



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting  
its participation to the Bureau Meeting  
and XXXIX Ordinary Session of the  
*Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)***

**Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire  
de la Francophonie (APF)***

**Abidjan, Ivory Coast  
July 8 to 12, 2013**

# Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF), which attended the APF Bureau meeting in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on July 8, 2013, and the XXXIX Session of the APF, also held in Abidjan, from July 10 to 12, 2013, is honoured to present its report. The delegation was led by the Honourable Senator **Andrée Champagne**, International Vice-President of the APF, and included the following parliamentarians: the Honourable Senator **Paul E. McIntyre**, Acting Chair of the Canadian Branch of the APF, **Robert Aubin**, MP, Vice-Chair of the Canadian Branch of the APF and Chair of the APF's Parliamentary Affairs Committee, **Bernard Trottier**, MP, Member of the Canadian Branch and Rapporteur for the APF's Political Committee, **Pierre Dionne Labelle**, MP, Member of the Canadian Branch's Executive Committee and Rapporteur for the APF's Cooperation and Development Committee, and **Massimo Pacetti**, MP, Member of the Canadian Branch's Executive Committee. The delegation was accompanied by André Gagnon, Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons and Vice-Chair of the Association des secrétaires généraux des parlements francophones, François Michaud, Association Secretary, Canadian Branch, and Jean-Luc Bourdages, Analyst, Library of Parliament.

The following branches were represented at the XXXIX Session: Andorra, Belgium/French Community/Wallonia-Brussels, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Economic and Monetary Union (CEMAC), Chad, Congo, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, France, Gabon, Haiti, Hungary, Jersey, Jura, Laos, Luxembourg, Morocco, New Brunswick, Niger, Ontario, Payment Incidence Centre of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (PIC-WAEMU), Quebec, Romania, Senegal, Switzerland, Togo, Vaud (Switzerland) and Vietnam.

## **Bureau business**

The APF Bureau meeting was held in Abidjan on July 8, 2013, and chaired by **Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara**, President of the APF and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso. The draft minutes of the Bureau meeting are available on the APF website [in French only]. They include the parliamentary secretary general's report (Appendix 1) and the treasurer's report (Appendix 2).

**Senator Andrée Champagne, Vice-President of the APF, Senator Paul E. McIntyre, Acting Chair of the Canadian Branch of the APF, and Robert Aubin, MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, attended the Bureau meeting.**

## Opening of Bureau meeting

**Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara**, President of the APF and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso, welcomed the Bureau members and opened the meeting. He suggested a minute of silence in memory of the many victims of the railway accident that occurred the day before in downtown Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. He then asked **Guillaume Kigbafori Soro**, Speaker of the National Assembly of Ivory Coast, to briefly address the Bureau members in attendance.

President **Ouattara** introduced the new permanent members of the Bureau, including the new chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, **Robert Aubin**, MP (Canada). The Bureau members thanked the outgoing committee chair, Senator **Pierre De Bané**, for his many years of dedicated service to La Francophonie's parliamentary initiatives. Senator **Champagne** gladly agreed to pass on their thanks to Senator **De Bané**.

The members adopted the agenda and the minutes of the Bureau meeting held on February 7 and 8, 2013, in Paris, France.

## Composition of the APF

Senator **Jacques Legendre** (France), Parliamentary Secretary General, noted that the APF now has 78 branches, including 47 full members, 17 associate branches and 13 observers; 5 branches remain suspended. Mr. **Legendre** proposed that the Bureau members accept the Parliament of Bosnia-Herzegovina's request to join the APF as an observer and the request of the associate member from Switzerland, the Canton of Vaud, to become a full member. Finally, he suggested that the General Secretariat be given the chance to further discuss the status change request from the legislature of the Province of British Columbia (Canada), an associate member that wishes to become an observer, before a decision is made. The Bureau adopted the proposals made by the Parliamentary Secretary General.

## Parliamentary secretary general's activity report

Senator **Jacques Legendre**, Parliamentary Secretary General, presented his activity report. He discussed the following matters, among others:

- the restoration of democracy in the Republic of Ivory Coast, where 15 years ago, the Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française (AIPLF) became the APF;
- the situation in countries suspended from the APF: Guinea and Madagascar (2009), Mali (2012), Syria (2011) and the Central African Republic (2013);
- the review of the agreement linking the APF to the institutions of La Francophonie, primarily the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), now set out in the 2005 Charter of La Francophonie and various associated documents; and
- the implementation of the Initiative multilatérale de coopération interparlementaire francophone (IMCIF), which serves to coordinate the multilateral assistance provided by the APF and the bilateral support from

national parliaments; the National Assembly of Ivory Coast was the first to benefit from this initiative.

During the ensuing discussion, the Vice-President of the APF, the Honourable **Andrée Champagne**, underscored the need to debate the issue of cooperation between the OIF and the APF, as well as the IMCIF itself. Other members of the Bureau asked the Parliamentary Secretary General about the elections in Madagascar, the problems involved in recruiting parliamentarians for election observation missions, and the APF's cooperation with the Association des secrétaires généraux des parlements francophones. The Bureau addressed the IMCIF later when discussing interparliamentary cooperation.

### **Treasurer's report on the 2012 financial statements and the amended 2013 budget**

**Anne Brasseur**, Member (Luxembourg), presented the key aspects of the 2012 financial report and financial statements, and the report on the 2013 amended draft budget on behalf of the Treasurer, **Michel Wolter**, Member (Luxembourg).

