



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

to the

**Meeting of the APF Bureau
Châlons-en-Champagne, France
January 16-19, 2007**

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch that participated in the meeting of the Bureau of the “*Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*” (APF) in Châlons-en-Champagne, France, from January 16 to 19, 2007.

Report

Led by Bernard Patry, MP, President of the APF, the delegation also included the Honourable Pierre De Bané, Senator and Chair of the APF's Parliamentary Affairs Committee. They were accompanied by Jean Michel Roy, the Branch's Executive Secretary.

The meeting of the APF's Bureau was chaired by Mr. Patry and the following branches were represented: Belgium/French Community/Wallonie-Bruxelles, Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Egypt, France, Jura, Laos, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Mali, Morocco, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Romania, Switzerland, Tunisia, Val D'Aosta and Vietnam.

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

On Wednesday, January 17, Mr. Patry began by attending the meeting of the Bureau's Permanent Delegation, which he chaired. The main item on the agenda was the report of the APF's Treasurer. In his report, the Treasurer raised the following matters: the increase in the branches' dues for the 2007 fiscal year; future increases in dues; arrears in the payment of dues by certain branches and the status of collections of those dues since 2003, and, lastly, the eventual installation of the General Secretariat at the *Maison de la Francophonie* in Paris, and related expenses.

Following the meeting of the Permanent Delegation, Senator De Bané joined Mr. Patry for the start of the Bureau's proceedings on the following items.

Ordre de la Pléiade

The nominations submitted by the Canadian Branch were approved.

Activity Report of the Parliamentary Secretary General

In his activity report, the Parliamentary Secretary General described the high-level parliamentary mission led by Mr. Patry, who was in Haiti from September 4 to 8, 2006. The decision to send the mission was made pursuant to the lifting of the suspension measure that had been imposed on the Haitian Branch at the last session of the Assembly in Rabat, in July 2006. As a result, the Haitian Branch has now been reinstated in all APF activities, and its Parliament may now enjoy interparliamentary co-operation programs. The Parliamentary Secretary General emphasized that the APF delegation was the first parliamentary mission to travel to Port-au-Prince since the last legislative elections. During the mission, the President of Haiti's Senate announced to his counterparts that the Haitian Branch of the APF would be reconstituted during the week, that he would become its President and the President of the Chamber of Deputies its Vice-President. The Parliamentary Secretary General also recalled that the APF had announced that, in the first months of 2007, it would be organizing an information seminar for elected members and training for staff, as well as a seminar of the Network of Women Parliamentarians.

The Parliamentary Secretary General also noted that, on September 28, 2006, the APF's President, Mr. Patry, had presented the Assembly's Opinion at the

XIth Francophone Summit held in Bucharest, Romania. That Opinion concerned the theme of the Summit: "Information Technologies in Education".

On another matter, the Bureau passed a resolution on ratification of the Convention on Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions. That resolution calls on all member Francophone states and governments to ratify, accept and approve or become party to the Convention, in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures, if possible on the occasion of March 20, the *Journée de la Francophonie*, in order to support the efforts of civil society and to increase international support for this instrument. The Convention will enter into effect on March 18.

Address by the Secretary General of *La Francophonie*

Upon presentation of the report of the Parliamentary Secretary General, Bureau members had the privilege of receiving the Secretary General of *La Francophonie*, His Excellency Mr. Abdou Diouf, who delivered a message to them. Mr. Diouf's message was delivered in the context of the 40th anniversary of the creation of the *Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française* (AIPLF). The Secretary General took the opportunity to review major events in the history of *La Francophonie*.

The morning's proceedings were followed by a brief ceremony in which the insignia of the *Grand Croix de l'Ordre de la Pléiade* were presented to Mr. Patry.

Proceedings then resumed on the following items.

