



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the XXVIIIth Regional Assembly
and the Conference of Branch Chairs of the America Region
of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF)
Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la
Francophonie* (APF)
New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States of
America
August 8 to 10, 2012**

Report

The parliamentary delegation that represented the Canadian Branch at the XXVIIIth Regional Assembly of the America Region of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) and the Conference of Branch Chairs (CBC) in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on August 8 to 10, 2012, has the honour to present its report.

The delegation from the Canadian Branch of the APF was made up of MP **Shelly Glover**, Vice-Chair of the Canadian Branch and head of the delegation; the Hon. **Gerald Comeau**, Senator; and **Pierre Dionne Labelle**, MP. The delegation was accompanied by François Michaud, Branch Secretary.

In addition to the Canadian Branch, the Alberta, Haiti, Louisiana, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Saskatchewan branches also participated in the working sessions.

Conference of Branch Chairs

Reports from the Chargé de mission

MLA **Yvon Bonenfant**, Chair of the New Brunswick Branch and Chargé de mission for the America Région, gave the CBC an overview of the decisions from the APF Bureau meeting and highlights of the 38th plenary session of the APF, which took place in Brussels, Belgium, from July 8 to 12, 2012. He also presented a report on the Region's activities since the April 2012 Conference of Branch Chairs in Toronto.

Statement of revenues and expenses, America Region

Dominic Dumont, Regional Executive Secretary, presented the 2011–2012 statement of revenues and expenses for the APF America Region, and the 2012–2013 budget estimates.

Update on gender-neutral writing

The Chair of the Ontario Branch, **France Gélinas**, discussed her efforts to have the APF use gender-neutral language in its documents. **Shelly Glover** congratulated her on her work and underlined that it is important for the America Region to use appropriate titles.

Canadian Branch initiative on the Bulletin Amérique

Yvon Bonenfant, Chargé de mission for the America Region, presented a status report on the Canadian Branch's initiative to enhance the format of the *Bulletin Amérique*. This proposal, introduced at the April 2012 Conference of Branch Chairs in Toronto, was unanimously adopted. The Region will henceforth publish an electronic communication tool: *Bulletin Amérique 2.0*.

Status report on the Francophone youth parliament of the Americas

Denis Desgagné, President and CEO of the Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques, presented his explanatory note on the structure of Francophone youth parliament of the Americas. **Shelly Glover** commented that the current fiscal climate is not conducive to this project. It was agreed that a subcommittee made up of

parliamentarians representing Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia would examine this project.

2013 Conference of Branch Chairs

Shelly Glover suggested that the Conference of Branch Chairs embrace new technologies and hold the next CBC meeting via teleconferencing, thus saving the participating branches several thousand dollars. The proposal was unanimously adopted.

2013 Regional Assembly of the America

The Ontario Branch confirmed its plan to host the XXIXth Regional Assembly of the America in Toronto in August 2013.

Regional Assembly of the Americas

Opening of proceedings

Brooke Smith, Advisor to the Mayor of New Orleans, introduced **Jacquelyn Clarkson**, President of the New Orleans City Council. Ms. **Clarkson** gave a presentation on her city, highlighting what she described as its greatest asset: its multiculturalism.

Tom Klingler, a professor at Tulane University, gave a presentation on language and identity in French-speaking Louisiana. He underlined among others the contribution made by Canadians, more specifically the Acadians, regarding the founding of the state and blooming of Cajun culture.

Joseph Dunn, Executive Director of CODOFIL, gave a presentation on the topic "Toward a lasting Francophone identity in Louisiana". He mentioned, among other things, that Louisiana does not have an official language, but that French is legally recognized in that state.

Stephen Ortega, State Representative for Louisiana, gave a presentation on the role of the French language in Louisiana's economy. One of the points he made was that Louisiana has a program that identifies "French-friendly" companies. The state has several programs to develop a French-speaking workforce and to encourage young people to learn and speak French. Senator **Eric LaFleur** (Louisiana) added that French is to Louisiana what jazz is to New Orleans: a treasure worth preserving.

Jay Dardenne, Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana, welcomed the participants and spoke of Louisiana's relations with other Francophone regions around the world.

Charles Larroque, President of Louisiana à la Carte, gave a presentation on his organization, whose mandate is to preserve Louisiana's French language and culture.

Reports on the impact of the knowledge of French on the local economy

Shelly Glover, MP and Branch Vice-Chair, presented the Canadian Branch's report on this topic. The report mentioned that, in order to make the knowledge of French a true economic asset, we must encourage people to keep up their French-language skills once they leave school. Ms. Glover's presentation also focussed on the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality*.

Simon Dieuseul Desras, President of the Senate of the Republic of Haiti; **Sharon Blady**, Chair of the Manitoba Branch; **Chris D'Entremont**, Vice-Chair of the Nova Scotia Branch; and **Danny Soucy**, Vice-Chair of the New Brunswick Branch, also presented reports on this topic. **France Gélinas**, Chair of the Ontario Branch, introduced **Pascal Arseneau**, Senior Marketing Director, Groupe Média TFO, who gave an overview of his company and its impact on the French language and culture in Ontario and in the rest of Canada.

Shelly Glover initiated a discussion on the presence of Anglophones at APF meetings. Many of the delegates participated.

It was agreed that the topic for the next regional conference would be chosen by the Branch chairs.

By participating in the meeting of the Conference of Branch Chairs and the assembly of America Region, the Canadian Branch achieved its goals of meeting its regional obligations, presenting a report, representing the budgetary interests of the Canadian Branch, maintaining regional contacts, representing its interests and presenting a brief that led to an in-depth debate.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Andrée Champagne, P.C., Senator
President of the Canadian Branch of the
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)

Travel Cost

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie</i> (APF)
ACTIVITY	XXVIII th Regional Assembly and the Conference of Branch Chairs of the America Region of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie</i> (APF)
DESTINATION	New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States of America
DATES	August 8 to 10, 2012
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Gerald J. Comeau
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Shelly Glover, Pierre Dionne Labelle
STAFF	François Michaud
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 4,526.52
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1,620.60
PER DIEMS	\$ 980.09
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 114.50
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 824.09
TOTAL	\$ 8,065.80