



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the 16th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the
Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) and to
the Mission to the 37th Regular Session of the General
Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS)**

**Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas (FIPA)**

**Brasilia, Brazil and Panama City, Panama
May 31 to June 5, 2007**

Report

The Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) recently participated in two activities. The first activity, the 16th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA), was held in Brasilia, Brazil from May 31 to June 2, 2007. The second activity, the Mission to the 37th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), was held in Panama City, Panama from June 3 to 5, 2007.

16th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA)

The Chair of the Canadian Section of FIPA, Mr. James Bezan, M.P., also Member of the Executive Committee of FIPA, and the Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C., Senator, Former President of FIPA attended the FIPA Executive Committee meetings in Brasilia, Brazil. The President of FIPA, Deputy Luis Carlos Haully of the Brazilian House of Representatives, hosted the FIPA Executive Committee Members.

The FIPA Executive Committee had a very full agenda, which included regular business items such as budget approvals, financial reports, appointment of auditors, elections of the corporation's officers and activity reports. The agenda item that was of a particular interest was the discussion on the Trade Knowledge Workshop that was hosted by the Canadian Section of FIPA in Ottawa from March 18 to 20, 2007. The Executive Committee felt that the workshop was a success and that one should be offered every 8 to 12 months, rotating between the regions of the Americas and looking at various topic areas. It was also decided that future workshops must allow for more time for discussion and debate for participants.

The Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C., Senator reported to the Executive Committee on the discussions that are currently taking place between FIPA and COPA, the Confederation of the Parliaments of the Americas. She indicated that a document establishing points of similarity between both organizations will be discussed at COPA's next Executive Committee meeting. This exercise will serve as the basis for future discussions on how both organizations work to develop inter-parliamentary dialogue in the Americas.

The Executive Committee also discussed the next FIPA Plenary Assembly. There is still no country offering to host the event but President Haully was hopeful he could confirm a host country within the next month. The Executive Committee Members decided that the themes for the next plenary will be *Trade: Piracy and Dumping; Energy Sustainability and the Environment*, and, *Human Rights and Migration*.

Members of the FIPA Executive Committee also approved a declaration for the Organization of American States (OAS) asking that FIPA be recognized for its work in the Americas with parliamentarians, and be allowed to be a permanent participant in OAS and Summit of the Americas meetings. The declaration is attached (Appendix 1).

FIPA, as an independent network of the national legislatures of the member governments of the OAS, and with its goal to promote and develop inter-parliamentary dialogue on issues of importance to the citizens of the hemisphere, would benefit from this participation. Executive Committee Members Mr. James Bezan, Member of Parliament of Canada, Senator Ricardo Garcia Cervantes of Mexico and Mr. Stanford Callender, Member of Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, would deliver this declaration at the OAS General Assembly in Panama City.

Mission to the 37th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS)

A delegation from the Canadian Section of FIPA joined the FIPA representatives at the 37th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Panama City, Panama from June 3 to 5, 2007. It included the Honourable Michel Biron, Senator, Ms. Colleen Beaumier, M.P., and, Mr. Marcel Lussier, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Danielle Labonté, Association Secretary.

The Canadian Section of FIPA had a particular interest in the main theme of the Assembly, Energy for Sustainable Development, and felt that this Mission could improve its understanding of issues of hemispheric interest and improve its capacity to bring the recommendations on these issues back for consideration. The Canadian Section also looked forward to the rapprochement that this Mission would create with other parliaments in the Americas. The program of activities in Panama City allowed the delegation to meet its goals.

The Canadian Section of FIPA had the opportunity to observe three pre-Assembly Dialogues where Ministers of Foreign Affairs or Heads of delegations of the OAS Member States met with civil society representatives, permanent observers and representatives of the private sector to exchange experiences and information on the theme of the General Assembly as well as on other issues of common interest. These dialogues were also opportunities for the representatives of civil society and the private sector to communicate recommendations to be considered by the Heads of delegations during the General Assembly.

