

Canada - Africa  
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire  
Canada - Afrique

**Report of**

**the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation**  
**on the Bilateral Visits to Kenya, Burundi, and Rwanda**

**Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association**

**Nairobi, Kenya; Bujumbura, Burundi;**  
**Kigali and Butare, Rwanda**

**June 22 to 28, 2008**

# Report

The Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association was represented by the Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, Co-Chair of the association; the Honourable Mauril Bélanger, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair of the association; the Honourable Mobina S.B. Jaffer, Senator; Mr. Robert Carrier, M.P.; Mr. David Christopherson, M.P.; and Mrs. Nina Grewal, M.P. Mr. Rémi Bourgault, Executive Secretary of the association, and Mr. Michael Dewing, Analyst for the association accompanied the delegation.

## OBJECTIVES

The Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association undertook bilateral visits to Kenya, Burundi, and Rwanda from 22 to 28 June 2008. The visits had the following objectives:

- to strengthen bilateral relations;
- to engage parliamentarians on democracy and governance;
- to learn about Canada's role in east-central Africa from Canadian diplomats and personnel from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); and
- to meet with representatives of non-governmental organizations that have links with Canada.

To meet these objectives, the delegation met with Kenyan, Burundian, and Rwandan parliamentarians and government officials, Canadian officials, representatives of United Nations agencies, academics, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. They also visited development projects in Nairobi, Kenya and in rural Rwanda.

The visit followed up on the Association's 2007 visit to Tanzania and Uganda. A common theme of these visits was the evolution of the East African Community (EAC). The EAC is an intergovernmental organization made up of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda. The partner countries are working to widen and deepen co-operation among themselves. They established a customs union in 2005 and they hope to establish a common market by 2010, a monetary union by 2012, and, ultimately, a political federation of the East African States.(1)

Burundi and Rwanda joined the EAC in 2007 and the Association was particularly interested in discussing their incorporation into the organization. The other countries in the EAC have English as an official language and common-law traditions, while Burundi and Rwanda have French as an official language and civil-law traditions. The delegation's discussions with African counterparts also dealt with governance, the role of women, and the situations in Zimbabwe and Sudan.

## KENYA

### A. Key Issues

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(1) East African Community, "Welcome to EAC," <http://www.eac.int/index.php/about-eac/34-body-text-area/1-welcome-to-eac.html>.

Kenya was dealing with the aftermath of the violence that followed the December 2007 election. In February 2008, Party of National Unity (PNU) leader Mwai Kibaki and Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) leader Raila Odinga agreed to share power, and a coalition government was established in which cabinet posts were allocated on the basis of each party's representation in Parliament.

During President Kibaki's first term (2003-2007), the government adopted an economic reform program. Economic growth exceeded 5% per year in 2005, 2006, and 2007. On the 2007/2008 Human Development index, Kenya ranked 148th out of 177, and on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2007, it ranked 150th out of 179.

The Canadian High Commission in Nairobi is Canada's largest mission in Africa. Kenya is one of CIDA's 14 African development partner countries in which CIDA concentrates the major part of its bilateral assistance. Since 1961, Canada has disbursed approximately \$600 million in development assistance to Kenya. Trade between the two countries is modest in both directions, totaling \$72 million in 2007.(2)

## **B. Visits and Meetings**

### **1. Visit to the Kibera Informal Settlement**

On Sunday 22 June, members of the delegation visited the Kibera informal settlement, one of Africa's largest slums. Located in Mr. Odinga's constituency on the outskirts of Nairobi, it is roughly four square kilometres – about the size of Stanley Park in Vancouver, British Columbia – and home to as many as one million people(3). Kibera was the site of much of the post-election violence.

The delegation was greeted by the District Officer and members of the Kibera Women's Network (KWN), an umbrella body of some 47 community groups. It receives funding from the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, a program funded by CIDA.

After visiting the District Officer's Office, members of the KWN led the delegation on a visit to six development projects within Kibera, including a peace and hope garden, a youth self-help labour project, a vegetable garden project, a workshop where they make jewellery out of animal bones, and an environmental project.

