head of the United Nations Office to African Union

The delegation met Mr. Colin Stewart, the Deputy Head of the United Nations Office to African Union (UNOAU) and a Canadian citizen. The UNOAU was created in 2010 and Zachary Muburi-Muita, a former Kenyan Permanent Representative to the UN, was appointed as the first Head of the Office.¹²

Mr. Stewart said both the UN and the AU see the necessity for the UNOAU. From the UN perspective, three-quarters of its peacekeeping is done in Africa and it faces challenges in financing the missions and obtaining troops to take part in them. From the AU perspective, it would like to become more involved in peacekeeping, but because it lacks the capacity to do so, relies on the UN for support.

¹² "Kenyan diplomat chosen to lead UN office to the African Union," UN News Centre, 18 August 2010, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp/html/www.wmo.int/story.asp?NewsID=35654&Cr=African+Union&Cr1=>.

The purpose of the UNOAU is to coordinate UN representation to the AU in order to ensure consistency and efficiency. Its budget is roughly \$10 million. It focuses on political affairs, security sector reform, and the demobilization of former combatants. It is also working to coordinate activities with partners such as the European Union and the United States.

Mr. Stewart said that elections are a source of potential conflict in Africa. He said that establishing the basis for long-term peace by ensuring the transition from non-functioning states to successful ones is a tricky, long-term process. This process is poorly understood, but requires more than peacekeeping.

Regarding capacity building at the AU, Mr. Stewart said this goes beyond skills training, and involves reinforcing the underlying principles and values of the organization. Given the high level of staff turnover, he said there is the need to establish practices, procedures and policies.

In dialogue with the delegation, Mr. Stewart discussed the perspectives of the UN and the AU over the issue of Libya. He said the UNOAU would like to establish mechanisms for consulting the AU that would come into effect in times of crisis. Mr. Stewart also discussed the other mechanisms for African voices to be heard at the UN, such as through the African countries represented on the UN Security Council.

Mr. Stewart said the AU has similar goals to the UN. Its peacekeeping efforts are based on the UN model, and it is willing to become involved in places where the UN is reluctant to go in, such as Somalia. On the other hand, while the AU has excellent conventions, protocols and charters, they are not always implemented. The UNOAU would like to bring the UN and AU together to establish early warning systems to alert the international community of potential trouble spots. To do so, it is trying to build formal, professional networks that are more systematic than the informal channels that are currently in place.

4. Meeting with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa officials

The delegation met with Mrs. Jennifer Kargbo, Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), along with Mr. Adeyemi Dipeolu, Chief of Staff with the Office of the Executive Secretary; Mr. Steven Karingji, Director of the Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Division; and Mr. Alan Kyerematen of the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC).

Mrs. Kargbo said the UNECA aims to facilitate policy planning, with a focus on regional integration. Its main pillars are infrastructure, economic integration, social issues, and political issues. The UNECA works within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) framework and tries to translate intentions into concrete measures. It supports intra-African trade in the areas of tariff and non-tariff barriers, currency convergence, and governance. Currently, it is focusing on the areas of food security, energy, and infrastructure development.

Mrs. Kargbo went on to say the RECs are the building blocks of a process that could eventually lead to the United States of Africa. She noted that COMESA, SADC and the East African Community (EAC) are working towards a tripartite free trade area and said

that most RECs intend to move from a free trade area to a customs union to a common market. On the subject of a common currency, Mrs. Kargbo said that Africa is watching developments in Europe closely. In the initial stages, Africa needs to allow currency convertibility, but this is several years away.

Mrs. Kargbo said Africa's single most important problem is the issue of access to capital. While large corporate entities can access capital and informal businesses can access microfinance, the problem is when informal businesses want to become a formal small or medium enterprise (SME). Then they are constrained by the lack of collateral security, equity, and capacity to prepare bankable projects.

Asked about the willingness of African states to give up sovereignty as they pursue integration, Mr. Karingi responded that states are willing to cede some sovereignty to credible regional economic institutions, such as customs unions. They are less likely to give up sovereignty in the area of security.

The delegation then heard about the work of the ATPC, which CIDA funds. Within the UNECA, the ATPC works to build the trade capacity of African governments and enhance their negotiating capacity. The current CIDA project focuses on building the trade capacity of the RECs. The delegation was told that people don't take trade seriously, and parliamentarians have a role in teaching them that trade matters.

The delegation also heard that Africans have benefited from North American trade preferences. New businesses have been formed and they are moving up the value chain. At the same time, there are still technical barriers to trade and they affect Africans' ability to access markets.

During the meeting, Mrs. Gallant demonstrated solar-powered LED lanterns developed by Glenergy Inc. of Petawawa, Ontario. She also described Glenergy's business model, which uses village-level entrepreneurs to distribute clean and affordable solar lighting in order to replace fuel-based (kerosene) lighting along with microfinancing for entrepreneurs.

5. Meeting with the Chief Commissioner of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission

The delegation met the Chief Commissioner of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Ambassador Tiruneh Zenna, along with members of his staff.

Noting the EHRC is only six years old, Chief Commissioner Zenna said it is an independent body that is responsible to Parliament. It works to raise awareness of human rights and sensitize parliamentarians, the police, the army, and mass organizations. It has six branch offices and it is working to devolve power to the lowest administrative units. Chief Commissioner Zenna said that most human rights abuses occur at the local level, where awareness of human rights is low. The EHRC is also working to change the school curriculum.