In his report, the treasurer confirmed that the APF ran a surplus in 2012. He was especially pleased that the OIF administrator provided all the supplementary funding the Bureau had requested and that the Conseil permanent de la Francophonie allowed the APF to carry over into 2013 all of its unused funding from 2012. The amended budget presented and adopted by the Bureau members included these unanticipated or unconfirmed items.

The Parliamentary Secretary General shared the treasurer's satisfaction with the OIF's financial contribution and the carryover of unused funds, particularly as regards the Noria program. In fact, the treasurer proposed increasing the Noria appropriations by €100,000, bringing them to €478,000, and increasing those for seminars and internships to €47,438.

The treasurer concluded his report by expressing concern about the APF's financial dependence on outside organizations: the contributions of member branches make up only 18.6% of its total revenue. He noted that one of the fundamental principles of parliamentary democracy is the financial independence of parliaments and that this principle applies to the APF even though it is merely a consultative assembly.<sup>1</sup>

In the discussion that followed, **Robert Aubin** (Canada) expressed shock at the proportion of the Noria program's funding that goes toward operating expenditures. He asked whether this ratio is normal and whether the additional €100,000 will go directly to program activities rather than operating expenditures. **Jacques Chagnon** (Quebec) said he would like to have more specific and detailed information on the Noria program, which constitutes 25% of the APF's budget, at the next Bureau meeting. The treasurer's representative, **Anne Brasseur**, committed to providing this information, while the Parliamentary Secretary General offered some clarifications regarding the program's three full-time positions and the associated salary expenses.

The Bureau approved the 2012 financial statements and the amended 2013 budget.

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<sup>1</sup> "Discours du Trésorier – Présentation des comptes 2012 et du projet de budget rectifié pour 2013," *Projet de compte rendu de la réunion du Bureau*, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, July 8, 2013, Appendix 2 [in French only].

## Committee work

President **Ouattara** invited **Robert Aubin**, Acting Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, to present the committee's past work and future plans. Mr. **Aubin** apologized for the absence of Senator **Pierre De Bané**, who will soon be retiring from the Senate of Canada and, based on the Senate's rules, is unable to attend the Abidjan Bureau meeting and Session. He thanked the senator for all his work on La Francophonie's parliamentary initiatives in general and on the APF's Parliamentary Affairs Committee in particular. The acting chair summarized the work the committee accomplished at its meeting in Pointe-aux-Piments, Mauritius, on March 14 and 15, 2013. He mentioned the compendium of parliamentary procedure and practice, prepared under the direction of Senator **Michèle André** (France), Vice-Chair of the committee. Mr. **Aubin** also provided an update on parliamentary cooperation activities and the review of the IMCIF undertaken in Ivory Coast.

**Moussa Abdoul Thiam**, Member (Senegal), Chair of the Cooperation and Development Committee, made a presentation on the work of the committee at its meeting in Québec City, Canada, on March 18 and 19, 2013. He mentioned the reports on the Millennium Development Goals (Togo) (and the resulting resolution), biofuels (France), WTO international trade negotiations (Quebec and Burkina Faso) and La Francophonie's contribution to the adoption of national sustainable development strategies. The last of these reports was presented by Mr. **Dionne Labelle**, MP, Canadian Branch rapporteur for the committee. The Chair then discussed the committee's past and future activities. He noted that the committee has been working on one of its priorities—the security of land tenure—with the Notariat Francophone since 2008.

**André Schneider**, Member (France), Chair of the Political Committee, presented the committee's activity report. He provided a brief overview of the work carried out by the committee at its last meeting in Rabat, Morocco, on April 10 and 11, 2013. For the first time, the committee began its meeting by asking each member to provide an update on the political situation and developments in their countries since their last meeting in Brussels in July 2012. Mr. **Schneider** mentioned the report on the political situation in francophone countries (Gabon), subsequent to which the members adopted draft declarations on Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The committee's other reports concerned social networks and their impact on citizenship, democracy and politics (Belgium/French Community/Wallonia-Brussels), the role of parliaments in providing access to justice (Quebec), and strengthening security in response to the globalization of organized crime. This last report was presented by **Bernard Trottier**, MP, Canadian Branch rapporteur for the committee. Finally, Mr. **Schneider** provided an update on the suspended and monitored APF branches.

**Didier Berberat**, State Councillor (Switzerland), Chair of the Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee, presented the committee's activity report and that of the Parliamentary Network to Fight HIV/AIDS, which falls under the committee. He described the activities of the committee at its meeting in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on May 6 and 7, 2013, and briefed branch members on youth education and skills development. The issues raised included the commodification of education, the use of dual occupational training systems and the use of new technologies to bring parliaments closer to their citizens. Regarding the Parliamentary Network to Fight HIV/AIDS, Mr. **Berberat** mentioned relations between the APF and the UNAIDS Secretariat, and the additional funding

provided by the OIF to hold a seminar on the role of parliamentarians in achieving the HIV/AIDS-related Millennium Development Goals.

### **Work of the APF Network of Women Parliamentarians**

The Chair of the network, **Françoise Bertieaux**, Member (French Community of Belgium/Wallonia-Brussels), presented its activity report. She noted the network's participation in the first World Francophone Women's Forum, held in Paris on March 20, 2013. She then summarized the network's activities at its first intersessional meeting (following the lead of the standing committees), held in Dakar on April 25 and 26, 2013. The members discussed an event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* on gender equality and the empowerment of women. An information brochure and follow-up reports on the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) were also examined. In addition, members discussed the prevention of all types of violence against women and girls. The meeting concluded with a workshop on leadership.