At the end of the visit – which was covered by local media – the delegates listened to children recite poems and heard speeches by elders and youth. They asked for Canada's ongoing support, especially in helping to create jobs for idle youth. In response, members of the delegation said they would take this message back to Canada.

### **2. Meeting with Vice President and Minister for Home Affairs, The Honourable Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka**

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(2) Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, "Canada-Kenya Relations," April 2008, <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/geo/kenya-bb-en.aspx>.

(3) Kibera Slum Foundation, "About Kibera," <http://www.kslum.org/aboutkibera.htm>.

On Monday 23 June, the delegation met with the Honourable Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, Vice-President and Minister for Home Affairs. The meeting was open to the media. Mr. Musyoka was first elected to Parliament in 1985, and has served as deputy speaker, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Minister for Education. He came third in the 2007 presidential election.

Mr. Musyoka talked about the warm relations between Canada and Kenya, discussed the evolution of the EAC, reviewed the political situation in Kenya and Kenya's regional role, and talked about the challenges ahead. He called on Canada to take leadership in encouraging the private sector to invest in Kenya and said that instituting direct flights would bring the two countries closer. In response to questions from the delegation, he discussed events in Zimbabwe and the situation in Sudan and elaborated on the Kenyan political situation.

### **3. Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs, The Honourable Wycliffe Musalia Mudavadi**

The delegation met with the Honourable Wycliffe Musalia Mudavadi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs. A member of the ODM, Mr. Mudavadi is one of two deputy prime ministers in the coalition government. He first became a Member of Parliament in 1989 and served briefly as vice-president under President Daniel arap Moi.(4)

During the discussion with the delegation, Mr. Mudavadi talked about the taxation of parliamentarians' salaries, the process for reviewing the constitution, the question of amnesty for those involved in the post-election violence, short-term and long-term solutions for reconciliation, the operation of the coalition government given the lack of an official opposition, and Kenya's response to the situation in Zimbabwe. The meeting was preceded by a press briefing.

### **4. Working lunch with CSO partners and CIDA governance unit**

High Commissioner Hynes hosted a working lunch with representatives from the following Community Service Organizations (CSO): ACDC Women in Development Programme; Community Aid International; Community Based Development Services; Constitution and Reform Education Consortium; Kenya Human Rights Commission; Kenya National Commission on Human Rights; Kenya Women Parliamentarian Association; Kibera Women Network; Regional Centre for Stability, Security & Peace in Africa; SISA Centre for Corporate Partnership; and URAIA – the second phase of Kenya's National Civic Education Programme. They were joined by CIDA staffers from the Canadian High Commission.

The discussion revolved around governance, constitutional reform, security sector reform, the role of CSOs in the reform process, political parties, and the changing role of men and women in society.

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(4) "Musalia Mudavadi," Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musalia\\_Mudavadi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musalia_Mudavadi).

## **5. Meeting at the Ministry of East African Community with Minister Hon. Amason Kingi Jeffah, Assistant Minister Hon. Peter Munya, and Mr. David Nalo, Permanent Secretary**

The delegation met with the Honourable Amason Kingi Jeffah, Minister of East African Community; the Honourable Peter Munya, Assistant Minister for East African Community; and Mr. David Nalo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of East African Community. Mr. Jeffah is a lawyer who has worked in private practice as well as with the Constitutional Review Commission. Mr. Munya is a former university law lecturer who was first elected in 2002. Mr. Nalo is a career civil servant who holds a master's degree in economics from Concordia University in Montreal.

Minister Jeffah began by giving an overview of the EAC's strategic plan to create a common market, a monetary union, and, ultimately, a political federation. He said the challenges were the need for political will and the need to develop the region's infrastructure. Mr. Munya then discussed the underlying reasons for creating a political federation of the EAC countries, including the historical ties between the countries and the region's shared language, Kiswahili (Swahili). He was followed by Mr. Nalo, who talked about the need to build negotiating capacity and to develop the region's transportation networks, especially railways.