Chief Commissioner Zenna acknowledged that the EHRC's capacity is small, but that, with the assistance of the Canadian government, it is improving. He talked about the EHRC's work to end harmful traditional practices – such as early marriage and female genital mutilation – monitor prisons, and observe elections. The aim is to create a human rights culture, and it is preparing a national human rights action plan.

In discussion with the delegation, Chief Commissioner Zenna said the EHRC had issued a press release following the 2010 election, but that it had not yet released its comprehensive report. Addressing the question of journalists who had been arrested under the anti-terrorism law, he said the EHRC intended to carry out a study of this law, but will not take a position before it does so. Likewise, on the subject of the outlawing of homosexuality, the EHRC has not taken a position.

6. Meeting with the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, African Ambassadors and the Director of the Institute of Strategic Studies

The delegation held a meeting the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mr. Erastus Mwencha; the Ambassador of Burkina Faso, H.E. Mr. Bruno Nongoma Zidouemba; the Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda, H.E. Mr. Mull Katende; the Ambassador of the Republic of Gabon, H.E. Mr. André William Anguile; Ambassador of Canada, H.E. Ms. Michèle Lévesque, and the Director of the Institute of Strategic Studies, Mr. Olusagen Akinsanyi.

The meeting began with a discussion of regional integration and the role of the RECs. Ambassador Zidouemba noted that in West Africa, the states involved in WAEMU, which has a common currency, had given up some sovereignty. He noted, however, that not all African regions are as ready to give up sovereignty.

Mr. Akinsanyi remarked that integration involves civil society and the private sector. Regarding continent-wide integration, he said Libya's Colonel Gaddafi had pushed for the creation of a United States of Africa in one jump. In the post-Gaddafi era, a more realistic, step-by-step vision may take hold. This could involve the free movement of people and services and the right to reside in another country and set up a business.

The discussion then turned to the role Canada can play in Africa. Deputy Chairman Mwencha noted that Canada was supportive of AU efforts, especially in places such as the Sudan. He also mentioned Canada's involvement in the mining sector. He said, however, that Canada's role had not been explored in a systematic way and that it would be important to create a structure for Canadian involvement.

Ambassador Katende talked about the changes that had taken place in Africa. Whereas it was known for its coup d'états, today it is characterised by regular elections. As well, African countries have human rights commissions and there is a continental African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. He recognized that much work needs to be done in the area of elections and human rights, and called for a strategic partnership with Canada to find areas of cooperation.

This theme was picked up by Ambassador Anguile, a former Ambassador to Canada. Ambassador Anguile talked about the areas in which Africa and Canada could cooperate and stressed the importance of shared values. Ambassador Katende called for a lasting engagement with Canada and Ambassador Zidouemba asked about Canada's intentions to develop a strategic partnership with Africa.

The members of the delegation stressed that as an all-party delegation, it could not speak for the Government of Canada. It said, however, that it would pass on their concerns through a report that would be tabled in Parliament. The African

ambassadors expressed their support for a return delegation of Canadian parliamentarians at the next African Union Summit in January 2012.

The discussion then turned to the relative merits of parliamentary and presidential systems of government, as well as unicameral and bicameral legislatures. The challenges of incorporating traditional African forms of government – as is being done in Botswana – were also discussed. At the same time, there was recognition that no matter what system is adopted, there are universal democratic values that must be respected.

7. Meeting with the Speaker of the House of People's Representatives

The delegation visited the House of People's Representatives, where it met the Speaker, H.E. Mr. Ato Abadula Gemedo, along with the Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Affairs, H.E. Ato Tesfaye Daba Wakjira, the Honorable Seifu Kinfe, the Honorable Ayelech Eshete, and the Honorable Tekele Tessema.

Speaker Gemedo gave an overview of the House of People's Representatives. The Ethiopian parliamentarians then talked about Ethiopia's military structure and noted that the minister of defence is accountable to Parliament. They noted that military spending is about 2% of gross domestic product, which is low compared with other countries. Rather, they said that the government's main priorities were to develop the economy and to provide good government.

The Ethiopia parliamentarians then discussed the ways in which the House of People's Representatives oversees the executive given there is only one opposition member. They said parliamentarians represent all the people, including those who did not vote for the ruling party, and noted they have regular discussions with the people to learn about their concerns. Issues raised by citizens are the subject of questions in the House of People's Representatives. The Ethiopian parliamentarians and the delegation also discussed the participation of women in Parliament.

Noting that Ethiopia had started from zero after the civil war that ended 20 years ago, Speaker Gemedo said Ethiopia's main aim is to fight poverty. He also talked about the need to support the private sector, especially SMEs, and to support young entrepreneurs.

The delegation took the opportunity to visit the Chamber of the House of People's Representatives.

8. Meeting with the Minister of State for Finance and Economic Development

The delegation met with the Minister of State for Finance and Economic Development, H.E. Mr. Ahmed Shide. He gave an overview of Ethiopia's economy and the government's plan for growth and transformation, which aims to turn Ethiopia into a middle-income country. The plan aims to promote inclusive, comprehensive growth, to develop the agricultural sector, build infrastructure, develop energy, and improve transportation links. Some of the challenges he identified were the state's limited capacity and the need to find ways for youth to participate in the economy. He

attributed Ethiopia's 11% growth rate last year to the policy choices the government had made.

In discussion with the delegation, Minister Shide said that Ethiopia had checks on unfettered entrepreneurship, such as labour laws. He also talked about the need to develop the participation of civil society and for the government to guide private-sector development.

