



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation to the
Bureau Meeting and XXXVIIIth Session of the *Assemblée
parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF)**

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

**Brussels, Belgium
July 8 to 12, 2012**

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF), which attended the APF Bureau meeting in Brussels (Belgium) on July 9, 2012 and the XXXVIII session of the APF, also held in Brussels from July 10 to 12, 2012, is honoured to present its report. The delegation was led by the Hon. **Andrée Champagne**, Senator and President of the Canadian Branch, and included the following parliamentarians: the Hon. **Pierre De Bané**, Senator; **Shelly Glover**, MP; **Bernard Trottier**, MP; and **Pierre Dionne Labelle**, MP. Accompanying the delegation were François Michaud, Branch Association Secretary, Jean-Luc Bourdages, Library of Parliament Analyst, and Gaëtane Lemay, a Clerk at the Senate of Canada, on secondment to the General Secretariat of the APF in Paris as of September 2012.

The following branches were represented at the XXXVIII session: Alberta, Andorra, Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels, Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Economic and Monetary Union (CEMAC), Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Gabon, Georgia, Haiti, Hungary, Jersey, Jura, Laos, Luxembourg, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Moldavia, Niger, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Poland, Quebec, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Switzerland, Togo, Valais, Valle d'Aosta, Vanuatu, Vaud and Vietnam.

Bureau business

The APF Bureau meeting was held in Brussels on July 9, 2012, and was chaired by Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso.

Senators **Andrée Champagne**, Vice-President of the APF, and **Pierre De Bané**, Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, attended the Bureau meeting.

Opening of Bureau meeting

Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso opened the Bureau meeting. Members of the Bureau present adopted the agenda and the minutes from the meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on February 8 and 9, 2012.

The President welcomed the Bureau members and introduced the new permanent members. He pointed out that the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* now had 78 branches—48 full members, 17 associate members and 13 observers.

Parliamentary Secretary General's activity report

Senator Jacques Legendre, Parliamentary Secretary General, presented his activity report. In particular, he discussed the following issues:

- His disappointment over the Madagascar situation and the overly slow progress of the road map;

- The situation in Egypt and Mali; the exemplary recent elections in Senegal; the reinstatement of Côte d'Ivoire to the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*;
- The relationship with the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) in view of the October 2012 Kinshasa Summit and the first Forum de la langue française held in Quebec City in July 2012;
- The Canadian Branch's initiative on the financial situation of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*;
- The success of the internship program and other secondments; the participation of young francophone volunteers—three full-time equivalent positions for the year;
- The holding of three new-format parliamentary seminars on cooperation;
- The organization of seminars with the Institut de l'énergie et de l'environnement de la Francophonie (IEPF), which requires finding new partners without losing visibility.

During the discussions, the Vice-President of the APF and President of the Canadian Branch, the Hon. **Andrée Champagne**, reminded the Bureau members of Canada's contribution to the General Secretariat of the APF in Paris regarding the return to Canada of Christine Lafrance, a Clerk at the House of Commons, and the secondment of Gaëtane Lemay, a Clerk at the Senate of Canada, to the Secretariat as an advisor from September 2012.

Treasurer's report on the 2011 financial statements and the amended 2012 budget

Michel Wolter, Member (Luxembourg) and Treasurer, presented his report. The Treasurer reported a slight deficit in 2011 and specified that the *Assemblée* depended on steady contributions from its main partners to avoid a precarious financial situation. He said that, according to the figures released at the Bureau meeting in Phnom Penh, in February 2012, Canada's overall contribution (including that of provincial branches) was almost €77,000, making it the second-largest contributor behind France (whose contribution of €130,000 should be reduced to €117,000 in 2012). The OIF contributes nearly 50% of the total budget of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*.

The Hon. **Andrée Champagne**, Vice-President of the APF and President of the Canadian Branch, provided information on the Canadian Branch's requests with regard to the overall funding of La Francophonie and suggested that the wages paid to the individual seconded from the Canadian Parliament to the General Secretariat be included in the Canadian contribution. The Parliamentary Secretary General confirmed that the APF's financial situation had become more precarious, but said that this state of affairs was only temporary. He reminded participants that contributions were not the primary source of funding, that they would remain the same for the time being and that it was important for members to pay them on time. Therefore, careful management is necessary.