The delegation was also an observer at the four Plenary Sessions, which included not only regular business items such as elections, activity reports and adoption of resolutions and program-budget, but also important presentations from Heads of delegation. These sessions were of great interest as Heads of delegation presented their views on the theme of the General Assembly and reinforced their perspectives on hemispheric priorities such as democratic values and security. The Plenary Sessions also provided a forum for the presentation of views and progress on specific questions such as the Malvinas Islands and the peace process in Columbia. The final Plenary Session allowed for the observation of the approval of the Declaration of Panama on Energy for Sustainable Development. The declaration is attached (Appendix 2). The Canadian delegation also observed the discussions during the Meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) where the Heads of delegation discussed the status of the implementation of various activities initiated by the OAS.

The Mission was not only an opportunity to observe the meetings as part of the General Assembly agenda but was also an opportunity to have several bilateral meetings with Heads of delegations to gain support for furthering the linkages between FIPA and the OAS, and to finally gain, in principle, permanent observation status in future meetings. The delegation met with the Secretary General of the OAS. It also met with Ministers of Foreign affairs of Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Canada, Costa Rica and Guyana.

The activities in Panama also allowed for meetings with Panamanian parliamentarians. The delegation met with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Panama as well as Members of the Foreign Relations Committee and of the Canada-Panama Parliamentary Friendship Group. Finally, the activities in Panama included a visit of the Panama Canal and locks and a presentation on the Canal expansion project, a major undertaking by the Panamanian government following the recent referendum on this subject.

Conclusion

In the deliberations following the meetings in Panama City, the Canadian delegation concluded that its participation in these meetings had been a productive experience. This event provides an excellent opportunity for Canadian parliamentarians to familiarize themselves with the OAS objectives, discussions and decisions. This allows them to play a role in further defining and implementing programs that are initiated to support the OAS. This event also provides opportunities for Canadian parliamentarians to make contacts with their counterparts from across the Americas, to exchange ideas and perspectives on current issues, and to discuss common problems and policy challenges. It is suggested that a small delegation comprised of two to three parliamentarians, participate in the annual General Assembly of the OAS.

Finally, the Canadian delegation would like to thank the department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ambassador José Herrán Lima and officials from the Canadian Embassy in Panama as well as Ambassador Romy Vasquez de Gonzalez from the Panamanian Embassy in Canada for their support in the planning and coordination of the program.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. James Bezan, M.P.
Chair

Canadian Section
of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas (FIPA)

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C., Senator
Vice-Chair

Canadian Section
of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas (FIPA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA)
ACTIVITY	16 th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) and Mission to the 37 th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS)
DESTINATION	Brasilia, Brazil and Panama City, Panama
DATES	May 31 to June 5, 2007
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette Honourable Michel Biron
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. James Bezan Ms. Colleen Beaumier Mr. Marcel Lussier
STAFF	Ms. Danielle Labonté, Association Secretary
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 22,097.84
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 5,813.52
HOSPITALITY	\$ 276.53
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,296.28
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 161.80
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 165.99

TOTAL

\$ 29,811.96

Appendix 1

FIPA//EC/2007/DEC.1/e



Declaration to be presented at the 37th Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States

June 3-5 in Panama City, Panama

Adopted by the FIPA Executive Committee on June 1, 2007, in Brasilia, Brazil

CONSIDERING:

That the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) is an independent network composed of the national legislatures of the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS), whose purpose is to promote parliamentary participation in the inter-American system and to contribute to inter-parliamentary dialogue in dealing with issues on the hemispheric agenda, pursuant to Resolution 1673/99 of the OAS General Assembly.