Minister Shide then talked about the new eight-lane highway that is being built to Djibouti, Ethiopia's main outlet to the sea. The road is being financed through a loan from China. He also talked about Ethiopia's efforts to protect women and children and to encourage the education of girls. Regarding regional integration, he talked about Ethiopia's membership in COMESA and the free trade area it is developing with SADC and EAC. He said the RECs are the building blocks of integration and connectivity with neighbouring countries is crucial to this effort.

Minister Shide also discussed the policy regarding corporate income tax and the right to repatriate profits. The corporate income tax rate is 30%, but there are various exemptions based on the amount of product that is exported and the expansion of manufacturing or agro-industry projects. The repatriation of capital and the remittance of dividends and interest by foreign investors are guaranteed.¹³

Minister Shide also addressed the questions of foreign involvement in hydro-electric projects, the ways in which the government raises revenue through taxation, and the ways the federal government subsidizes regions.

SENEGAL

A. Background

The Republic of Senegal is located on the west coast of Africa. A former French colony, it has enjoyed relative stability since gaining independence in 1960. It is one of the few African countries that has never had a coup d'état. There have been two peaceful political transitions: one between leaders of the long-time ruling party, the Parti socialiste (PS), and one between the PS and the opposition Parti démocratique sénégalais (PDS). President Abdoulaye Wade, a long-time opposition leader, was first elected in 2000 and re-elected in 2007. Despite the constitutional limit of two mandates, the president has indicated that he will run again in the February 2012 elections. His supporters argue that the two-term limit only came into effect when the Constitution was amended in 2008. In June 2011, government attempts to modify the Constitution to create a post of vice-president and reduce the winning threshold in presidential elections from 50% to 25% were withdrawn following protests. Since 1982, there has been an armed separatist movement in the Casamance region in southern Senegal.

Senegal's population of roughly 13 million is made up of a number of ethnic groups and about 95% of the population is Muslim. The economy is dominated by a few key sectors, including groundnuts (peanuts), fisheries and services. However, the agriculture sector is affected by droughts. In terms of energy, Senegal relies on

¹³ Ethiopian Business Development Services Network, "Investment Policy," <http://www.bds-ethiopia.net/investment-policy.html>.

imported oil and there are frequent power shortages.¹⁴ Poverty is high, especially in rural areas, and 34% of the population lives on less than \$1.25 per day. The population is growing rapidly – about 3% per year – and there is high unemployment, especially among youth.¹⁵

Life expectancy at birth is about 60 years. Maternal mortality is high – 410 deaths per 100,000 live births (compared with 12 deaths per 100,000 live births in Canada). Infant mortality is also high – 56 of every 1,000 children die before the age of one (compared with 5 deaths per 1,000 in Canada). The HIV/AIDS infection rate is quite low – 0.9%, which compares favourably with Canada's rate of 0.3%.¹⁶

In the international arena, Senegal is actively involved in regional and African affairs. It has played a prominent role in Libya, Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritania and has been involved in numerous international peacekeeping operations, particularly in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Darfur, and Côte d'Ivoire. Within West Africa, President Wade has been a vocal supporter of democracy.

Senegal has generally good relations with its neighbours. Senegal, Mauritania, and Mali have agreed to cooperate on border issues and on combating extremism. There has been some tension with The Gambia over transportation issues and border crossings, as well as over the latter's role with separatist rebels in the Casamance region. President Wade and Gambian President Yahya Jammeh recently discussed the Casamance issue, and President Jammeh agreed to crack down on rebels using The Gambia as a base.

Senegal has friendly relations with the West, particularly with France and the United States. Senegal has fostered relations with developing countries and it has developed relations with India and Arab countries such as Kuwait. Senegal established relations with the People's Republic of China in 2006, after ending its ties with Taiwan. Relations with China have flourished since then.

Bilateral relations between Canada and Senegal are strong. The two countries cooperate through the Francophonie and in the areas of regional and international peace and security. Their forces work together in the United Nations Mission in Darfur. Canada has long been a development partner in Senegal and has invested more than \$1.2 billion in official development assistance since 1962. Senegal is currently one of the CIDA's 20 countries of focus under the Aid Effectiveness Agenda.

B. Meetings

1. Meeting with the President of the National Assembly

¹⁴ World Bank, "Senegal: Country Brief," <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/SENEGALXTN/0,,menuPK:296312~pagePK:141132~piPK:141107~theSitePK:296303,00.html>.

¹⁵ Canadian International Development Agency, "Senegal: Overview," <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/Eng/JUD-217123240-NKYn>

¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Senegal," *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html>.

The delegation met the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Mamadou Seck, along with the chairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Affairs of the African Union and Expatriates (Mr. Bocar Kane), the Committee on Economy, Finances, Planning and Economic Co-operation (Mr. Alé Lo), the Committee on Territorial Development and Planning (Mr. Abdoulaye Sène), the Committee on Laws, Decentralisation, Labour, and Human Rights (Mr. Abdoulaye Babou), and the Committee on Health, Population, Social Affairs and National Solidarity (Mr. Oumar Ndoye).

Mr. Seck gave an overview of the National Assembly, noting that it is currently in the 11th legislature since independence, and this has been without interruption. He also outlined the methods used in overseeing the executive.

In discussion with the delegation, the Chair of the Committee on Laws, Decentralisation, Labour, and Human Rights talked about the importance of the respect for human rights. He described the various provisions in the Constitution, including the right to work, the right to demonstrate, and the freedom of the press. Within the National Assembly, the Committee can advise the president that a bill is unacceptable if it goes against human rights principles.