Mali's suspension in the wake of the recent coup d'état was also discussed. The Secretary General reminded the participants that the suspension must be imposed until the people

are back in power. Only the General Assembly could request the reinstatement of the Malian Branch.

The Bureau approved the 2011 financial statements and the amended 2012 budget.

Committee business

Didier Berberat, State Councillor (Switzerland), presented the activity report for the Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs committee, which he chairs, and the report of the Parliamentary Network to fight AIDS/HIV, which falls under his committee. He highlighted the work done by Christine Lafrance, seconded by the Parliament of Canada to the Committee, and welcomed her replacement, Gaëtane Lemay. The Hon. Senator **Pierre De Bané** (Canada), Chair of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, presented the Committee's report. **Mahama Sawadogo**, Member (Burkina Faso), and Acting Chair in the absence of **Joseph Ndong**, Member (Senegal), presented the report of the Cooperation and Development Committee. Lastly, **André Schneider**, Member (France) and Chair of the Political Committee, presented his Committee's activity report.

Work of the APF Network of Women Parliamentarians

Françoise Bertieaux, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels) and Chair of the Network of Women presented her activity report. She also requested that the Network hold an intersessional meeting, and her request received some support; however, she specified that the decision would be made by the branches, which would have to cover the related costs.

Reports from regional Chargés de mission

The Chargé de mission for Africa, **Salvador Yaméogo** (Burkina Faso) presented an activity report on the Africa Region. **Yvon Bonenfant**, M.L.A. (New Brunswick) and Chargé de mission for the American Region, presented the regional activity report and pointed out that the region supported, by way a resolution, Senator **De Bané's** document on the funding of the institutional Francophonie. **Bougnong Boupoua**, Member (Laos) and Chargée de mission for the Asia-Pacific Region, presented her region's report, while Europe's Chargé de mission, **Jean-Paul Wahl**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), presented the report for the Europe Region.

Brief on funding for La Francophonie internationally

The Hon. **Pierre De Bané**, Senator (Canada), presented to the Bureau the conclusions of his brief on funding for La Francophonie internationally. That document was originally presented and discussed at the Phnom Penn Bureau meeting, in February 2012, and then covered again by the Parliamentary Affairs Committee, at its March meeting in Vancouver (Canada).

Senator **De Bané** talked about how the APF's institutional role has changed since the assembly was created in 1967. He also highlighted the current shortcomings in the Charter of La Francophonie—adopted in Antananarivo in 2005—which does not provide for the APF's powers and prerogatives. He went on to summarize the conclusions of Professor Flageolle, a former assistant auditor general of Canada, who recommended in a report prepared for the Senator that the Charter of La Francophonie be amended to clearly set out the APF's responsibilities. The Senator was of the opinion that the 2000 agreement

between the OIF and the APF could be reviewed to remedy the shortcomings identified and that, ideally, the Charter of La Francophonie should be amended accordingly.

Regarding exchanges among Bureau members, the Parliamentary Secretary General proposed various channels for discussion within the organizations of La Francophonie in order to consolidate the role of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* going forward and to have a better idea of the allocation and distribution of resources that enable the General Secretariat of La Francophonie to do its work.

The APF's participation in the first Forum mondial de la langue française

At the Montreux Summit of La Francophonie in October 2010, heads of state and government unanimously decided that a French language world forum would be organized. On the initiative of the OIF, that first Forum was held in Quebec City (Canada), and close to 1,500 civil society participants were invited to reflect on the future of the French language. The APF was closely associated with that event and participated in the activities, which focused on four topics: economy, work and training; linguistic diversity; cultural references; and the new digital environment. The parliamentarians who attended the Forum were pleased with young people's place and role in the highly successful event.

Preparation for the 14th Summit of La Francophonie

Aubin Minaku Ndjaladjoku, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), provided an update on the state of preparations for the 14th Summit of La Francophonie to be held in Kinshasa on October 13 and 14, 2012, on the following topic: La Francophonie, economic and environmental issues in the face of global governance. Despite the difficulties facing the DRC, it was suggested that everyone go to Kinshasa to mark the progress toward democracy, as a show of solidarity by La Francophonie internationally.

Parliamentary Secretary General, **Jacques Legendre** (France) talked about practical issues and suggested that the APF's official delegation, as usual, consist of the President, the first Vice-President, the Parliamentary Secretary General, the Administrative Secretary General and, if possible, a few youth parliament representatives.