In response to questions from the delegation, the Minister addressed the different levels of support for the EAC in the different countries of the region. He recognized that countries as different as Kenya and Burundi cannot be compared, and discussed the step-by-step approach being pursued by the EAC countries. If the common market, which is expected to be created by 2010, goes well, he said, then the next steps should fall into place. On the question of the language to be used in the EAC, the Minister said that English is the official language, but that most are also comfortable with Kiswahili. The Minister also discussed the workings of the East African Legislative Assembly and noted that bills require the approval of the Council of Ministers. Representatives of the news media then came in for a briefing.

## **6. Working dinner with the Speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya and other MPs**

The delegation attended a working dinner hosted by High Commissioner Hynes. It was attended by the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Honourable Kenneth Marende; the chair of the Parliamentary Investment Committee, the Honourable Mithika Linturi; the vice chair of the Public Accounts Committee, the Honourable Thomas Mwadeghu; and the Senior Deputy Clerk, Mr. Peter Omolo. They talked about parliamentary business, regulation of political parties, public financing of political parties, sessions, election of the speaker, the role of the opposition, the ways in which MPs can switch parties, the constitution, and MPs' salaries.

### **BURUNDI**

#### **A. Key Issues**

Burundi has long been subject to ethnic and tribal tensions between Hutus and Tutsis. In the 1990s, they culminated in a dozen years of ethnic violence, during which more than 200,000 people were killed. In 2001 an accord signed in Arusha, Tanzania

provided for a three-year transitional government, the integration of Hutu rebels into the armed forces, and an electoral system that would ensure power-sharing between the Tutsi and the Hutu. The composition of the National Assembly was set at 60% for Hutu parties and 40% for Tutsi parties. A new constitution was adopted in 2005 and in 2006, a ceasefire was signed with the last rebel group, the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (*Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu*) – National Forces of Liberation (*Forces Nationales de Libération*) (PALIPEHUTU-FNL), ending 16 years of civil war. Despite the ceasefire, sporadic fighting continued into 2008.

Burundi is dealing with the aftermath of this ethnic conflict. Ten years of economic decline have left it one of the poorest countries in Africa. Economic growth has been low, averaging 2.7% per year between 2001 and 2006. Burundi ranked 167th out of 177 on the 2007/2008 Human Development index and 131st out of 179 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2007.

Canada supports Burundi's reconciliation process and assisted the peace process. CIDA does not have a bilateral assistance program in Burundi, but it does assist the country through multilateral and regional programs.

The political situation was extremely tense in the weeks and months prior to the delegation's visit. There was a split within the ruling National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (*Conseil National Pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie*, or CNDD-FDD). The government lost its majority, but regained it when the Constitutional Court ruled that 22 dissident members could be replaced by members loyal to the leadership.(5) In addition, the opposition Front for Democracy in Burundi (*Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi*, or FRODEBU) contested the distribution of responsibilities among ministers and the lack of consultation. A number of politicians said they feared for their lives. As a result of these political crises, the National Assembly was paralysed and some 20 laws were blocked.(6)

## **B. Meetings**

### **1. Meeting with Mr. Youssef Mahmoud, Executive Representative of the UN Secretary-General**

On 24 June, at the compound of the United Nations Integrated Bureau for Burundi (*Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi*, or BINUB), the delegation met with Mr. Youssef Mahmoud, Executive Representative of the UN Secretary-General. The BINUB was created by the UN Security Council in 2006 to assist the government in its

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(5) International Crisis Group, "Burundi: Restarting Political Dialogue," 19 August 2008, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5632&l=1>.

(6) United Nations Security Council, "Third Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi," 15 May 2008, <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Burundi%20S%202008%20330.pdf>.

efforts towards peace and stability through coherent and coordinated response of the UN System in Burundi.(7)

Mr. Mahmoud has a long career with the United Nations, prior to which he was an Assistant Professor of Linguistics at the University of Tunis.(8)

Mr. Mahmoud began by explaining the complex situation in Burundi. He said he was hopeful despite the country's many challenges. He identified the three main challenges as repatriation of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL; Burundi's weak institutions and their lack of legitimacy; and the poor socio-economic situation.