Asked what are the major challenges facing the National Assembly, the Chairs mentioned the relationship with the executive, the need to oversee the budgetary process, the need to improve the capacity of parliamentarians and female parliamentarians in particular, the effectiveness of development programs, and reform of the electoral law. In summing up, Mr. Seck said that development partners tend to focus their efforts on governments and civil society and forget about strengthening Parliament. If Parliament is not strong, it is not able to hold the executive accountable. Overseeing financial matters requires expertise and technical assistance. To ensure stability, he said Parliament must play a role in formulating good law. He mentioned that salaries for Members of Parliament had been increased and they now had vehicles and offices, which had improved things. Regarding elections, he said that the National Assembly plays a monitoring role.

The discussion then turned to the subject of the African Standby Force, which Senegal is involved in creating. At the same time, the delegation was told that Senegal is involved in too many peacekeeping operations, which is putting pressure on its military capacity.

The delegation took the opportunity to visit the Chamber of the National Assembly.

2. Meeting with the President of the Senate

The delegation met with the President of the Senate, Mr. Papa Diop, along with the First Vice President of the Senate, Mr. Kansoumbaly Ndiaye, and the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. Famara Sané. President Diop began by talking about the close relations between Senegal and Canada. Many Canadian teachers worked in Senegal and numerous Senegalese have studied in Canada.

President Diop talked about the work of the Senate, which was created four years ago. Designed to represent communities, it pays particular attention to proposals for bills regarding treaties, communities and expatriates.

In conversation with the delegation, President Diop discussed Senegal's energy supply, which has problems as a result of a lack of petroleum resources. Solar and wind energy are being considered as alternatives.

The discussion then turned to the role and the powers of the Senate, the participation of women in politics, and the limit on the number of presidential terms. Regarding the latter issue, President Diop noted there is a debate as to whether President Wade was eligible to serve another term.

3. Meeting with Civil Society Groups

The delegation met with representatives of a number of civil society groups involved with human rights, press freedom, good governance and election monitoring. They included Ms. Fatou Marone of Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (RADDHO); Mr. Elimane Kane of Forum Civil, the Senegalese branch of Transparency International; Mr. Assane Diome Ndiaye of the Ligue sénégalaise des droits de l'homme; Mrs. Astou Mbène Kane of the Convention des jeunes reporters du Sénégal; and Mr. Abdou Mazide Ndiaye of the Comité de veille et de suivi des recommandations de la mission d'audit du fichier électoral (Oversight Committee for the Audit of the Electoral Register).

The issue of human rights was the first topic of discussion. The civil society representatives noted that although Senegal has ratified the international conventions on human rights, the situation remains fragile. They said there are continued instances of torture and suspicious deaths. Journalists, who are seen as being members of the opposition, are often called in for questioning and some of them have been assaulted. The representatives also questioned the independence of the judiciary.

Regarding the forthcoming elections, the representatives said the situation is one of uncertainty. They noted that opposition activists who had sent a letter to the Constitutional Council urging it to prevent President Wade from running for another term had been charged.¹⁷

Regarding the rights of children and women, the representatives said that though Senegal had signed international human rights conventions, they were not always enforced. They mentioned the number of street children and the difficulty of bringing charges against those who have subjected women to violence.

Elaborating on cases of torture, the representatives said that brutality tends to occur during preliminary investigations when no lawyer is present. They said there have been about 15 suspicious deaths and that there have been no enquiries into them.

On the subject of press freedom, the representatives said though it is enshrined in the Constitution, it is not practiced in reality. They said there was a climate of fear. Journalists had been arrested for publishing embarrassing stories, the government had

¹⁷ The activists would be sentenced to two years in prison for uttering death threats. See Diadie Ba, "Critique of Senegal president jailed over letter," *Reuter Africa*, 20 October 2011, <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E79J0F320111020>.

withdrawn advertising from certain publications, and the ruling party had set up its own newspaper. On the other hand, they noted there were subsidies for newspapers.

On the subject of good governance, the representatives said things had become worse. They said the controls against corruption are not very effective and the institutions charged with monitoring the situation need strengthening. They went on to say that a major problem is that the tools of the state are used for partisan purposes and that jobs are given to people from the governing party. They said that work needs to be done to make people aware of the problem.

Regarding elections, the representatives said the opposition will be vigilant. The Comité de veille et de suivi des recommandations de la mission d'audit du fichier électoral (Oversight Committee for the Audit of the Electoral Register), which is made up of members from the opposition, government, and civil society, is monitoring the implementations of the recommendations of an audit by independent experts of the electoral lists.¹⁸ The representatives said the electoral system is sound and there is no real possibility for massive fraud. They said, however, that the main question is whether President Wade will be permitted to run again. This will not be settled until January. At the same time, the opposition is fragmented and it is unclear whether it will be able to present a single candidate. The uncertainty is causing tension, and some representatives said that if President Wade were permitted to run again, it could threaten stability.

4. Meeting with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

The delegation met with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Me Madické Niang. Discussing integration in West Africa, he said as the AU has not been able to bring about continent-wide union, West Africa will have to explore its options. He said Senegal is considering the idea of a West African confederation.

Minister Niang talked about the events that took place in Côte d'Ivoire. He said that Nigeria and Senegal had taken the lead on this issue. He said the presence of 15 million foreigners in the country had made the situation difficult. On the subject of Libya, he noted that President Wade had been the first to ask Colonel Gaddafi to leave.

5. Meeting with the President of the Republic of Senegal

The delegation met with the President of the Republic of Senegal, H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade. He began by talking about the inspiration he had taken from Canada in designing Senegal's electoral law. He tried to adopt the idea of a leader of the opposition, but the Senegalese opposition had refused to accept it. With regard to the economy, he said that he had been inspired by the Québec model.