Interparliamentary cooperation programs

Senator **Jacques Legendre**, Parliamentary Secretary General, talked about various cooperation programs of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*, starting with the Noria program. He reminded the participants that Noria was a cooperation program that focused on information and communication technologies as a way to help bridge the digital divide between the north and the south. He pointed out that some 20 parliamentary assemblies have been provided with support to enhance their structural and technical capacities, and to strengthen La Francophonie. The Parliamentary Affairs Committee will study a document outlining new directions for the Noria program.

Regarding parliamentary seminars, the Parliamentary Secretary General reminded the participants that three seminars were organized during the second half of 2011, but that none were held during the first half of 2012. Two seminars are planned for the second half of 2012—one in Chad and one in a post-crisis country.

With regard to internships for parliamentary officers, Senator **Legendre** announced that the APF had awarded nine grants as part of that program. In addition, three new interns joined the General Secretariat in Paris.

As for youth-oriented programs, the Parliamentary Secretary General mainly focused on the projects the APF was planning to implement in late 2012 and 2013. The APF wanted to organize a new edition of the francophone youth parliament in 2013—as no such event had been held since 2009—possibly during the Francophonie Games in Nice in Fall 2013, and the first Francophone Youth Parliament of the Americas in Toronto in August 2013.

Election observation missions, activity calendar and communication

It was specified that no election observation missions were carried out in the first half of 2012. The Parliamentary Secretary General disliked the fact that the APF parliamentarians were increasingly being left to their own devices, while the OIF has been dedicating €1.5 million a year to electoral processes. Discussions are ongoing with the Peace, Democracy and Human Rights Representative for the OIF.

The Parliamentary Secretary General also expressed disappointment over the uncertainty surrounding the Assemblée's activity calendar over the past year. The first Vice-President of the APF, the Hon. **Andrée Champagne** (Canada), pointed out that the Canadian Branch of the APF had intensified its efforts to keep an officer of the Parliament of Canada in the General Secretariat and to acquire the funding it needed to host the XXXX Session of the APF in Ottawa in 2014.

In closing, Senator **Legendre** pointed out in particular that 2012 marked the 45th anniversary of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*. On that occasion, a 13-minute film¹ was produced, tracing the APF's 45-year history—from the May 1967 creation of the Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française (AIPLF) in Luxembourg to the present day.

Distinctions

The President of the APF, **Roch Marc Christian Kaboré**, presented the proposals for appointment and promotion for the Order of the Pléiade, and those proposals were adopted by the Bureau.

Other business

At the proposal of the Chair of the Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee, **Didier Berberat**, a motion in support of Liège's candidacy for the 16th Congrès mondial de la Fédération internationale des professeurs de français (FIPF) was adopted.

Next, the participants discussed the questionnaires sent to branches in preparation of committee and network reports. The Hon. **Andrée Champagne**, first Vice-President and President of the Canadian Branch, suggested at a past Bureau meeting that such questionnaires no longer be used, mainly because few responses were submitted and they mostly came from the north. It was decided that the questionnaires requested by

¹ The film can be viewed on Youtube at the following link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPJv4KASTq4&feature=player_detailpage.

committee rapporteurs would once again be handled by the General Secretariat, but that it would be appropriate to determine the response rate and eventually report the findings to the Bureau.

For more details on this Bureau meeting, please visit: http://apf-francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2012_07_bureaubruxelles_projetcr.pdf.

Network of Women Parliamentarians

The APF Network of Women Parliamentarians met in Brussels on July 8, 2012. **Françoise Bertieaux**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels) and Chair of the Network presided over the meeting.

Following adoption of the draft agenda and minutes from the meeting held in Kinshasa on July 5, 2011, **Françoise Bertieaux** delivered her report as chair. The Chair provided a progress update on the reports submitted and decisions made at the March 2012 Network meeting in Athens, especially the decision to better define the topics discussed and the related reports.

Next, the members heard the presentation on follow-up reports regarding women's economic independence—comprising a main topic and two related subtopics. **Stéphanie Vallée**, Member (Quebec) and one of the Network's rapporteurs, presented the main report on the legal framework of women's economic independence. **Gisèle Guigma** (Burkina Faso) and **Eyoun Epoube** (Cameroon) presented a report on rural women. Lastly, **Shelly Glover** (Canada) provided an update on the report presented in Athens (Greece) in March 2012 by the Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, Senator and one of the Network's rapporteurs, on the subtopic of education and training of girls and women. In the summary presentation of her report, Ms. Glover focused on information technology training for girls and women, without emphasizing the report's other factual elements, by levels of education.