On the positive side, Mr. Mahmoud said the population had turned the page on violence, the Arusha accords had established guidelines for the balance between Hutus and Tutsis in parliament and in the army; and civil society was organizing itself in a remarkable way. He argued that Burundi's peaceful development was a challenge for the international community, and that stability in Burundi was essential for stability in the Great Lakes region.

In response to questions from the delegation, Mr. Mahmoud discussed initiatives for improving governance, developments regarding the security situation, efforts to combat corruption, the issue of direct budget support, and efforts to improve the situation of women. He also talked about the integration of Burundi into the EAC and the situation of returning refugees.

## **2. Working lunch with the Vice-Minister Responsible for the East African Community and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials**

The delegation hosted a working lunch with Mr. Déo Nduwimana, the Vice Minister Responsible for the East African Community and Mr. Gaudence Sindayigaya, the chief of staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. They were joined by Ambassador Jérémie Ndayiziga and Ambassador Edonias Niyongabo, advisors to the minister of regional integration.

The discussion began on the subject of the reasons why Burundi had joined the EAC. Mr. Nduwimana pointed out that because of Burundi's isolation, it needed to cooperate with other countries. Due to the physical barriers to the west, commerce naturally tends to flow eastward, and Burundi depends on East African countries for most of its trade. He said integration into a wider region would help stabilize Burundi.

On the subject of language, Mr. Nduwimana said Burundi shares a common indigenous language with East Africans. He said that French would not disappear, and that it would

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(7) UN Integrated Bureau for Burundi, "BINUB's Mandate,"

[http://binub.turretdev.com/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=48](http://binub.turretdev.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=48).

(8) United Nations, Secretary General, News Release, "Secretary-General Appoints Youssef Mahmoud of Tunisia as Deputy Special Representative for Burundi," 22 September 2006, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sga1021.doc.htm>.

continue to be an asset for Burundi. At the same time, he said the people of Burundi had an interest in learning to use English.

In response to questions from the delegation, Mr. Nduwimana discussed labour mobility, the move toward a political federation, and the advantages of joining multilateral bodies.

### **3. Meeting with Mr. Charles Chileya, Deputy Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Regions, and Mr. Silas Sinyigaya, Program Officer**

The delegation met Mr. Charles Kapekele Chileya, Deputy Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Regions (ICGLR) and program officer Mr. Silas Sinyigaya. The ICGLR was created in the aftermath of the civil strife in Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2004, the leaders of the region (9) signed the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region. This was followed in 2006 by a Pact on Security, Stability and Development, which created the ICGLR Secretariat. The Secretariat has 11 international staff and 11 Burundian nationals who act as support staff.

Mr. Chileya gave an overview of the ICGLR and talked about the two Conferences of Parliamentarians of the Great Lakes Region that have taken place. He talked about parliamentarians' interest in creating a forum for parliamentarians for the region. In response to questions, he said a permanent forum was needed to harmonize human rights instruments and that care would be taken to avoid duplication with other groups. In closing, he described a number of governance projects being undertaken by the ICGLR.

### **4. Meeting with the Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies**

The delegation visited the Parliament of Burundi and met with the Speaker of the Senate, Honourable Gervais Rufyikiri and the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Honourable Pie Ntavyohanyuma, as well as two deputies, two senators, and two members of the parliamentary staff.

The Speakers gave an overview of the Parliament of Burundi, talked about the challenges facing it as a young parliament, and expressed their desire for greater ties between the Parliaments of Burundi and Canada. In discussion with the delegation, the Burundian parliamentarians explained the parliamentary blockage, the two-thirds quorum needed to conduct business, the system of party lists, the ethnic balance in party slates, the role of women in parliament, and minority governments.