### **Reports from regional chargés de mission**

The Chargé de Mission for Africa, **Boyo Célestin Koussoubé** (Burkina Faso), presented the region's activity report. The activities he described included the election observation missions in which Africa Region parliamentarians participated, and the three parliamentary seminars on budget and public accounts legislation. A regional seminar was held in Mauritius for parliamentarians from nations bordering the Indian Ocean to raise their awareness of environmental issues and climate change.

**Yvon Bonenfant**, MP (New Brunswick), Chargé de Mission for the America Region, presented the region's activity report. He noted that the intersessional meeting of the Conference of Branch Chairs was held by videoconference for the first time on April 5, 2013. Mr. **Bonenfant** summarized the region's activities over the past year and those planned for the coming months. Senator **Andrée Champagne** (Canada), First Vice-President of the APF, noted that the region's parliamentarians are enthusiastic about organizing new activities to bring together New Brunswick's francophones.

**Bougnong Boupfa**, Member (Laos), Chargé de Mission for the Asia-Pacific Region, presented the regional report, which outlined the activities of the branches of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Ms. **Boupfa** highlighted the challenges facing the Asia-Pacific Region respecting active participation in La Francophonie, and the continued use and teaching of French. She recommended strengthening existing cooperation programs and establishing new bilateral and multilateral cooperation programs between the APF and its member branches.

The Chargé de Mission for Europe, **Jean-Paul Wahl**, Member (Belgium/French Community/Wallonia-Brussels), presented the region's report. He informed the Bureau members that the regional assembly held in Montreux, Switzerland, considered the topic of relationships between economies, businesses and languages in the context of sustainable economic and social recovery. The assembly concluded with the adoption of a resolution to promote training and mobility for youth in francophone countries. At the Conference of Branch Chairs held in Berne, Switzerland, on June 7, 2013, the chairs explored the topic of French and multilingualism in the sciences and the role of French in applied research. Regarding the Europe Region's activities, the Parliamentary Secretary

General lamented that interactions with European Union institutions are infrequent and that it is difficult to get them interested in francophone issues. Mr. **Wahl** explained that some are reluctant to be represented in an institution that is based solely on the use of a single language. However, other Bureau members were pleased by the alliances formed with universities.

## **Interparliamentary cooperation**

Senator **Jacques Legendre**, Parliamentary Secretary General, spoke about the APF's various cooperation programs, starting with the Noria program. First, he noted with respect to the treasurer's report that 90% of the Noria program's funding comes from the OIF. He also clarified how these funds are used. He said that the program's objective is to modernize information systems, promote La Francophonie and strengthen parliamentary skills. He referred to some 10 countries that have recently benefitted from a component of the program.

Regarding parliamentary seminars, the Parliamentary Secretary General discussed the establishment of specialized seminars, such as the one held in Brazzaville, Congo, in April 2013 on budget and public accounts legislation as a means to strengthen democracy and governance.

He then turned to internships for parliamentary officials and pointed out that the APF has endeavoured to diversify its internship offerings. The APF awarded 10 bursaries for the annual internship on organizing the work of parliament. More than 60 interns from some 30 countries have benefitted from this program since it was created. Mr. Legendre also provided an overview of the activities of the international francophone volunteer program and the internships at the APF General Secretariat for parliamentary officials from the southern hemisphere.

As for youth-oriented programs, the Parliamentary Secretary General focused on the sixth edition of the francophone youth parliament, which will bring 80 young people from 30 APF branches to the Abidjan Session. He also clarified certain points about national youth parliaments.

The Parliamentary Secretary General concluded his remarks on interparliamentary cooperation by addressing the APF's involvement in the IMCIF. First, he noted that this new initiative is intended to combine and coordinate the support that francophone parliaments offer to parliaments in countries transitioning to democracy or emerging from crisis. He referred to the current pilot program in Ivory Coast, where the APF decided to get involved through its cooperation programs alongside some 10 national assemblies, parliaments and agencies from La Francophonie. Despite Mr. Legendre's positive assessment, the Acting Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, **Robert Aubin**, MP (Canada), and **Michèle André**, Senator (France), told the Bureau that there are certain questions surrounding the IMCIF. In particular, they wanted to know what concrete role the APF plays in the IMCIF and what role the Parliamentary Affairs Committee should play as a result. The Parliamentary Secretary General stated that the APF's involvement is primarily a matter of coordinating and pooling resources, and he encouraged the committee to follow up on the APF's involvement in the IMCIF. The Speaker of the National Assembly of Quebec, **Jacques Chagnon**, pointed out that the IMCIF is above all an initiative spearheaded by parliaments, which the APF chose to join. Senator **Andrée Champagne** (Canada), Vice-President of the APF, said she was concerned that only a

few parliaments decided to work together, revealing that communication during the implementation of this project was inadequate.

### **Relations with the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie**

Parliamentary Secretary General **Jacques Legendre** spoke about the update to the APF-OIF framework agreement. He said that the Secretary General of La Francophonie had recommended that the APF and the OIF abandon their agreement because of several existing instruments that have strengthened francophone institutions and clarified their operations and interactions. After examining these instruments, Mr. Legendre concluded that they do not cover certain key provisions set out in the agreement. He therefore proposed to the Bureau members that the General Secretariat continue to work with the office of the Secretary General of La Francophonie to find a solution to be presented at the next Bureau meeting.

Mr. **Legendre** then addressed the brief on funding for the international Francophonie presented by the Chair of the Canadian Branch, Senator **Andrée Champagne**, (Canada), at the Bureau meeting in Phnom Penh in February 2012. At the request of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee and the Bureau, Mr. Legendre asked the OIF about its response concerning changes in financial resources and the funding structure of La Francophonie. In his reply of June 11, 2012, the OIF administrator had addressed the operations of the Francophonie and the external auditor's role. **Robert Aubin**, MP (Canada), reiterated the importance for parliamentarians to have a solid understanding of the OIF's budget so that they can encourage their respective parliaments to continue funding the OIF.