During the discussion on Ms. Glover's report, the representative of the Central African Republic commented on the use of French in information and communication technology (ICT) training. The Canadian Rapporteur was of the opinion that basic and ICT training could directly help increase the use of French, with everyone, and especially women, making an effort in their immediate environment. In addition, the Chair of the Network pointed out that the instructors were concerned about their own knowledge of information technologies. The Vice-Chair, from Gabon, reminded the participants that many girls and women had no computer access and did not know how to use computers. That is why it is important to make information technology accessible and to educate the public on using said technology. The representative for Burkina Faso also pointed out that access to electricity was a requirement. She used the example of Cameroon, where ICT use was as much of an issue among boys as it was among girls. The Chair repeated how important it was to have the economic conditions necessary for access to technology. The Vice-Chair also emphasized men's role in and contribution to the education of girls and women, through support and encouragement. Since that element could impede progress, the Representative for Belgium stressed the need to raise men's awareness of education for women and girls. With a consensus reached, it was agreed to add to the report a sentence on the need to raise men's awareness from a very early age of the importance of girls' and women's education. Ms. Glover suggested that a similar addition be made to the more

general resolution with respect to Ms. Vallée's (Quebec) resolution on women's independence.

Next, the Network members heard from **Geneviève Colot** (France), who presented her report on the topic of violence against women and children in the public sphere: the legal framework in France. The Burkina Faso Rapporteur presented her contribution on the same topic. The participants then briefly discussed witchcraft in Africa. A Belgian member wanted to see that practice condemned. Others felt that witchcraft was intrinsic to Africa, but did not, however, condone the violence that might come with it.

Burkina Faso's **Gisèle Guigma** presented a first report on the fight against genital mutilation in Burkina Faso and a second report on the status of maternal, infant and child health there. Relevant legislation in Benin and Belgium was cited as an example. While condemning the practice of genital mutilation, Canada's rapporteur, **Shelly Glover**, stressed the need to educate African women on that issue.

Network members monitored the implementation of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW). **Stéphanie Vallée** (Quebec) presented her report on the reservations some of the 187 participating states expressed on that issue. Some of those reservations were slowing down the Convention's implementation. The Network also heard voluntary contributions from branches whose country was recently audited by the CEDAW Committee—Chad, Valle d'Aosta, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mauritius.

France Gélinas, M.P.P. (Ontario), presented a communication on gender-inclusive writing—including a resolution on the use of non-sexist language in all communications—subject to discussion in the Political Committee. The Network members were then provided with information on the statement by **Abdou Diouf**, Secretary General of La Francophonie and on the APF Opinion in preparation for the Kinshasa Summit in October 2012.

In other business, the Network participants discussed the three resolutions that were moved, including the resolution on women's economic independence submitted by **Stéphanie Vallée**. With regard to that resolution, the Rapporteur for Canada, **Shelly Glover**, suggested that a reminder be added about the necessity to raise men's awareness of women's economic independence. The two other resolutions moved at the plenary session were about female genital mutilation and respect for the rights of women. Lastly, the participants discussed the recurring issue of the Network of Women Parliamentarians being recognized as a separate and independent committee.

Parliamentary Affairs Committee

The Hon. **Pierre De Bané**, Senator (Canada), chaired the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee held in Brussels on July 10, 2012. Mr. De Bané thanked the Belgian hosts and welcomed the parliamentarians in attendance. Parliamentary Secretary General, Senator **Jacques Legendre**, said a word of welcome and wished the Committee well in its work.

Following adoption of the amended agenda and the record of decisions from the meeting held in Vancouver on March 19 and 20, 2012, Senator **De Bané** delivered his report as a

slide show on the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* and other institutions that are part of La Francophonie internationally.

The Committee then heard presentations on draft reports and considered them.

Carole Poirier, M.N.A. (Quebec), and **Blaise Lambert Kyelem**, Member (Burkina Faso), presented a report on political nomadism.

Louis Vlavonou, Member (Benin), presented his report on discrimination, and free, fair and transparent elections.

The Committee heard from **Françoise Bertieaux**, Member for Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels and Chair of the Network of Women Parliamentarians on the topic of the resolution the Network adopted on the imprescriptible and inalienable rights of women.