### **5. Meeting with the President of Burundi**

On 25 June, members of the delegation met the President of Burundi, His Excellency Honourable Pierre Nkurunziza. President Nkurunziza is a former teacher and university lecturer who, after surviving an attack on the University of Burundi by the Tutsi-led army

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(9) Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo (Republic of), Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.



in 1995, led the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (*Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie*, or FDD) rebel group during the civil war. After the FDD signed the peace accords in 2003, he became a member of the transitional government. In 2005, he became Burundi's first democratically elected president since civil war broke out.<sup>(10)</sup>

At the meeting with the President, members of the delegation stated the objectives of the Association's visit, noting that the delegation represents all political parties and both Houses of Parliament. They stressed the Association's interest in the East African community and the important role of parliamentarians in providing checks and balances on the executive branch.

The President outlined his country's issues after years of conflict. Some changes will take longer to implement, but he pointed out that elementary school is now free, along with medical care for children under the age of five. Not all children can attend school yet though since there are still not enough schools.

His government's priorities are education, health and agriculture. In response to a question, the President spoke about justice issues in Burundi and impunity after over ten years of conflict. He also addressed the peacekeeping role and impact of the United Nations in Burundi.

## **6. Meeting with representatives of Burundian political parties**

The Association hosted a meeting with representatives of the ruling CNDD-FDD and two opposition parties: FRODEBU and Union for National Progress (*Union pour le Progrès national*, UPRONA). Representing the CNDD-FDD were Honourable Latare Myuyekure and Senator Richard Nimbasha. Representing FRODEBU were chairman Honourable Pierre Claver Nahimana and Honourable Léonce Ngendarudhona. Representing UPRONA were party president Honourable Aloys Rubuka, vice-president Honourable Antoine Cishahayo, and Honourable Bonaventure Niyoyankana.

The Burundian parliamentarians talked about the Arusha Accords and the problems that had arisen with the power-sharing arrangement. They also discussed the integration of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. Although the opposition members and members of the CNDD-FDD disagreed about the operation of the power-sharing agreement, they agreed on the need for dialogue. The parliamentarians also talked about regional integration as a way of promoting cohabitation, but wondered whether Burundi had the economic capacity to participate in a competitive environment.

In discussion with members of the delegation, the Burundian parliamentarians elaborated on the application of the Arusha Accords and discussed the operation of the parliamentary quorum and the ethnic and gender quotas.

## **7. Working Lunch and roundtable on Human Rights and Good Governance with CSO**

The delegation hosted a lunch and roundtable discussion on human rights and good governance with University of Burundi Human Rights Law Professor Gervais

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(10) "Pierre Nkurunziza," *Britannica Online Encyclopedia*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1090732/Pierre-Nkurunziza>.

Gatunange and representatives of the following civil society organizations: *Observatoire de l'Action Gouvernementale*, *Ligue Burundaise des Droits de l'Homme* (Iteka), and *Observatoire de lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques* (OLUCOME). The discussion revolved around the issues of transitional justice, reconciliation, human rights projects, the fight against corruption, governance, the 2010 election, the proliferation of weapons, and the role of women.

## **RWANDA**

### **A. Key Issues**

Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa and, like Burundi, has long been subject to ethnic and tribal tensions between Hutus and Tutsis. These tensions culminated in the 1994 genocide in which about 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. Since then, Rwanda has been dealing with the aftermath of the genocide and has been looking for ways to bring about peace and reconciliation.

Rwanda has made progress in the area of reconciliation, and it held multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections in 2003. Rwanda has also instituted economic reforms that have led to strong growth. Between 1995 and 2005, Rwanda's GDP growth averaged 7.4% per year. In September 2007, Rwanda was ranked the most improved sub-Saharan nation in the Ibrahim Index, a governance survey by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation. On the 2007/2008 Human Development index, Rwanda ranked 161st out of 177, and on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2007, it ranked 111th out of 179.

Rwanda is one of Canada's development partner countries. They have cooperated on development since 1963, and since then, CIDA has contributed over \$500 million to Rwanda.(11) After the genocide, Canada lead international efforts to re-establish Rwanda's social institutions and infrastructure. Canada also supports projects to train Rwandan journalists. Trade between Canada and Rwanda is limited.(12)

### **B. Visits and Meetings**

#### **1. East African Investment Conference Opening Ceremonies**

On 26 June, the delegation attended the opening ceremonies of the First East African Investment Conference in Kigali. The Conference was hosted by the Government of Rwanda to bring together heads of state, business people, and government officials to explore ways to increase trade in the region.