### **Preparations for the XXXIX Session of the APF (Abidjan)**

Bureau members adopted the session's agenda, as presented at the beginning of the meeting by the Chair of the Ivory Coast Branch.

### **Elections**

APF President Mr. **Ouattara** provided information on the election procedure for office holders on committees and in the regions. The Bureau approves appointments to these positions, which must be ratified at the plenary session.

### **Communications**

Parliamentary Secretary General **Jacques Legendre** provided additional information about APF communications. He discussed elements regarding the XXXIX Session, the APF's use of social media, the online posting of videos on various activities throughout the year, and the francophone youth parliament.

### **Honours awarded by the APF**

Bureau members approved the list of proposed nominations and promotions to the Order of the Pléiades. Mr. **Legendre** said that senior APF executives, including Chair **Andrée Champagne**, would attend the Francophonie Games in Nice in September 2013 in part to present the APF award, a €7,000 fellowship. He added that the Bureau must give some thought to presenting awards, if possible in advance of the upcoming Senghor-Césaire



award in 2014, and proposed a few ideas. On the recommendation of Mr. Legendre, the Bureau agreed to postpone the award to 2015.

### **Other business**

Bureau members discussed a proposal by the Switzerland Branch to implement an official process for following up on resolutions adopted by the APF. They agreed to implement a three-point procedure in advance of the 2014 pre-session Bureau meeting.

The Parliamentary Secretary General told the Bureau about changes at the General Secretariat in Paris, including the end of the assignment of **Jean-Luc Lala** to the position of administrative secretary general and his replacement by **Didier Le Bot**, whose appointment was approved by the Bureau.

Lastly, Bureau members were informed of a vote on self-determination regarding the creation of new political entity or canton incorporating the Jura part of the canton of Bern, a German-speaking canton, into the canton of the Swiss Jura.

### **Date and location of next meeting**

Mr. **Ouattara** adjourned the Bureau's meeting after confirming that the next meeting would be held in Rabat, Morocco, in February 2014.

For more information on the Bureau meeting, please visit [http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/cr\\_abidjan.pdf](http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/cr_abidjan.pdf).

### **Network of Women Parliamentarians**

The APF Network of Women Parliamentarians met in Abidjan on July 9, 2013. The meeting was chaired by **Françoise Bertieaux**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels) and Chair of the Network of Women Parliamentarians.

Ms. **Bertieaux** addressed the delegates following the adoption of the draft agenda. She welcomed the members of the network and read from her report on activities conducted since the network's intersessional meeting in Dakar on April 25 and 26, 2013. The network members adopted the report and the record of decisions from the intersessional meeting.

Members then heard a presentation on the report on unwanted pregnancy and child mothers, prepared under the direction of Members **Gisèle Guigma** (Burkina Faso) and **Lydiene Epoube** (Cameroon). A draft resolution was adopted as amended.

The Parliamentary Secretary General **Jacques Legendre** and the Speaker of the National Assembly of Ivory Coast, **Guillaume Kigbavori Soro**, addressed the delegates.

**Robert Aubin**, MP (Canada), presented a summary of a draft report on women and the cooperative movement in La Francophonie on behalf of Senator **Pierrette Ringuette** (Canada), who serves as co-rapporteur with **Lydiene Epoube**, Member (Cameroon). Network members were very interested in the report and suggested additional information to include in the next draft, such as: model legislative frameworks; a possible capacity building workshop on this subject; funding for rural cooperatives; Morocco's initiative on human development in poor rural areas; two funds established in the early 1990s by the government of Burkina Faso to encourage cooperatives; and funding by the government of Equatorial Guinea to support the development of cooperatives.

**Catherine Quéré**, Member (France), presented the highlights from a report by **Pascale Boistard** (France) on the role of political parties and the impact of the electoral system on women's representation in parliament. The Chair of the network asked the branches to fill out a questionnaire that will accompany the draft report and proposed that it be split into three sub-reports on political parties, quotas, and the impact of the electoral system.

**Lise Thériault**, Member (Quebec), presented her report on women in decision-making positions and senior management in Crown corporations and the private and public sectors.

Network members monitor the implementation of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. **Lise Thériault** (Quebec) presented her follow-up report. It was proposed that the report be adopted at the network's next meeting in January 2014. The network also heard voluntary contributions from branches from the following countries, where the CEDAW Committee recently conducted audits: Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cape Verde.

Network members discussed two draft resolutions. The first concerned the 20th anniversary of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* on gender equality and the empowerment of women (Beijing +20). The second concerned violence against Egyptian women. Lastly, as part of the resolution passed July 2012 condemning the practice of female genital mutilation, network members heard messages from **Imam Djiguiba** (Ivory Coast) and **Constance Yaï** (Ivory Coast).

## **Parliamentary Affairs Committee<sup>2</sup>**

**Robert Aubin**, MP (Canada), chaired the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee held in Abidjan on July 10 and 11, 2013. After a brief roundtable discussion, members adopted the agenda and the record of decisions from the meeting in Pointe-aux-Piments, Mauritius, held March 14 and 15, 2013.

The committee then proceeded with the presentation and discussion of draft reports.

**Michèle Andrée**, Senator (France), presented the final summary of her compendium of parliamentary procedure and practice in francophone nations. The compendium was distributed to everyone attending the XXXIX Session in Abidjan. Ms. **Andrée** gave a brief presentation on her draft report on civil status and democracy.