Michèle André, Senator (France) and Vice-Chair of the Committee, presented the last two chapters of the compilation parliamentary procedure and practice in assemblies in the francophone world and specified that summaries could be published in preparation for the next meeting.

The Hon. **Pierre De Bané**, Senator (Canada) and Chair of the Committee, talked about the Bureau's decision regarding the conclusions of his brief on the funding of La Francophonie internationally (see the Bureau business section at the beginning of the report).

The Committee then discussed parliamentary cooperation programs, including the following: parliamentary seminars and training sessions, the Noria program, the Parlement francophone des jeunes and national youth parliaments, as well as election observation missions. On the last topic, the Committee also heard from **Hugo Sada**, Peace, Democracy and Human Rights Representative for the OIF. The Peace Representative's presentation enabled those participating in the Committee's work to begin a discussion on ways to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the OIF's electoral missions—for instance, by appointing parliamentary leaders or by increasing the number of parliamentarians participating in those missions. However, some people wondered whether the APF could afford to participate in such missions.

In preparation for the hearing with **Abdou Diouf**, Secretary General of La Francophonie at the XXXVIII Session in Brussels, the Committee decided that one topic would focus on political nomadism, a second one on the APF's advisory role, and a third one would follow up on the parliamentary seminar held in Bamako on the family code. The participants finally agreed on the following new report topics for 2013: civil status and democracy; political party financing; decentralized cooperation in La Francophonie; and Parliament, press, media and democratization.

For more details on this meeting, please visit:
http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2012_07_cap_bruzelles.pdf

Political Committee

A meeting of the Political Committee was held in Brussels on July 10, 2012, and chaired by **André Schneider**, Member (France).

Following adoption of the agenda and the record of decisions from the meeting held in Lomé (Togo) in March 2012, Mr. **Schneider** delivered the chair's report.

Henri-François Gautrin, M.N.A. (Quebec) presented a report on the institution of the ombudsman in La Francophonie.

Denise Mekamne, Member (Gabon), presented a report on political situations in La Francophonie. Resolutions were passed on the following countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali and Syria. The Committee decided to submit a proposal to the Brussels plenary session (July 2012) to reinstate to the APF the Côte d'Ivoire Branch, which had been suspended since 2006.

The Committee then discussed the review of the APF rules, before hearing from **Françoise Fassiaux-Looten**, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), who presented a draft report in which she discussed facing the demographic challenges of the 21st century.

Bernard Trottier, M.P. (Canada) and Rapporteur of the Committee, presented a final draft report on natural resources and conflicts, along with a draft resolution. As a complex and sensitive issue on several levels, the development of natural resources has a direct impact on the daily lives of millions of people, many of whom live in francophone countries. In worst case scenarios, that development leads to dissatisfaction and conflicts among communities, and even violent conflicts within the same country or in border areas. The main resources and industries affected are oil, mining involving diamond, gold, tin and coltan extraction and forest. But agricultural products such as cocoa and coffee are also affected.

Mr. **Trottier** talked about the approaches put forward by the Secretary General of the United Nations, as well as initiatives developed internationally and in Canada, especially when it came to corporate social responsibility (CSR): the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the ISO 26000 standard on corporate social responsibility, and the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy for the Canadian International Extractive Sector. He invited La Francophonie to reiterate that developing natural resources while respecting human rights, local communities, and the natural and cultural environments, remained an asset in conflict resolution and economic development of the most vulnerable regions. He wanted La Francophonie to make a concerted effort to ensure that existing initiatives and agreements were respected and implemented. He also wanted La Francophonie to actively contribute to the emergence of new intervention and control structures with regard to the development of natural resources in conflict areas. He moved a relevant resolution that the Committee adopted along with the report.

Rapporteur Trottier's final report and the resolution adopted in the plenary session are available at the following addresses, respectively: http://apf.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/2012_session_politic_Rapport19_Ressourcesnaturelles.pdf and <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1666>. The general thrust of the resolution proposed by the Canadian Rapporteur was incorporated into the opinion offered by the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* in preparation for the Summit of La Francophonie being held in October 2012 in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

Before completing its work, the Committee agreed that the topic of the next report by Belgium and Quebec would focus on the influence of new media in francophone politics. The participants agreed on the question to be raised with the Secretary General of La Francophonie at the plenary session.