President Wade then talked about Senegal's agricultural progress in the production of groundnuts, millet, sesame, wheat, and rice. Whereas Senegal used to import food, it is now self-sufficient. It is also developing a food-processing industry. He also talked

¹⁸ See Délégation de l'Union européenne en République du Sénégal, "Rapport d'audit du Fichier électoral sénégalais," 7 April 2011, (French only),

about the Great Green Wall – a project to plant a barrier of trees 7,000 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide across Africa to stop the spread of the Sahara Desert.

President Wade went on to explain Senegal's efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals. He said that 40% of the budget goes to education. He gave the example of teacher assistants who are being recruited to help out with children who are falling behind. To help with maternal health, women in each community are being trained to monitor pregnant women, with the result that maternal mortality has dropped.

President Wade then expressed his desire to visit Canada. This was followed by a discussion of the ways in which political parties renew themselves. President Wade said that ruling parties risked becoming complacent and that he had brought many young people into his government as a way of assuring generational renewal.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the delegation expressed its hope that the 2012 elections will proceed smoothly.

After the meeting, Radio-télévision du Sénégal conducted interviews with the head of the delegation.

6. Meeting with Civil Society Groups Involved in Social and Development Issues

The delegation held a meeting with representatives of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and four civil society groups. They included Mr. Cheick Mbow of the umbrella organisation for education known as the Coalition des organisations en synergie pour la défense de l'éducation publique (COSYDEP); Mr. Thierno Ba of the Union pour la solidarité et l'entraide; Mrs. Safiètou Mbodj of the Fédération des associations féminines du Sénégal (FAFS); Mrs. Kathryn Touré of IDRC; and Mr. Momar Talla Kane, of the umbrella organization for development known as Conseil des organisations non gouvernementales d'appui au développement (CONGAD).

The participants began by giving presentations about their organisations. Mr. Mbow gave an overview of his 125-member coalition. The challenges for education in Senegal include improving the quality of education, providing education for adults, dealing with illiterate families and developing programs based on research into these issues.

Mr. Ba talked about rural issues in the areas of health, education and accessibility. These include the shortage of schools, the quality of education, the financing of education and the promotion of literacy. He also mentioned the challenge of dealing with traditional practices such as early marriage.

Mrs. Mbodj discussed various issues affecting women, such as the risk of disease, the education of girls, access to microfinance and the effects of early marriage on dropout rates.

Mrs. Touré talked about IDRC's research in the areas of food security, health, education, and inclusive growth. She also talked about the need to encourage participation in decision-making bodies.

Mr. Kane noted the concerns of his member organizations, including health, education, gender, and the environment. In the area of education, he noted that facilities are often

inadequate and the quality of education is poor. In particular, he said technical and science education was lacking. In his opinion, many problems are linked to poverty, and he called for more citizen involvement in decision-making and for support for civil society.

In discussion with the delegation, the participants elaborated on school attendance, the lack of resources to provide quality education at the local level, early marriage, and the cost of education. They talked about the restrictions on civil society with regard to political engagement. Regarding female genital mutilation, they said it is restricted to certain ethnic groups. They also talked about the need to have reliable statistics to help them improve their work.

7. Meeting with Canadian Business Representatives

The delegation met with representatives of the Canadian business community in Senegal, including Mr. Macoumba Diop of Teranga Gold Corporation; Mr. Michel Marceau of Oromin; Mr. Malcolm Versel of IAMGOLD; Mr. Philippe Barry of RSE Sénégal, which is involved with corporate social responsibility; Mr. Tony Toufic of Laval University; Mr. Mihai Popescu of AECOM; Mr. Philippe Bélanger of UMT Technologies; Mr. Yves Charland of Développement international Desjardins (DID); and Mr. Khaled Houda of the legal firm Jolicoeur Lacasse.

The participants said that mining is just beginning in Senegal and as few firms are active in the country, there are opportunities for suppliers to the mining industry. They said the Senegalese are interested in acquiring knowledge so they can contribute to the development of the industry in their country. The participants also identified opportunities in the areas of microfinance and education and training,

Generally speaking, the participants said Senegal is politically stable with good basic infrastructure, such as roads, airports and telecommunications. Challenges include transparency, inadequate energy capacity, and poor manpower training. In many ways, however, Senegal was seen as being at a crossroad. There are large numbers of unemployed youth and the government sometimes has unrealistic expectations about the number of jobs industry can create. The participants talked about the need to develop the country outside of Dakar.

The business representatives also talked about the need for business law to be respected and the lack of coordination between various African countries on matters such as trademarks and public-private partnerships. In addition, labour law, which has not been revised since 1947, is very complex and makes it very difficult to fire incompetent people. They also identified problems with applying the laws that are on the books. There was general agreement that there was little legal recourse in cases of corruption.

In discussion with the delegation, it was pointed out that mining companies do not create much employment and that it is crucial that Canadian manufacturers be encouraged to come to Senegal. With regard to corporate social responsibility, it was felt there are many examples where ethical behaviour has been rewarded. However, not all competitors feel it is a priority. In addition, if a company emphasising corporate social responsibility pays lower wages, other companies may raid their employees.

Access to capital was identified as a challenge. Local traditions of sharing with family rather than accumulating wealth can act as a constraint and suppress innovation. There are few sources of capital, and this does not favour the emergence of entrepreneurship. Without land title, land cannot be used as collateral. The capital that is available is very expensive.

Finally, the participants pointed out that Canadian firms operating in Senegal are competing against other first-world companies. To succeed, they must make use of the latest industry techniques in conjunction with excellent business know-how. During the meeting, Mrs. Gallant also talked about Glenergy's solar-powered lighting initiative.