In his address, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni emphasized the role of the private sector in reducing poverty and creating wealth. He said a number of conditions needed

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(11) Canadian International Development Agency, "Rwanda: Programming Framework (2005-2001)," Updated 23 July 2008, <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/JUD-22212111-MYG>.

(12) Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, "Rwanda-Canada Bilateral Relations," July 2008, <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/geo/rwanda-bb-en.aspx>.

to be met, including security of the person, security of investors, infrastructure development, convertible currencies, and market access. He also said infrastructure should be built using local resources instead of relying on donors.

The opening ceremony was also addressed by Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki, Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza, and the host of the Conference, Rwandan President Paul Kagame. President Kagame said that Africa was at cross roads and needed the tools to get itself to the desirable destination. He identified these tools as increasing sophistication in order to enter into world-class investment and trade ventures, developing infrastructure development strategies, and using the strength of the East African people themselves.

After the opening speeches, members of the delegation had the chance to reacquaint themselves with the Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly, Honourable Abdirahin Haithar Abdi, the Executive Director of the Uganda Investment Authority, Professor Maggie Kigozi, and others.

## **2. Working lunch with members of the African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption**

The delegation held a working lunch with President Constance Rwaka, MP, and other members of the Rwandan section of the African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption (APNAC).

In discussion with the delegation, the members of APNAC discussed Rwanda's efforts to combat corruption, including its anti-corruption laws, its ratification of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, and its parliamentary oversight mechanisms. They also discussed the advantages of joining the EAC, such as the harmonization of laws on good governance, the harmonization of the fiscal year, and the managing of public funds. President Rwaka described this as a win-win situation.

The discussion also touched on Rwanda's multiparty system and its quotas for women, MPs' salaries, the powers of oversight committees such as the Public Accounts Committee – including the power to subpoena – and the need for consensus when deciding major issues. The dialogue then moved to the subject of the role of women in Rwandan society and in Parliament. The delegates and the members of APNAC also discussed International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the efforts to bring to justice those involved in the genocide.

During the lunch, the delegation announced that the Canadian visa application form had been changed to delete a question about the name of the ethnic group indicated on pre-1996 Rwandan identity cards.

## **3. Visit to a rural development project**

On 27 June, the delegation drove 135km south of Kigali to the town of Butare. On the way, it visited a rural development project in the Ruhango District. The project, which is administered by German Agro Action, aims to increase agricultural production in the Base-Kiryango Valley. It focuses on developing the marshland in the valley for rice growing, terracing the hills to prevent erosion, and building roads so that supplies can be brought in and any agricultural surplus can be transported to market. The project

has built a small irrigation dam to control flooding in the valley, allowing some 4,000 small-scale farmers to grow two crops a year instead of one.(13) During the visit, members of the delegation met project administrators and local farmers.

#### **4. Roundtable on Rwanda's Parliament and regional integration issues**

In Butare, the delegation visited the National University of Rwanda (NUR), which was established in 1963 with the help of Canadian missionary Father Georges-Henri Lévesque. The NUR is the oldest and largest public university in Rwanda and now has some 10,000 students.

The delegation attended a roundtable on Rwanda's Parliament and regional integration issues. It was attended by Professor Anastase Shyaka, director of the university's Centre for Conflict Management; Professor Anthony Ntalindwa, head of the Political Science Department; Professor Nicodème Bugwabari; and Professor Elias Sentamba.

During the discussion, the Rwandan participants elaborated on the development of the EAC and the East African Legislative Assembly, discussed Rwanda's experience with conflict management and reconciliation, and talked about the electoral process and the role of women in Rwandan society. It was pointed out that the role of women has changed since the genocide and that they now are respected and have taken on more responsibility. The participants also discussed the challenges facing the University.