Committee Business

Senator De Bané, Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, presented the committee's report. Senator De Bané recalled that, at the committee's last meeting in Rabat, Morocco, the decision had been made to pursue a number of topics and projects, including access to information for all citizens and freedom of the press; the report on "*La vie des assemblées dans l'espace francophone : recueil des procédures et des pratiques parlementaires*" [The life of assemblies in the French-speaking world: compendium of parliamentary procedures and practices - Tr.] and the election observation missions.

Senator De Bané closed the presentation of his report by announcing that the committee would meet in Sofia, Bulgaria, from May 21 to 25. The aforementioned topics will be addressed at that time, as well as interparliamentary co-operation programs.

Reports of the Regional Chargés de Mission

The chargé de mission for America, Michel Samson (Nova Scotia) noted in his activity report the following resolutions adopted at the XXIIIrd Session of the *Assemblée régionale Amérique* held in Toronto, Ontario, from August 23 to 27, 2006.

A resolution on ratification of the Convention on Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

A resolution on the place of French in international organizations called upon to play a role in the Middle East.

A resolution on the vitality of the Francophone community outside Quebec in the North American context.

Follow-up on the Work of the Network of Women Parliamentarians

The President of the Network of Women Parliamentarians drew Bureau members' attention to the fourth seminar for women parliamentarians on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was held in Tunis, Tunisia, on October 30 and 31, 2006.

Preparations for the XXXIIIrd Session in Libreville, Gabon

The XXXIIIrd Session of the APF will be held in Libreville, Gabon, from July 2 to 7. At that time, the Assembly will renew the Bureau and the committee chairs.

Thursday, January 18, 2007

On Thursday, January 18, 2007, the Bureau resumed its proceedings on the following points.

Presentation and Review of the Proposed Budget for 2007

In his report, the Treasurer reviewed the points raised at the meeting of the Permanent Delegation. The dues of the branches will increase by 1.8% in 2007, an increase equal to the rate of inflation forecast in France for the same period. An increase equal to 10% more than the forecast inflation rate was approved for 2008.

Review of the Situation in Several Countries

It was noted that the branches of Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were still under suspension.

The following resolutions concerning the situation in a number of countries were adopted:

Democratic Republic of the Congo: resolution supporting consolidation of democratic institutions;

Mauritania: resolution for the completion of the transition process;

Mauritania: resolution authorizing organization of a parliamentary seminar;

Côte d'Ivoire: resolution to terminate deadlocks and organize elections within the scheduled time frame;

Lebanon: resolution to resume political dialogue;

Central African Republic – Chad – Darfur: resolution to encourage regional political dialogue.

Interparliamentary Co-operation Programs

A report was given on the main interparliamentary co-operation programs: parliamentary seminars, internships for parliamentary employees, national youth parliaments, the *Parlement francophone des jeunes*, the IVth Session of which will be held in Libreville, Gabon, in July 2007, and the NORIA program the purpose of which is to meet the needs of certain Francophone parliaments in the south for greater internal legislative information production, management and distribution capabilities.

Election Observation Missions

In his activity report, the Parliamentary Secretary General noted that the legislative elections in Mauritania on November 19 and December 3, 2006 had been properly held and, consequently, that the Bureau and General Assembly could consider the possibility of reinstating the Mauritanian Branch within the APF.

Miscellaneous

Michel Bissonnet, Speaker of the National Assembly and President of the Quebec Branch of the APF, announced that the XXXIVth Session of the APF would be held in Quebec City from July 2 to 8, 2008, as part of the city's 400th anniversary celebrations.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrée Champagne, Senator,
President

Travel Cost

ASSOCIATION	Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) Canadian Branch
ACTIVITY	Meeting of the APF Bureau
DESTINATION	Châlons-en-Champagne (France)
DATES	January 16-19, 2007
SENATORS	Hon. Pierre De Bané, Senator
MEMBERS	Bernard Patry, MP
STAFF	Jean Michel Roy
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 11,449.56
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 3,371.46
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,598.97
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 292.50
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 112.00
TOTAL	\$ 16,824.49