8. Meeting with the Minister for Elections

The delegation met with the Minister for Elections, Mr. Cheikh Guèye, along with members of his staff. Minister Guèye was previously the Director of Elections and reported to the Minister of the Interior. The position of Minister for Elections was created in July 2011. The Minister for Elections is responsible for the election materials, such as ballots and ballot boxes, whereas tabulating and announcing the results is the responsibility of the Minister of Justice.

Minister Guèye stressed his organization is impartial and noted the electoral code had been developed by the government and the opposition working together. Indeed, he said parties are involved at all levels of the process. He also talked about the audit of electoral lists that was performed by independent experts.¹⁹ In an exchange with the delegation, he said that everything possible is being done to ensure public confidence and transparency.

On the subject of election expenses, Minister Guèye explained there are no limits on how much a candidate may spend. Indeed, in order to level the playing field, the state provides assistance to presidential candidates. For example, it provides them with a television crew.

Regarding the election timetable, the Minister explained that presidential candidates for the 26 February election may submit their names any time between 26 December 2011 and 25 January 2012.

The Minister's staff responded to questions about the Minister's impartiality by noting that similar cabinet positions exist in other Francophone countries, such as Belgium and France. They reiterated that political parties are involved at all levels and that a monitoring committee (Comité de veille) has been set up.

9. Meeting with the President of the Commission Electorale Nationale Autonome

The delegation met with the President of the Commission électorale nationale autonome (CENA), Mr. Doudou Ndir, along with a number of commissioners (two of whom had recently been named) and members of the Commission staff. The meeting, which began late, opened with the reading of a lengthy presentation on the CENA.

¹⁹ Mission d'Audit du Fichier Électoral, "Rapport Final," January 2011
http://photos.state.gov/libraries/adana/323269/pdf/rapport_audit_fichier_electoral_sn_31Jan2011.pdf.

Established in 2005, it is a permanent, independent organization that supervises elections and ensures that the electoral law is observed. Its members are appointed by the President of the Republic, but are neutral professionals.

In discussion with the delegation, the commissioners talked about the CENA's relationship with the Ministry for Elections, saying they have a shared responsibility for elections, with the Ministry taking care of election materials and the CENA controlling and supervising the election.

Regarding election observers, the commissioners said that the CENA participates in their accreditation. They said that observers that are only in Senegal for a week would not know enough about the context to be able to evaluate the election. They also stressed the need to be knowledgeable about the situation in the country and wondered whether observers are sometimes responsible for the violence that can follow elections. The delegation felt that the commissioners were less than forthcoming in their answers regarding the election process and election observers.

10. Visit to an Education Project

Mrs. Gallant travelled to Thiaroye on the outskirts of Dakar to visit a CIDA-sponsored project. She met Mr. Thiam, an inspector with the Ministry of Education. She learned that many of the children leave school at noon because they have no lunch. CIDA provides funding to a World Food Programme initiative to provide school meals for poor children.

Mrs. Gallant witnessed some of the challenges facing schools in Senegal. She visited old military barracks that have been converted into classrooms. Teaching tools such as globes must be kept locked up. One school was awaiting delivery of computers donated by a school in Paris. However, because Internet costs are so expensive, the school had disconnected the lines. One school was closed as a result of flooding.

Overall, the school inspectors and the headmasters she met expressed their appreciation to Canada for its role in assisting Senegal's education system.

11. Meeting with the United Nations Special Representative for West Africa

The delegation met the UN Special Representative for West Africa, Mr. Saïd Djinnit. He talked about the AU's philosophical evolution from blaming external factors for Africa's problems to assuming responsibility for them. It has established an architecture for peace and security, but needs to sustain the good will it has generated. To do this, the AU needs resources.

Regarding the African Standby Force (ASF), Mr. Djinnit said it was important to have such a continental force. He also said that regional organizations such as ECOWAS were encouraged to build their own forces so that they can take action at a regional level. The ASF would provide assistance if the regional force were not able to.

Mr. Djinnit returned to the question of funding, which he said was the AU's biggest problem and one that has inhibited its ability to act. Funding has tended to be ad hoc and each donor has a different accounting method, which leads to inefficiency.

Regarding his role, he said he works with regional organizations in the areas of conflict prevention and peace consolidation. In West African, ethnic clashes in places such as Liberia and Sierra Leone led the countries in the region to establish the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and the UN was also involved. In 2002, the UN decided to create an office to work with ECOWAS. He gave a number of examples where the UN had worked with regional partners and the AU to prevent crises, including Mauritania, Togo, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. He said his priority themes are the role of women in peace, drug trafficking and organized crime, the rule of law, and the reform of the defence and security sectors. He also talked about the need to support countries holding elections.

Regarding the situation in Senegal, Mr. Djinnit said one needs to be cautious, as there are risks. He said he takes every opportunity to discuss the need to preserve stability with government officials, including the President of the Republic. Closer to the election, he will become more proactive, depending on the situation.

Regarding the general situation in West Africa, Mr. Djinnit said the region is undergoing a long transition. Countries are generally going in the right direction, but they need to be accompanied. Even stable countries such as Ghana are fragile. Countries in the region are dealing with legacies of single-party rule and ethnic violence. They lack strong institutions and democratic traditions and their media and the judiciary are weak.

The role of organizations such as the UN, the AU and ECOWAS is to support these countries as they make the transition. He pointed out that it pays off to diffuse crises, noting that the \$10 million it costs to run the UN office in West Africa can save money by avoided costly peacekeeping missions. By avoiding one such mission every ten years, enough money is saved to pay for the office for 20 years.