After the roundtable, the delegation visited the Murambi Genocide Memorial near Butare.

#### **5. Meeting with the President of Rwanda**

On 28 June, the delegation drove back to Kigali. After visiting the Kigali Genocide Memorial and laying a wreath in memory of the victims, the members attended a private meeting with His Excellency Paul Kagame, the President of the Republic of Rwanda.

President Kagame grew up in exile in Uganda, where he attended Makerere University. He joined the forces of Yoweri Museveni and served as his chief of intelligence. He helped form the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriot Front (*Front Patriotique Rwandais*, or FPR), which invaded Rwanda in 1990, but was repulsed. When the genocide was underway in 1994, Kagame led FPR troops against the perpetrators. He eventually became president of the transitional government and in 2003 was elected president in the country's first multiparty elections.(14)

President Kagame began with an overview of Rwanda's tragic history and its efforts to learn the lessons of the past and to build institutions, the economy, and democracy. He

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(13) Welthungerhilfe, "Annual Report 2007 of Welthungerhilfe: Investments in rural development necessary," p. 7, [http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/fileadmin/media/pdf/jahresbericht/Jahresbericht\\_Welthungerhilfe\\_2007\\_engl.pdf](http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/fileadmin/media/pdf/jahresbericht/Jahresbericht_Welthungerhilfe_2007_engl.pdf).

(14) "Paul Kagame," Britannica Online Encyclopedia, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/309587/Paul-Kagame>.

then discussed Rwanda's integration into the EAC. He said that there was increasing realization among Rwandans that they have much in common with the peoples of the East African region and that they need to resolve economic issues together.

In response to questions from the delegation, President Kagame talked about the benefits of regional integration. In considering the move toward political federation, he said Rwanda would study the history of the EAC and the experiences of other groups, such as the European Union.

President Kagame also discussed steps being taken to encourage investment in Rwanda by foreign business people and gave an overview of the government's development priorities, such as decentralization, grassroots participation, and appropriate investment. He also discussed the situation in Zimbabwe and southern Sudan.

Finally, on the subject of Rwanda-Canada relations, President Kagame noted the long history between the countries, but said that given the changes Rwanda has made, Canadians should change the way in which they see Rwanda. In response, members of the delegation said that they would convey the impression of modern Rwanda they had gained during their visit. They said that while realizing more needs to be done, they were aware of the genuine effort to improve the situation.

After the meeting, the members of the delegation held a press briefing with local media. The delegation's meeting with President Kagame was the subject of a front-page story on the *Sunday Times* the next day.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The delegation attended a briefing presented by Canadian officials for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency in Nairobi, Kenya.

The delegation visited the National Assembly of Kenya in Nairobi, where it met the Clerk, Mr. Patrick Gichuru Gichohi. It also visited the National Assembly of Burundi in Bujumbura and the Parliament of Rwanda in Kigali.

The delegation attended receptions hosted by the Canadian Ambassador in Bujumbura and Kigali, a dinner with Rwanda parliamentarians hosted by the deputy speakers of the Rwandan Parliament in Kigali, and a dinner in Butare hosted by Rwanda Initiative, a Canadian-sponsored program for training journalists.

The delegation held press briefings with local media in Nairobi, Bujumbura, Butare, and Kigali.

### **CONCLUSION**

By visiting the partner countries of the EAC, the delegation gained a better understanding organization's development. They also gained an impression of the different levels of political and economic development in the partner countries, and the challenges this presents.

Members were generally impressed by the preparations being made to further the development of the EAC. Indeed, they felt they were witnessing a turning point in the region's history.

Members noted that regional integration was the subject of a recent report by the High Level Panel for the African Development Bank, which was chaired by former Prime Minister Paul Martin and the former President of Mozambique, Joachim Chissano. This report said that Africa will never be able to trade competitively unless it becomes more integrated.(15)

Indeed, the delegation was told the EAC is important for small landlocked countries such as Burundi and Rwanda. They have few trading opportunities to the west, where there are geographic boundaries and where the Democratic Republic of the Congo is in turmoil. They require transportation routes to the sea and these would run through either Kenya or Tanzania, both founding members of the EAC. In both Burundi and Rwanda, the delegation was told that these countries had historic ties with the other EAC countries, both in terms of trade and language.

