

Canadian Group
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien
Union interparlementaire

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the United Nations Parliamentary Stakeholder Forum on
Official Development Assistance**

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

**Rome, Italy
12 – 13 June 2008**

Report

United Nations Parliamentary Stakeholder Forum on Official Development Assistance¹

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations, and other partners (CIVICUS, Action Aid, United Cities and Local Governments)

1. Background

The Stakeholder Forum was organized by the United Nations in cooperation with the IPU and other partners (CIVICUS, Action Aid, United Cities and Local Governments). The Forum brought together representatives of parliaments, civil society and local governments to discuss the role of these actors in strengthening aid quality and effectiveness at the country-level. Members of parliament met amongst themselves on the first day of the Forum before joining representatives of the other groups for a joint discussion on the second day.

2. Programme

The Forum was held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy on 12 and 13 June, under the overall theme of the “Role of national and local stakeholders in contributing to aid quality and effectiveness.”

3. The Canadian Delegate

Members of national parliaments, UN bodies, as well as representatives of civil society organizations took part in the Forum. The following Canadian parliamentarian attended:

- Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.

4. Outcomes

Key messages and recommendations from the Rome meeting were fed into discussions at the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations held on 30 June and 1 July 2008. These included:

- Parliaments, as the representatives of the people, should play a more active role in planning, implementing and assessing national development policies and plans. Although more parliaments are being consulted on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and other national development plans, this consultation does not yet go deep enough. And very few parliaments are consulted about aid policies and plans.
- Many donor countries are shifting from outright conditionality towards building the capacity of partner countries for good governance. However, donors must invest much more in good governance and fundamental democratic processes in partner countries. This includes strengthening controls and procedures that aim

¹ Source for several portions of this report: <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/dcf-rome.pdf>

at improving transparency, checks and balances, and overall accountability. Aid given in support of parliaments should go directly to them.

- At a minimum, parliament should have an opportunity to debate financing of the government budget through presentation of an annual report by government, either annexed to the budget or separate.
- In performing their budgetary role, parliaments must ensure that all aid and loans from bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs, local authorities and others should be included in development budgets and subject to parliamentary oversight.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Donald H. Oliver, Q.C., Senator
President, Canadian Group IPU

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
ACTIVITY	United Nations Parliamentary Stakeholder Forum on Official Development Assistance
DESTINATION	Rome, Italy
DATES	June 12 – 13, 2008
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$3,711.98
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 780.54
HOSPITALITY	
PER DIEMS	\$ 438.79
OFFICIAL GIFTS	
MISCELLANEOUS	
TOTAL	\$4,931.31