



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Conference of Branch
Chairs of the Americas Region of the *Assemblée
parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)***

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

Baton Rouge and Lafayette, Louisiana,

**United States of America
March 11-12, 2010**

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the APF that attended the APF Conference of Branch Chairs of the Americas Region in Baton Rouge and Lafayette, Louisiana, USA, on March 11 and 12, 2010, has the honour to present its report.

The delegation was made up of the Hon. Andrée Champagne, Senator and Chair of the Canadian Branch and of the Conference of Branch Chairs, and Mr. Jean Michel Roy, acting Branch Secretary.

In addition to the Canadian Branch, the following sections were present: Alberta, Louisiana, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec.

Thursday, March 11, 2010

The Conference, chaired by the Hon. Andrée Champagne, met in the Louisiana State Senate Chamber in Baton Rouge.

Mr. Eric Lafleur, Senator and Chair of the Louisiana Branch of the APF, welcomed participants. In his speech, he reaffirmed Louisiana's interest in the APF and expressed his intention to see his branch play a larger role within the APF, with a view to a renaissance of the Branch within the APF.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde of Ontario, *Chargé de mission* for the Americas, and the Hon. Andrée Champagne also spoke. She indicated that she was pleased to be part of the reawakening of francophonie in Louisiana.

Mr. Lalonde then presented a summary of the proceedings from the previous APF Bureau meeting in N'Djamena, Chad, on February 2 and 3, 2010. He also introduced the Americas Region activity report for July 2009 to February 2010.

The following branches indicated they wished to present reports on the following topics at the next regional assembly:

- Canada: Linguistic duality at the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. Senator Champagne briefly outlined the issue.
- Louisiana: The importance of involving locally, regionally and nationally elected officials to defend the French language in minority communities.
- Manitoba: Economic development in Francophone and bilingual communities.
- Nova Scotia: The French-Language Services Act (An Act Respecting the Office of Acadian Affairs and the Delivery of French-Language Services by the Public Service).
- Ontario: The Francophone Youth Parliament and the National Youth Parliaments. Mr. Lalonde brought up the possibility of creating a youth parliament for the Americas region.
- Quebec: The co-operative movement as an economic development tool in the French-speaking regions of the Americas.

Mr. Lalonde and Mr. Dominic Dumont, Administrative Secretary for the Region, presented the 2009–2010 income and expenditures report for the Americas Region and the budget estimates for 2010–2011.

Following the presentation of various reports, participants heard from the following speakers:

Mr. Olivier Brochenin, France's Consul General in New Orleans.

Mr. William Arceneaux, Professor at Tulane University and President of the Louisiana Public Broadcasting Foundation and *La Fondation Louisiane*, gave a brief summary of the history of Louisiana.

Mr. Robert Lafayette, Professor Emeritus and President of the Friends of French Studies at Louisiana State University, gave a presentation on the education system in the US. The American system is decentralized, with its more than 14,000 school boards responsible for making education decisions. Second-language instruction is optional. Prof. Lafayette also spoke about a dictionary of Louisiana French.

Mr. Damien Regnard, member of the *Assemblée des Français de l'étranger*.

Mr. Paul G. Pastorek, Louisiana's State Superintendent of Education.

Friday, March 12, 2010

The Conference continued at the *Centre international de Lafayette*.

The Mayor of Lafayette, Mr. Joey Durel, welcomed the participants and then gave each of them a certificate of honorary citizenship for the City and District of Lafayette.

Round-table discussion on the situation in Haiti and on francophonie in Louisiana

Mr. Philippe Gustin, Director of the *Centre international de Lafayette*, introduced the speakers for the round-table discussion.

Mr. Christophe Landry, Program Director, World Studies Institute of Louisiana (WSIL), presented WSIL projects, including the main one that links primary school classrooms in Louisiana, Quebec and Haiti.

Ms. Ingrid Lemke, founder of the Happy Haiti Foundation, presented her organization's mandate to build a trade school campus giving students an opportunity to learn how to build roads, latrines, sewer systems, low-cost housing, water wells, solar- and wind-powered small-scale energy systems and small hydroponic farming operations, as well as how to breed Haitian escargots, sew, make arts and crafts, offer hospitality services, etc.—with no tuition costs. Its long-term goal is for the graduates to return as teachers and pass on their skills to others, thereby empowering destitute Haitians to save their own country.

Ms. Elaine Clément, Community Outreach Coordinator for the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), gave a presentation.

Senator Champagne gave participants a rundown of the Canadian government's actions following the earthquake in Haiti and the investments of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to fight HIV/AIDS in Haiti.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde introduced a draft resolution on the situation in Haiti in response to the APF Bureau's declaration for the people of Haiti, adopted at its meeting on February 2 and 3, 2010. During the debate on the draft resolution, participants reported on the International Donors' Conference Towards a New Future for Haiti, which would take place on March 22 and 23, 2010, in New York at UN headquarters.

Mr. David Marcantel, CODOFIL and *La Fondation Louisiane* board member, spoke about the legal status of French in Louisiana.

Ms. Suzanne Gadbois, Assistant Director of the *Centre de la francophonie des Amériques*, presented the Centre's main activities:

- Francophone youth in action 2010, encouraging the promotion of French by youth for youth.
- The *Université d'été sur la francophonie des Amériques 2010*, hosted by the Université Laval and the Université du Québec en Outaouais.
- Win a Francothèque!
- The program for young ambassadors of La Francophonie of the Americas, which allows young people to share their experiences with their peers from other French-speaking parts of the Americas.

Ms. Vaughne Madden, CEO of Nova Scotia's Office of Acadian Affairs, presented the "Bonjour!" logo, to be placed on a sign or a pin to indicate to the public that service is available in French. Public servants wearing the "Bonjour!" logo demonstrate their willingness to communicate with the public in both English and French. The logo gives French-speaking Nova Scotians a way to easily locate a person who can serve them in French.

Ms. Madden also presented the Access Nova Scotia program, which gives French-speaking Nova Scotians access to government programs, services and information in French.

Mr. Christian Goudeau, CODOFIL and LPB (Louisiana Public Broadcasting) Foundation board member, talked about the renewal of francophonie in Louisiana, the true desire to re-establish Francophone institutions and the need to restructure and redefine CODOFIL.

The conference ended with a meeting with young Acadians.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrée Champagne, Senator
Chair 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 (APF)</i>
ACTIVITY	Conference of Branch Chairs of the America Region of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie</i>
DESTINATION	Baton Rouge and Lafayette, Louisiana, United States of America
DATES	March 11-12, 2010
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Andrée Champagne
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	Jean Michel Roy
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 2,653.89
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1,021.37
PER DIEMS	\$ 542.24
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 199.50
TOTAL	\$ 4,417.00