The delegation learned that in both Burundi and Rwanda, efforts are being made to learn English, the working language of the EAC. At the same time, members of the delegation expressed their concern that Burundi and Rwanda should maintain and protect their Francophone heritage.

By visiting Kenya, the delegation gained a better understanding of the situation in the aftermath of the election violence and the formation of the coalition government. During the visit to the Kibera slum, the delegation was moved by inhabitants' resilience in the face of difficult conditions. It was touched by the pleas of the people involved in community organizations – particularly the youth – and encouraged by their determination to improve the situation. The delegates felt that it was important to continue supporting projects in Kibera.

More generally, the delegation learned that Kenya's coalition government was a work in progress. It agreed Kenya would require more financial and technical support to adjust to the situation.

In Burundi, the delegation was told that the political situation was even more delicate. At the same time, they heard that political disputes are preferable to violence. The delegation was concerned by the blockage in parliament and it encouraged Burundian parliamentarians to continue working to find ways of finding ways to break the parliamentary deadlock and to settle their political differences.

In Rwanda, the delegation was struck by the sense of optimism and hope. It was impressed by the parliamentary oversight mechanisms and with use of consensus. It was also encouraged to see that women were playing an important role in society and

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(15) African Development Bank Group, Press Release, "Investing in Africa's Future: the AfDB in the 21st Century," 22 January 2008, [http://www.afdb.org/portal/page?\\_pageid=293,174339&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&press\\_item=27844391&press\\_lang=f](http://www.afdb.org/portal/page?_pageid=293,174339&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&press_item=27844391&press_lang=f).

politics. Indeed, at the time, 48.8% of MPs were women, which was the world's highest rate.(16) When visiting the rural development project, the delegation saw that a small irrigation project could have a large impact on the lives of many people. When visiting genocide memorials, members were reminded of past events and hoped that the process of national reconciliation would continue.

In all the countries it visited, the delegation was encouraged to see the news media was operating freely.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For their help in making the visit a success, the delegation would like to thank the staff of the Canadian High Commission in Kenya, particularly High Commissioner Mr. Ross Hynes, Mr. Robert Logie, Ms. Sophie Omoro-Mwangi, Mr. Okello Otieno, and Mr. Ibrahima Sakho. They would also like to thank Mr. Alexis Gakuba and Mr. Édouard Munyamaliza from the Canadian Embassy in Kigali.

The delegation would also like to thank two Rwandan parliamentarians – the Honourable Valens Munyabagisha, Senator and the Honourable Antoine Somayire, MP – who accompanied the delegation during its visit to Rwanda. It would also like to express its appreciation to its interpreters – Mr. Jean Fleury Sindayigaya in Burundi and Ms. Esther Milenge in Rwanda.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Raynell  
Andreychuk, Senator  
Co-Chair  
Canada-Africa Parliamentary  
Association

The Honourable Mauril Bélanger,  
M.P.  
Co-Chair  
Canada-Africa Parliamentary  
Association

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(16) "Women to Rule Rwanda Parliament," BBC News, 17 September 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7620816.stm>.

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Bilateral Visits to Kenya, Burundi, and Rwanda
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Nairobi, Kenya; Bujumbura, Burundi; Kigali et Butare, Rwanda
<b>DATES</b>	June 22 to 28, 2008
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, Co-Chair Honourable Mobina S.B. Jaffer, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Honourable Mauril Bélanger, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair Ms. Nina Grewal, M.P. Mr. David Harold Christopherson, M.P., Mr. Robert Carrier, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Rémi Bourgault, Executive Secretary of the Association Mr. Michael Dewing, Analyst for the Association
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 84,998.09</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 8,552.75</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 2,205.09</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 3,564.13</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 1,925.43</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 1,717.57</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$102,963.06</b>