FIPA's objective to "contribute to the process of integration as one of the most appropriate instruments for sustainable and harmonious development in the hemisphere";

That Heads of State and Government of the Americas decided, in the Plan of Action of the Third Summit of the Americas, to "Encourage cooperation and exchange of experiences and parliamentary best practices between national legislators of the Hemisphere, while respecting the separation and balance of powers, through bilateral, subregional and hemispheric vehicles such as the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA)";

The contribution made by FIPA since 2001 in advancing the hemispheric agenda, described in the report "From Quebec city to Mar del Plata: Progress by the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas", presented to Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the

Americas at the Fourth Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, on November 3, 2005, and to the OAS Permanent Council in Washington DC on April 12, 2006;

The importance that, in addressing the issue of “Energy for Sustainable Development”, the central theme of the 37th Session of the OAS General Assembly, the voice of parliamentarians be taken into account;

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

1. FORWARDS the recommendations adopted by the Plenary Assembly of FIPA on November 21, 2006, on the issues of Trade and Integration, Poverty Reduction, the Fight against Drug Trafficking, Gender Equality and Cultural Diversity to the OAS General Assembly and, in particular, its recommendation stating that “Policies that favour energy integration should be created, taking into account the challenges related to non-renewable resources and the opportunities offered by renewable resources such as bio-energy, wind energy and other sources”.
2. CALLS for OAS member governments to consider national parliaments as front-line actors in the oversight and implementation of commitments that stem from the General Assembly Declaration on “Energy for Sustainable Development,” as a means of ensuring that regional commitments in this area be translated into national legislation and policies that respond to the needs of the citizens they represent.
3. ASKS that the OAS General Assembly take note of the recommendation of the FIPA Executive Committee that representatives of member parliaments seek means through which legislators can contribute to the implementation of a regional energy agenda that fosters the harmonious and sustainable development of the hemisphere, during the Sixth FIPA Plenary Meeting.
4. CALLS for a strengthening of the collaboration between national parliaments and the OAS, through the establishment of two-way direct communication between FIPA and the OAS, the provision of parliamentary input to regional negotiations and debates when appropriate, and through the attribution of a special status that would allow FIPA to participate as an observer in meetings of the Organization.
5. CALLS for a formal recognition of the contribution made by national parliaments to the Summits of the Americas process and EXPRESSES its intention to submit to the Summits Implementation Review Group (SIRG) a proposal for FIPA to be recognized as a special parliamentary observer in this process.

Appendix 2

AG/DEC. 52 (XXXVII O/07)

DECLARATION OF PANAMA: ENERGY FOR sustainable DEVELOPMENT

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS), meeting in Panama City, Panama, during the thirty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly,

REAFFIRMING the principles and purposes of the OAS Charter, of the people of the Americas, as well as the sovereign right of our countries to the conservation, development, and sustainable use of their energy resources;

REAFFIRMING our commitments under the OAS Charter and to the principles enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Inter-American Democratic Charter states that the exercise of democracy promotes the preservation and good stewardship of the environment, and that it is essential that the states of the Hemisphere implement policies and strategies to protect the environment, to achieve sustainable development for the benefit of future generations;

RECOGNIZING that energy is an essential resource for sustainable development of peoples, and that access to energy that is diverse, reliable, secure, and affordable is of paramount importance to economic growth with equity and social inclusion, and contributes to poverty eradication;

AWARE that economic and social development and environmental conservation are complementary, and that they are among the essential goals of the OAS member states;

RECALLING that the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed, in paragraph 10, the right to development;

RECOGNIZING the different existing energy cooperation and integration initiatives in the region, based on solidarity and complementarity;

RECOGNIZING the importance of generating and strengthening regional markets for the use of cleaner and renewable energy, and of the exchange of information and experiences by member states on the matter;

RECOGNIZING the adverse effects and challenges of climate change and, accordingly, aware:

- Of the need to promote clean energy through research, development, and the transfer of environmentally sound technology, and international partnerships and/or agreements;
- Of the need to enhance energy efficiency and conservation in the Hemisphere and to promote sustainable patterns of production and consumption; and
- That the transition to a sustainable development model, based on the generation and efficient use of renewable forms of energy and balanced patterns of consumption will require the implementation of a set of progressive measures and, in that context, that it is important to continue promoting, through the use of cleaner and innovative technologies a better use of fossil fuels in relation to the environment, given their continued predominant role in the energy matrix;