Co-rapporteurs **Carole Poirier**, Member (Quebec), and **Gérard Bila Segda**, Member (Burkina Faso), presented their draft report on political party financing, and **Martine Bondo**, Senator (Gabon), and **Martin Nyonyo Balikwisha**, Senator (RDC), presented their draft report on decentralized cooperation in francophone countries. Lastly, **Fathi Derder**, State Councillor (Switzerland), gave an overview of his draft report on parliament, the press, the media and democratization.

As the successor to the Hon. **Pierre De Bané**, retired Senator (Canada), committee Chair **Robert Aubin** followed up on Senator **De Bané's** previous message concerning the memorandum to raise awareness of the OIF's objectives, programs and funding, and its cooperation with the APF.

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<sup>2</sup> The meetings of APF committees were held over two days, from July 10 to 11, in the midst of the plenary session.

The committee then received updates on parliamentary cooperation programs. **Jean-Claude Maene**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), discussed election observation missions, and **Georges Nakseu Nguefang**, Deputy Director of the OIF's peace, democracy and human rights division, spoke to the delegates. **Louis Vlavonou**, Member (Benin), spoke on parliamentary workshops and internships. **Robert Aubin** (Canada) spoke on the Noria program, and **Martine Bondo** (Gabon) discussed the francophone youth parliament and the national youth parliaments.

As he did at the Bureau meeting, Parliamentary Secretary General **Jacques Legendre**, appeared before the committee to discuss the IMCIF. He described the origin of the initiative, emphasizing that the Ivory Coast's urgent need to re-establish its parliament made it necessary to respond rapidly and integrate the activities of various branches. He regretted the fact that the Parliamentary Affairs Committee was not involved at the outset and hopes that it will help to ensure the operation and success of the initiative, if it so wishes. Delegates discussed funding and the possible duplication of APF activities and asked several questions. The Hon. **Andrée Champagne**, Vice-President of the APF, regretted that neither the Canadian Branch nor the committee chaired by Canada received prior notice of the initiative in Ivory Coast. The committee members agreed that there will be no other projects prior to a comprehensive review of the IMCIF by the Parliamentary Affairs Committee.

At the end of the meeting **Robert Aubin**, MP (Canada), officially became the committee's new chair. Members adopted motions thanking Senator **De Bané** (Canada) and Senator **Michèle Andrée** (France), the outgoing chair and vice-chair, respectively.

### **Political Committee**

**André Schneider**, Member (France), chaired the meeting of the Political Committee held in Abidjan on July 10 and 11, 2013.

Following the adoption of the agenda and the record of decisions from the April 2013 meeting in Rabat, Morocco, Mr. **Schneider** welcomed the members, and the meeting began with the customary roundtable discussion of recent political events in the members' countries.

**Denise Mekam'ne**, Member (Gabon), gave an update on the report regarding the political situation in francophone areas. Resolutions were adopted concerning countries that are in crisis or have emerged from a crisis: Guinea, Madagascar, Mali and Syria. The committee believes that the Niger Branch, which is under APF supervision, should be reinstated in the APF. This decision will be taken at the plenary session.

**Bernard Trottier**, MP (Canada) and committee rapporteur, presented a draft resolution and the final draft of a report on enhancing security in response to the globalization of organized crime. The report gives an overview of transnational organized crime, highlights various impacts and risk factors, and identifies the aspects of greatest concern to francophone nations. The report also offers examples of capacity-building initiatives, and international and regional efforts to fight transnational organized crime, primarily in La Francophonie. The resolution calls for capacity building in La Francophonie and participation in bilateral and multilateral activities, and urges the OIF to continue its initiatives and partnerships to address transnational organized crime.

The resolution presented in the **Trottier** report and adopted at the plenary session is available at <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1816> [in French only].

The committee next heard from **Léon Walry**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), who presented his report on social networks and their impacts on citizenship, democracy and politics. **Luc Ferland**, Member (Quebec), reported on access to justice and the role of parliaments.

Before concluding, the committee discussed the review of the APF rules, and relations between the OIF and the APF.

## **Cooperation and Development Committee**

The meeting of the Cooperation and Development Committee was held in Abidjan on July 10 and 11, 2013, and chaired by **Moussa Abdoul Thiam**, Member (Sénégal). Following adoption of the agenda, Mr. **Thiam** spoke briefly to members and reported on activities since the last committee meeting in March 2013 in Québec City. The committee adopted the minutes and record of decisions from that meeting.

**Hervé Cronel**, Special Advisor for Economics and Sustainable Development to the Secretary General of La Francophonie, addressed the committee. He provided an update on the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and described its origin and activities. The EITI implemented a tripartite approach that involves government, industry and civil society, and is based on the application of 20 principles and 7 standards. Mr. **Cronel** stated that the APF acts as the executive secretary for the EITI. He also discussed the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Doha Cycle, stressing the role of La Francophonie given that bilateral agreements are increasing, mainly because multilateral processes like Doha are at a standstill. The OIF's position is that it is impossible to implement fair and consistent approaches without a comprehensive multilateral agreement, and there is an increased risk that some countries may simply become providers of raw materials. In terms of future Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the economic strategy for La Francophonie, Mr. **Cronel** mentioned specific areas of interest, such as new patterns of consumption, green employment for young people, the transition to new energy models and cultural diversity which, he pointed out, has still not been recognized as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. He repeated that La Francophonie considers it essential for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be integrated with the broader SDGs. With regard to the economic strategy, La Francophonie must provide suitable activities and identify ways to build capacity. It is hoped that Africa will be a unified free-trade zone by 2017.