Mr. Djinnit then talked about Nigeria's key role in ECOWAS peacekeeping operations. When Nigeria is dealing with internal matters, it affects the ability of ECOWAS to perform its peacekeeping mandate. He went on to discuss the make-up of the ASF. The plan is to have five forces of brigade strength, but the AU cannot afford to create the one to two billion-dollar trust fund that would be required to pay for them.

Mr. Djinnit said he was essentially optimistic about progress in the region. He said though opposition parties are marginalized, 20 years ago they did not exist, there was no freedom of expression and no free press. While the situation is still not ideal, these freedoms are emerging. He said, "Africa is set for transformation, but it will take some time."

Mr. Djinnit also noted that the old principle of non-interference has been replaced by the principle of non-indifference. He said that women can play a key role in establishing peace.

In closing, Mr. Djinnit said his office has a small budget, a staff of about 30, and an airplane, giving it the flexibility and mobility to respond to crises.

12. Meeting with Opposition Parties

The delegation held a meeting with six members of the opposition coalition known as Bennoo Siggil Senegaal. They included Mr. Ousmane Tanor Dieng of the Parti socialiste; Mr. Magatte Thiam of the Parti de l'Indépendance et du Travail; Mr.

Mamadou Lamine Diallo of the Union nationale patriotique; Mr. Robert Sagna of the Rassemblement pour le socialisme et la démocratie/Takku Défaraat Sénégal; Mrs. Zahra Iyane Thiam of the Union pour le développement du Sénégal/Innovation; and Mr. El Hadji Mbow of the Union citoyenne.

The participants said while Senegal has enjoyed stability, it is undergoing a period of uncertainty. They discussed the root causes of the country's problems – the low standard of living, the exodus from rural areas, and the closing of the route to Europe via Libya. In addition, the government's attempts to modify the Constitution, which had been withdrawn following protests, had created a crisis atmosphere in which nobody knew how the situation could evolve. The participants expressed concerns over problems with voter registration and the lack of a single ballot for the presidential election. They said there had been a consensus between the opposition and the government over the conduct of the election, but this had been broken by the government. The participants said they did not have contact with the Minister of Elections.

The participants questioned whether there would be enough polling stations and whether election observers, who will only be present on Election Day, would be able to do a proper job. Regarding the candidacy of President Wade, they hoped the Constitution would be respected and the Constitutional Council would reject his candidacy. Asked whether the AU or regional organizations would be able to mediate if there is a crisis, the participants did not express much confidence, saying the AU had not acted decisively during the events in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya.

The participants felt that Senegal was at a crossroad. They said all they wanted was regular and transparent elections.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The delegation attended briefing sessions presented by Canadian officials in Ottawa, Addis Ababa and Dakar. Upon its return to Ottawa, the delegation held an information session with Canadian officials.

In Addis Ababa, the delegation attended a reception hosted by the Canadian Ambassador, where it met a broad spectrum of the Ethiopian political leadership, civil society, business people, and the diplomatic community.

In Senegal, the Association's visit was covered by Radio-télévision du Sénégal, the public broadcasting company, and reported by the Agence de Presse Sénégalaise.

CONCLUSION

Though far apart geographically, both Ethiopia and Senegal face similar challenges and have considerable potential. Both have large numbers of very poor people, rapidly growing populations, and inadequate infrastructure. Both have been relatively stable countries that are active in their regions, particularly with regards to peacekeeping. Canada has good relations with Ethiopia and Senegal, both of which are CIDA countries of focus.

ETHIOPIA

The delegation was encouraged to learn about the Government of Ethiopia's emphasis on reducing poverty, particularly in rural areas. It was also impressed by the Government's determination to develop the country's hydroelectric capacity, as well as its transportation infrastructure. The delegation observed the need for the latter when it travelled along the congested two-lane highway leading from Addis Ababa to Djibouti.

On its visit to a CIDA-sponsored agricultural project, the delegation was pleased to see the efforts being made to improve farmers' knowledge and their production. The farmers seemed keen to try new methods and to use their improved income to educate their children.

The delegation was encouraged by the discussions it held with the Minister of State for Finance and Economic Development, H.E. Mr. Ahmed Shide. He was positive about Ethiopia's plans to become a middle income country within the medium term.

The delegation had some concerns about the ability of the Ethiopian Parliament to hold the government to account, particularly as there is only one opposition member in the House of People's Representatives. The delegation felt the establishment of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) was a positive development, but had some doubts about its ability to address some human rights issues and to perform its work effectively. The delegation hopes it will continue its work and develop its capacity.

AFRICAN UNION

One of the main objectives of the visit to Addis Ababa was to visit the headquarters of the AU and to meet senior officials of the AU Commission. The delegation was grateful for the frank exchange it had with the Chairman of the AU Commission, H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, and with other members of the Commission. The delegation noted the concerns about the UN intervention in Libya, which some African countries felt went from one of protecting citizens to regime change.

The delegation also took note of the concerns the AU has with respect to its funding. Generally speaking, the delegation felt though the AU faces numerous challenges as it tries to find consensus among its member states, as the only continent-wide organization in Africa, the Government of Canada should continue to work with it to promote shared values, prevent conflict, and encourage political and economic development. As well, the delegation recommends that, on the occasion of the AU's 10th anniversary in 2012, the Government of Canada consider providing further funding to the AU.