NOTING that cooperation, partnerships, and/or agreements between the public and private sectors and other sectors of society, in accordance with national law, may help promote the Hemisphere's energy agenda;

RECOGNIZING that energy sector enterprises should assume and/or deepen social responsibility for the benefit of community development and conservation of the environment;

BEARING in mind that the Fourth Summit of the Americas recommends "favor[ing] the research, development, and adoption of renewable and efficient energy sources and the deployment of technology for cleaner and more efficient energy sources, including among them, those that foster the intensive use of labor, which, together with the promotion of sustainable development, and addressing climate change concerns, permit the reduction of poverty;"

UNDERSCORING the relationship between access to energy and the eradication of poverty to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;

BEARING IN MIND ALSO resolution AG/RES. 2253 (XXXVI-O/06), "Support for the Use of New and Renewable Energy Sources;"

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the policies and programs promoted by the member states to encourage the use of new and renewable energy sources for sustainable development, such as solar, biomass, including biofuels, wind, tidal, hydroelectric, minihydraulic, and geothermal, and recognizing also the contributions of regional initiatives in the area of energy cooperation;

EMPHASIZING that energy is fundamental to achieving sustainable development objectives and that therefore, the combination and complementarity of use of all types of energy sources, including a cleaner use of fossil fuels, contributes to the attainment of those objectives;

CONSIDERING that the hydro-resources in the region, *inter alia*, represent an important source for the generation of renewable energy;

BEARING IN MIND that the Declaration of Santa Cruz +10 promotes the strengthening of regional and sub-regional cooperation on sustainable development, particularly regarding environmental education and awareness, the training and enhancement of human resources, and the creation and strengthening of networks and other cooperation mechanisms; and

CONSIDERING that the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (2006-2009) (PIDS) refers to, among its areas of action, the development of programs for the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency,

DECLARE:

1. Their recognition of the fundamental importance to the member states of the availability of energy resources for the promotion of their economic and social development in an environmentally sustainable manner.

2. Their recognition of the need to obtain and use all forms of energy that are in harmony with life and nature, preserving air, water, and land which provide indispensable food and habitat for all living beings, and to foster access for the more vulnerable populations, consistent with social and environmental sensitivity.

3. Their resolve to underscore that democratic governance, strong democratic institutions, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential elements in advancing the energy and sustainable development goals of member states and the region, combating social exclusion, and advancing the public good.

4. Their recognition of the importance of transparency in energy related government and private sector activities, as well as underscoring the importance of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption to the states of the Hemisphere and its follow-up mechanism (MESICIC).

5. Their recognition also that the region must endeavor to reduce its vulnerability to fluctuations in the price and supply of energy and seek to increase its energy independence through measures such as, the diversification of the energy matrix, favoring an increase in the sustainable use of renewable and cleaner energy or other modalities, as appropriate, in accordance with each country's legislation, improving energy efficiency in general in all sectors of the economy, and to increase their coverage of energy services for social development purposes.

6. Their need to recognize the potential of biofuels for diversifying the energy matrix of the Hemisphere. Accordingly, they will join efforts to share experiences gained in the region, with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the sustainable use of those sources to promote social, technological, agricultural, and productive development.

7. Their emphasis on the long-term sustainability of energy supply in the member states depends on the efficient management and development and sustainable use of natural resources for conversion into innovative and environmentally sound energy applications.

8. Their recognition of the importance of ensuring compatibility among the production of all energy sources, agricultural production, preservation of the environment, and the promotion and defense of decent social and labor conditions, ensuring the role of the Americas as an efficient energy producer.

9. Their resolve to develop and invest in national, subregional, and regional energy infrastructures to facilitate the availability of and access to energy, as well as to protect them and to move toward subregional and regional energy integration. To these ends, we emphasize the advisability, in accordance with national law of public-private partnerships and/or agreements, giving priority to those favoring our sustainable development.