On the subject of the EITI, **Pierre Dionne Labelle**, MP (Canada), asked Mr. **Cronel** to comment on Canada's situation; many mining companies that operate around the world are registered here. Mr. **Labelle** believes that the evaluation reports should consider not only the country where the company is operating but also the tax benefits the company receives in its country of origin.

The committee heard from **Nayé Bathily**, who is responsible for parliamentary relations at the World Bank, and then reviewed draft reports and resolutions. **Telou Mila Bele**, Member (Togo), presented her draft report on the Millennium Development Goals and the resolution calling on the international financial community to avoid substituting MDGs with SDGs. The resolution is available online at <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1797> [in French only].

**Patrick Dupriez**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), presented a draft report on simplified secure titles as a solution to the problem of land use regulation in Africa. Following the presentation, **Abdoulaye Harissou**, a notary from Maroua (Cameroon), spoke on the creation of a working group to study the simplified secure title system in Africa. The committee adopted the resolution proposed by Mr. **Dupriez**. It is available online at <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1798> [in French only].

The committee then considered follow-up reports. The first involved international trade negotiations conducted within the framework of the WTO and was presented by co-rapporteurs **Alain Bedouma Yoda**, Member (Burkina Faso), and **Jacques Marcotte**, Member (Quebec). They focused on recent changes and specific issues such as fair trade.

**Pierre Dionne Labelle**, MP and rapporteur (Canada), presented the follow-up report to the 2004 Ouagadougou Summit concerning La Francophonie's contribution to adopting national sustainable development strategies and developing national policies on ecosystem and natural resource management. Mr. Dionne Labelle reviewed the background to this recurring topic. He gave an update on the contribution of La Francophonie to introducing sustainable development strategies since the presentation by Fatimata Dia, Director of the Institute for Sustainable Development of La Francophonie (IFDD), at the committee meeting in Québec City in March 2013. In the latest version of his report, the rapporteur for the Canadian Branch summarized the advances in sustainable development made by some countries and highlighted the IFDD's activities in this regard. He also underscored the importance of synergies between the APF and the IFDD. In preparation for the next strategic framework for La Francophonie, which will be adopted at the 2014 Dakar Summit, Mr. **Dionne Labelle** asked his fellow committee members to identify the role that francophone parliamentarians can play in setting the priorities and objectives that should steer the framework. The ensuing discussion focused mainly on MDGs and SDGs, particularly concerns over excluding the former for the sake of the latter. Mr. **Cronel**, the OIF's Special Advisor, reiterated that both types of goals must be maintained and ultimately integrated—if not interwoven—in a common set of goals.

The committee heard from **Stéphane Demilly**, Member and rapporteur (France), regarding his draft report on biofuels. An interesting discussion followed on such subjects as third-generation biofuels, which do not require food crops to produce ethanol.

The committee members concluded the meeting by approving two new subjects for study: the green economy (Switzerland and Niger) and youth employment in La Francophonie (France and Chad).

### **Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee**

The meeting of the Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee (ECCAC) was held in Abidjan on July 10 and 11, 2013, and was chaired by **Didier Berberat**, State Councillor (Switzerland). The complete minutes are available at [http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2013\\_07\\_cecac\\_cr.pdf](http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2013_07_cecac_cr.pdf) [in French only].

The committee adopted the agenda and minutes from the last meeting held in Ouagadougou on May 6 and 7, 2013. Mr. **Berberat** presented his activity report and the report of the Parliamentary Network to Fight HIV/AIDS.

As part of the follow-up to implementing the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, **Henri-François Gauthrin**, Member (Quebec), presented a draft resolution on the contribution of the States to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity. The committee adopted this resolution and the draft resolution presented by Mr. **Berberat** on the reference guide for the use of French in international organizations.

The committee then heard from Professor **Jemaïel Ben Brahim**, representative of the West Africa regional bureau of the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie, and from Professor **Jean-Claude Bolay**, representative of the network of excellence in engineering sciences in La Francophonie (RESCIF) and director of the centre for cooperation and development attached to the office of the vice-president for academic affairs at the École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne. Committee members were very interested in the professors' presentations and a lively discussion followed.

**Yves Reinkin**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), and vice-chair of the committee, discussed the follow-up measures he wanted his legislature to take regarding the APF resolution on education and sustainable development, passed in July 2012 in Brussels. Through his presentation, he hoped to inspire other parliamentarians in their efforts to follow-up on APF resolutions.

**Henri-François Gauthrin**, Member (Quebec), presented his report on the use of Web 2.0 technologies to bring legislators and citizens closer together. The report focuses on the principles of transparency, citizen participation and cooperation, and highlights the growing use of social media in all areas of communication. Mr. **Gauthrin** described the use of Web 2.0 in Quebec and invited branches to contribute to his report by filling out his questionnaire.

The committee confirmed the composition of its office and then heard from **Michel Sidibé**, Executive Director of UNAIDS and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, who was accompanied by **Louis Ponzio**, UNAIDS coordinator for the Ivory Coast, and by two representatives from the francophone youth parliament, **Assia Ait Ouahman** of Morocco and **Moustapha Saadou Idi** of Niger. Mr. **Sidibé** stated that AIDS is not only a health issue but also an economic and social issue. He noted that the epidemic has stabilized in Africa, primarily because of the availability of less expensive drugs. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of partnerships between UNAIDS and parliamentarians. The youth representatives gave an update on discussions at the francophone youth parliament's ECCAC. A wide-ranging discussion with committee members followed the presentation.