The delegation was encouraged by its meeting with Mr. Colin Stewart of the United Nations Office for the African Union (UNOAU). It felt that the UNOAU represents an excellent opportunity for the UN and the AU to coordinate their activities. It hopes that both the UN and the AU will provide the UNOAU with all the support it needs to fulfil its mandate. It also felt the Government of Canada could explore ways of encouraging this cooperation.

The delegation was very grateful for the frank discussion it had with the Deputy Chairman of the African Union, the Ambassadors of Burkina Faso, Uganda, and Gabon and the Director of the Institute of Strategic Studies. The delegation felt this was the kind of dialogue that should be continued. It noted the Ambassadors' call for Canada to

establish a strategic partnership with Africa and promised to pass this message on to the Parliament of Canada and the Government of Canada. Indeed, this message was relayed to officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency at an information session held in Ottawa to discuss the delegation's visit.

SENEGAL

In Senegal, which has been one of the most stable countries in the region, the delegation heard from numerous contacts that the country is at a cross-road, both politically and economically. As a key player in the region, threats to its stability could have far-reaching consequences.

The delegation was particularly concerned about the process in place for the February 2012 elections. It noted there had been changes in the organizational structure for the elections with the recent creation of a new Minister for Elections, uncertainty regarding election lists, polling stations, and ballots, and a far too uncertain process for accrediting election observers. In addition, the question of President Wade's candidacy will not be decided until shortly before the election.

Taken together, the delegation felt there was the strong possibility for chaos and unrest. Accordingly, the delegation suggests the Government of Canada continue to pay close attention to the situation and to work with its partners in the region to hold Senegal to its commitments regarding the standards for fair and transparent elections enshrined in the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance and the Bamako Declaration of the International Organization of La Francophonie. The delegation also encourages the Government to urge Senegal to respect the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, which is endorsed by the United Nations and the African Union.

The delegation also took note of the concerns raised by civil society groups about the fragility of the human rights situation in Senegal. Again, it hopes the Government of Canada will continue to monitor the situation.

The delegation agreed with Senegalese parliamentarians that it is important to improve the capacity of parliamentarians so that they can hold the executive to account. This includes recruiting financial and technical experts to advise parliamentarians.

The delegation appreciated the informative session it held with Canadian business representatives in Senegal. While there are numerous challenges, Senegal holds great potential, and the delegation was encouraged by their efforts to pursue opportunities for Canadian businesses.

In both Ethiopia and Senegal, the delegation heard that access to capital is one of the key challenges for the development of businesses in Africa, particularly small and medium enterprises. The delegation encourages the Government of Canada to support efforts to find innovative solutions to this problem.

The delegation was grateful for the knowledge it gained about efforts to integrate Africa. Generally speaking, it heard the idea of creating the United States of Africa had fallen out of favour and that the step-by-step approach using regional economic communities as building blocks was now seen as more likely to succeed. It heard that efforts to

create regional free trade areas are going ahead and that work still needs to be done to reduce barriers between countries and to establish currency convertibility. The delegation encourages the Government of Canada to continue to support organizations working to reduce barriers and improve trade.

Finally, the delegation appreciated the insight of Mr. Saïd Djinnit, the UN Special Representative for West Africa. He encouraged it to take the long view and to recognize the progress that has been made. The delegation agreed with him that offices such as his, which are flexible and able to react quickly in times of crisis, are cost-effective ways of diffusing crises and thereby avoiding costly peacekeeping missions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their help in making the Ethiopian leg of the visit a success, the delegation would like to thank Canadian Ambassador H.E. Ms. Michèle Lévesque and her team, including Mr. Christopher Hull, Ms. Miriam van Nie, Ms. Konjit Seleshie, Mr. Robert Bunbury, Mr. Edmond Wega, Mr. Stephen Sandiford, Mr. Stephan Paquette, and Ms. Thérèse Poirier. The delegation would also like to thank Dr. Dirk Hoekstra, Dr. Azage Tegegne and Mr. Nigatu Alemayehu of the International Livestock Research Institute for welcoming the delegation to the IPMS project. The delegation was honoured to meet H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, the African Union Commission Chairperson and grateful for the time he spent with it. The delegation was also appreciative that Mr. Colin Stewart of the UNOAU was able to take the time to meet with it.

The delegation would also like to extend thanks to those who helped make the portion of the visit to Senegal successful. In particular, it would like to thank Canadian Ambassador H.E. Mr. Perry Calderwood and his team, including Ms. Suehila Elkateb, Mr. Carlos Rojas-Arbulú, Mr. Michel Gagnon, Mrs. Karine Girard, and Mr. Daouda Diop. The delegation was grateful to Mr. Saïd Djinnit, the UN Special Representative for West Africa, for his valuable insight.

The delegation is grateful to all those who took the time to meet with it. Their participation was invaluable to the delegation's understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing Ethiopia, the African Union and Senegal.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Raynell
Andreychuk, Senator

Co-Chair

Canada-Africa Parliamentary
Association

The Honourable Mauril Bélanger,
P.C., M.P.

Co-Chair

Canada-Africa Parliamentary
Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Bilateral Visits to Ethiopia and Senegal
DESTINATION	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Dakar, Senegal
DATES	October 9 to 14, 2011
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Terry Stratton, Hon. Jim Munson
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Mauril Bélanger, David Christopherson, Lois Brown, Cheryl Gallant
STAFF	Maxime Ricard, Michael Dewing
TRANSPORTATION	\$82,544.12
ACCOMMODATION	\$13,940.53
HOSPITALITY	\$5,008.30
PER DIEMS	\$3,039.93
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$2,380.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$11,844.28
TOTAL	\$118,757.16