10. Their support for the efforts toward the sustainable development of the member states, through use of energy strategies and services recommended in this Declaration that can promote the generation of productive activities and the introduction of new environmentally sound technologies in matters that concern energy.

11. Their recognition of the need to strengthen economic and technical cooperation at the regional and international levels in the energy sector.

12. Their resolve to joining forces in the implementation of energy policies in the Hemisphere to develop projects and initiatives based on solidarity, transparency, cooperation, and complementarity, to promote more prosperous, just, equitable and inclusive societies.

13. Their support for energy integration efforts, including existing experiences, and continued progress in the integration of energy systems and networks, and in the study of the possibility of harmonizing regulations among member states, in order to promote sustainable development and the more efficient and rational use of energy resources and increased marketing of energy products and services among such states.

14. Their determination to increase access by citizens of the member states to efficient energy services; and to emphasize that the use of energy for household purposes and for small scale productive activities contributes to improving living conditions and fighting poverty.

15. Their recognition of the need for member states to draw upon their experiences and those of multilateral organizations, *inter alia*, to promote synergy among specific programs on the use of energy for sustainable development and to study possible innovative funding and cooperation mechanisms.

16. Their recognition of the importance of multilateral lending and cooperation agencies for promoting new and innovative financing mechanisms and advisory services aimed at fostering renewable energy and access to new cleaner technologies as well as the more efficient use of existing programs and the use of special funds created with voluntary contributions from donor.

17. Their recognition also of the efforts of those countries that, based on the implementation of new financing modalities, promote sustainable development, the use of renewable energy, cleaner energy, and environmental protection, in particular, for those areas that are rich in biodiversity.

18. Their recognition also of the contribution of private-sector participation, in accordance with national laws and policies, in the development of traditional and new energy sources and in the installation of national and international distribution systems and networks.

19. Their recognition of the urgent need to take measures, mostly in the transportation and industry sectors, for the use of more efficient and cleaner technologies, the better use of existing technologies, and the use of less polluting fuels, bearing in mind also the need to promote the participation of micro-, and medium-sized enterprises, including cooperatives and other production units to contribute to this effort.

20. Their recognition of the importance of promoting the development of cleaner and more efficient technologies conducive to the greater use of renewable and less polluting energy in public and private transportation, as well as to promote an expanded use of public transportation with said technology, both to increase the efficient use of energy and to reduce its environmental impact.

21. Their commitment to encourage the input of financial resources, including those of the private sector, with the aim of promoting the dissemination and transfer of environmentally sustainable technologies, and capacity-building.

22. Their encouragement of an efficient energy resource management that reflects what is required for achieving sustainable development in all the member states, taking into consideration national circumstances.

23. Their request to the General Secretariat, in coordination with other institutions and experts, to:

- continue to promote instructional and training programs for relevant actors in the public and private energy sectors and taking into account the possibilities offered by the Scholarships and Training Program of the OAS and other possible funding sources;
- maintain, update, and distribute a registry of specialists of the member states who, at the request of the countries of the region, can offer cooperation on energy matters; and

- support regional dialogue for the creation and strengthening of markets and the promotion of energy efficiency and conservation for sustainable development.

24. Their request to the Permanent Council and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) to convene an inter-American meeting of national authorities and experts, with the participation of other relevant institutions before the General Assembly in 2008, for the discussion of experiences, best practices, and other information relating to the subject of this Declaration that will contribute to the sustainable development of all countries in the Hemisphere, and to create a Joint Working Group of the Permanent Council and CIDI to define the meeting's agenda.

25. Their request to the General Secretariat of the OAS, to promote the support and synergy of States, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, and the academic community, to promote the contents of this Declaration of Panama, and to report on a regular basis to the Permanent Council and to the Inter-American Council for Integral Development.

26. Their appreciation to the people and Government of the Republic of Panama for their warm hospitality during the thirty-seventh regular session of the OAS General Assembly.