Mr. **Berberat** concluded the meeting by providing information on the subjects in the draft reports that will be followed up at the next committee meeting. The committee adopted the following resolutions in Abidjan: the resolution on the reference guide for the use of French in international organizations ([http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2013\\_07\\_session\\_cecac\\_resolvadem.pdf](http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2013_07_session_cecac_resolvadem.pdf)) and the resolution on funding for the International Fund for Cultural Diversity ([http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2013\\_07\\_session\\_cecac\\_resolfidc.pdf](http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2013_07_session_cecac_resolfidc.pdf)).

## **Plenary session**

The APF convened in a plenary assembly in Abidjan on July 10, 11 and 12, 2013, with **Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara**, President of the APF and Speaker of the National

Assembly of Burkina Faso, presiding. The official opening ceremony was held in the auditorium of the conference centre (Hôtel Ivoire) with the President of the Republic, **His Excellency Alassane Ouattara**, in attendance. **Kigbafori Guillaume Soro**, Speaker of the National Assembly of Ivory Coast, opened the session by paying tribute to **His Excellency Abdou Diouf**, Secretary General of La Francophonie, for his key role in preserving and instituting democracy in Senegal. He mentioned the reintegration of Ivory Coast into the broader La Francophonie family, including the APF, and the role the APF played within the Initiative multilatérale de coopération interparlementaire by helping Ivory Coast modernize its parliament through 29 projects and through the Noria program. He related this situation to the general theme of the plenary session, which was how parliaments play a key role in nation-building.

The President of the APF, **Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara**, then welcomed participants from all the branches and invited the Secretary General of La Francophonie, **His Excellency Abdou Diouf**, to address the esteemed assembly. He began by emphasizing how important it was for all Ivoirians, from all backgrounds, to build a lasting peace and he described the role of the Ivory Coast President in this journey toward reconciliation and democracy. He expressed La Francophonie's unwavering support for them in this quest. Secretary General Diouf also took the opportunity to thank **Jacques Legendre** and **Jean-Luc Lala**, who would finish their mandates as the Parliamentary Secretary General and the Administrative Secretary General, respectively, at the close of the plenary session that was underway.

The President of Ivory Coast, **His Excellency Alassane Ouattara**, welcomed participants and said he was very pleased the APF had decided to hold its plenary session in Ivory Coast just one year after the Ivorian Branch was reintegrated into the APF. With the political crisis behind them, he said he was determined to establish good governance through free and transparent institutions, including a credible and effective parliament adapted to the new realities of Ivorian society. He thanked Secretary General **Diouf** for his key role in resolving crises in Africa, including those in Mali and Guinea-Bissau, and he paid tribute to the Speaker of the National Assembly, **Kigbafori Guillaume Soro**, and to all the Members of the National Assembly of Ivory Coast, three quarters of whom are new to politics. The President of Ivory Coast was awarded the Order of the Pleiades by the President of the APF, as were several other people.

The President of the APF then opened the XXXIX Session, inviting Secretary General **Abdou Diouf** to address the assembly, as is the custom. He emphasized the significant contribution of the APF's programs and the OIF's willingness to continue supporting their implementation to the best of its abilities. He said he would like to see the early warning systems expanded, which the APF oversees to some extent, referring to the Bamako and Saint-Boniface declarations. He provided an update on the situation in the three suspended countries—the Central African Republic, Madagascar and Mali—and emphasized how important the electoral observation process is in maintaining democracy in many countries, making specific mention of the cases of Guinea and Togo. On the subject of Arab countries, he referred to the elections in Tunisia and said he was very worried about the crisis in Egypt, especially as regards violence against women. That led the Secretary General to emphasize how important it is for the freedom of the press to remain a key part of democratic life, and he expressed his hope that the OIF and the APF will increase their collaboration to reduce barriers. He mentioned the new *Guide pratique sur Le Conseil des droits de l'Homme* and asked all countries to ratify the *Arms Trade*

*Treaty*. As regards the OIF's mission to promote the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity, the Secretary General announced that the French Language World Forum, held for the first time in Québec City, Canada, in July 2012, would be the first in a series of forums held every three years, with the second forum to take place in Liège, Belgium, in 2015. He also addressed several economic initiatives (WTO and the G20), environmental initiatives (Rio+20, national sustainable development strategies, Millennium Development Goals) and education initiatives (distance teacher training, francophone volunteer exchange program). In closing, he mentioned the upcoming Francophonie Games in Nice in September 2013, which would bring together 3,000 young athletes and artists, and he announced that the 8th Games would take place in Ivory Coast. Secretary General **Diouf** concluded his speech by saying that all of La Francophonie had a commitment to women's rights, and he called for formal co-operation between members of the first World Francophone Women's Forum (Paris, March 2013) and the APF's Network of Women Parliamentarians. The floor was then opened for questions. Committee chairs and the chair of the Network of Women Parliamentarians asked the Secretary General about crisis situations in certain francophone countries; the French-language promotion policy; extractives and the transparency initiative; and the action plan on violence against women. **Robert Aubin** (Canada), Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, asked about the role of parliamentarians as regards the OIF's election missions.

When the plenary session reconvened in the afternoon of July 11, the APF confirmed the Bureau's decision to agree to the request from Bosnia-Herzegovina to join the APF as its own branch.

At the invitation of the President of the APF, **Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara**, the plenary assembly heard contributions from some 15 branches on the theme of how parliaments play a key role in nation-building. On behalf of the Canadian Branch, the Hon. **Paul E. McIntyre**, Senator and Delegation Chair of the Canadian Branch, gave a statement about the first sub-theme—the role of parliament in addressing identity crises and building a democracy and a nation. He explored the concept of “nation” from a Canadian historical perspective, describing how a federal democratic system was instituted in 1867 with a bicameral Parliament, and he explained the challenges associated with constantly seeking a balance between the rights of the francophone minority and the rights of the anglophone majority. He concluded by saying that, in Canada, federalism and parliamentary democracy helped to reconcile the national aspirations of some groups, while maintaining the unity and integrity of the whole.

The APF heard from **Michel Sidibé**, Executive Director of UNAIDS and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, who provided a status report and explained that the epidemic has stabilized in Africa, primarily because of the availability of less expensive drugs. He hopes to see greater progress among francophone nations, particularly with regard to the treatment of children. He is pleased to see the new OIF roadmap and to note that Africa has taken responsibility for the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, he believes that the main challenge is a human one because it is primarily about violence against girls and women, especially young girls and women. The pandemic is still spreading among this group. Mr. **Sidibé** is also concerned about the many people who are at risk, as their legal rights are too often ignored.

The APF adopted the activity report prepared by **Jacques Legendre**, Senator (France) and Parliamentary Secretary General of the APF, and the report prepared by **Michel Wolter**, Member (Luxembourg) and APF Treasurer, containing the 2012 financial



statements and the amended 2013 budget. **Anne Brasseur**, Member (Luxembourg), who tabled the report, stated that the APF was in a better financial position than the previous year.

The session resumed on Friday, July 12, and the APF heard from **Yamina Benguigui**, the French minister delegate for La Francophonie, responsible to the minister of foreign affairs. Ms. Benguigui sponsored the first World Francophone Women's Forum in March 2013, attended by 770 women.

The APF adopted reports and resolutions tabled on behalf of the standing committees and the Network of Women Parliamentarians.

The following resolutions were adopted:

- Parliamentary Affairs Committee:
  - Resolution on decentralized cooperation;
  - Special motion thanking committee Chair Pierre DeBané;
  - Resolution on civil status and democracy.
- Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee:
  - Resolution on the reference guide for the use of French in international organizations;
  - Resolution on funding for the International Fund for Cultural Diversity.
- Political committee:
  - Political situation in francophone countries;
  - Resolution on enhancing security in response to the globalization of organized crime.
- Cooperation and development committee:
  - Resolution on simplified secure titles;
  - Resolution on Millennium Development Goals.
- Network of Women Parliamentarians:
  - Resolution on the 10th anniversary of the first meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians;
  - Resolution on the 5th world women's conference;
  - Resolution on the issue of unwanted pregnancy and child mothers;
  - Resolution on the violence being committed in Egypt.

The resolutions and speeches are available on the APF website at <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?rubrique163> [in French only].

The APF took note of the activity reports from the regional chargés de mission and heard from various speakers. **Didier Berberat**, State Councillor (Switzerland), spoke on implementing a follow-up mechanism for the resolutions passed during the plenary session. It was agreed that the Parliamentary Secretary General would define the approach, bearing in mind that it is the responsibility of each parliamentarian to follow up

on resolutions. **Pascal Terrasse**, Member (France), spoke on the motion by the Ivory Coast Branch to thank Parliamentary Secretary General **Jacques Legendre**, Senator (France). Mr. **Legendre** delivered his final address to the APF after more than 20 years of service to the organization. He hopes that the APF will continue to be focused on the future as it navigates the challenges of globalization and linguistic uniformity.

The APF confirmed the election of Bureau members and the new Parliamentary Secretary General, **Pascal Terrasse**. Mr. **Terrasse** addressed the plenary session and thanked the outgoing parliamentary secretary general and administrative secretary general. He also shared some of his priorities and ended his address by thanking Senator **Pierre De Bané** (Canada) for his long-standing dedication to the APF.

The outgoing APF President, **Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara**, introduced the new President, the Hon. Senator **Andrée Champagne**, and awarded her the Grand Cross of the Order of the Pleiades. Ms. **Champagne** delivered her acceptance speech, thanking **Kigbafori Guillaume Soro**, Speaker of the National Assembly of Ivory Coast, for the warm welcome by that country's branch at the plenary session, and **Roch Marc Christian Kaboré** and **Soungalo Apollinaire Ouattara** of Burkina Faso, both of whom served as APF president over the past two years. Senator Champagne also thanked the outgoing parliamentary and administrative secretaries general, **Jacques Legendre** and **Jean-Luc Lala**, for their dedication and loyal service to the APF. She highlighted her priorities for the coming year, such as having APF committees and networks refer more closely to the declaration of the Summit of the Heads of State of La Francophonie when preparing their reports as well as recommendations or resolutions made during the plenary session.

The plenary session concluded its activities and joined the 6th francophone youth parliament, whose participants described the resolutions passed during their session.

Because of its participation in this annual gathering, the Canadian Branch achieved its goals of meeting its international obligations, of representing the Canadian Branch's budget interests, of actively participating in discussions with the Secretary General of the OIF, of obtaining approval for the Branch's nominations to the Order of the Pleiades, of strengthening international ties and of representing Branch interests.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. Paul E. McIntyre, Q.C. Senator  
President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF)

## Travel Cost

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Branch of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie</i> (APF)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Bureau Meeting and XXXIX Ordinary Session Meeting of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie</i> (APF)
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Abidjan, Ivory Coast
<b>DATES</b>	July 8 to 12, 2013
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Andrée Champagne Hon. Paul E. McIntyre
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Robert Aubin Mr. Bernard Trottier Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle Mr. Massimo Pacetti
STAFF	Mr. François Michaud Mr. Jean-Luc Bourdages Mr. André Gagnon
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 44,455.95</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 12,605.80</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 4,574.80</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 108.00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS/ REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 746.43</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 62,490.98</b>