Cooperation and Development Committee

The Cooperation and Development Committee met in Brussels on July 10, 2012, and was chaired by **Mahama Sawadogo**, Member (Burkina Faso). Following adoption of the agenda, Chair **Sawadogo** reported on the activities of the past year and those that lay ahead. The Committee adopted the minutes and the record of decisions from the meeting held between April 2 and 4, 2012 in Delémont (Jura, Switzerland) and discussed the appearance of **Abdou Diouf**, Secretary General of La Francophonie, during the plenary session.

Hervé Cronel, Special Adviser for Economics and Sustainable Development to the Secretary General of La Francophonie, made a statement to the Committee. He reviewed the various conferences and activities that had taken place as well as those that lay ahead. They included the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in Doha, and the Rio+20 conference, at which La Francophonie's proposal to add culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development was rejected, as was the proposal to integrate all related programs into a single UN program on sustainable development. At the G20 Summit held on June 17, 2012, green growth, an important issue to the OIF, was overlooked owing to the focus placed on the financial crisis. At the Congo Brazzaville conference on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the issue of land management as regards energy and mining resources made its way into the discussion. In closing, Special Adviser **Cronel** said that, on the heels of the first Forum mondial de la langue française, held in Quebec City in July 2012, he hoped that, going forward, La Francophonie could excel not only in the areas of culture and human rights, but also in the area of economic development.

Committee participants then discussed the drafting of the APF Opinion on the topic of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of La Francophonie: La Francophonie, environmental and economic issues, and global governance.

Patrick Dupriez, Member (Belgium/Francophone Community/Wallonia-Brussels), presented a report on land regulations from a food sovereignty perspective. The report includes a resolution adopted, as amended, by the Committee. The resolution is available at the following address: <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1673>. Afterward, the Committee considered the report prepared by Rapporteur **André Burri** (Jura) on economic governance and the corresponding resolution on economic governance, transparency and corporate social responsibility (<http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1674>).

The Committee then considered follow-up reports, beginning with the follow-up on international trade negotiations conducted under the World Trade Organization (WTO), presented by **Mahama Sawadogo** (Burkina Faso) and **Germain Chevarie** (Quebec), co-rapporteurs. They expressed their desire to revise the report in order to emphasize recent developments and specific issues such as fair trade. A wish to propose a workshop on fair trade, through the work of the WTO, was expressed.

Pierre Dionne Labelle, Member and Rapporteur (Canada), presented the follow-up on the Ouagadougou Summit on the topic of La Francophonie's contribution to adopting national sustainable development strategies and developing national policies on ecosystem and natural resource management. The Member reminded the Committee of the background to this recurring topic. The updated report set out the progress made by certain countries in the area of sustainable development and highlighted the key initiatives of 2011 and 2012, including the 2012 global conference on sustainable development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. With La Francophonie's ten-year strategic framework—established following the 2004 Ouagadougou Summit—soon expiring, the Rapporteur for the Canadian Branch of the APF stressed the need for a comprehensive progress report regarding the progress of national sustainable development strategies within La Francophonie. He also underscored the importance of the existing synergies between the APF, the OIF and its corresponding agency, the Institut de l'énergie et de l'environnement de la Francophonie (IEPF). The Special Adviser to the OIF, **Hervé Cronel**, stated that the next ten-year framework would be key and stressed the importance of keeping sustainable development front and centre.

Mila-Bellè Telou, Member and Rapporteur (Togo), presented her follow-up report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), after which Special Adviser **Cronel** confirmed that development aid, which should represent approximately 0.7% of GDP, was still far short of the target, similar to the deficit associated with the investment in environment and climate change promised by donor countries. Mr. **Cronel** took the opportunity to tell the parliamentarians how important it was to retain the MDGs as concrete measures because, in his view, they were easier to quantify than the sustainable development goals expected to replace the MDGs in 2015. Member **Dionne Labelle** (Canada) encouraged Africa's francophone nations to be very vocal on the issue so that developed countries would not forget the continent's importance, particularly with respect to the decrease in international aid, added Chair **Sawadogo**. He suggested that, in 2013, a resolution be put forward to keep sustainable development in the next ten-year plan and to stress the importance of keeping the MDGs and not replacing them with the future sustainable development goals.

In closing, the Committee agreed on two new topics for future business: the green economy (Switzerland and Niger) and youth employment (France and Chad). Chair **Sawadogo** asked the parliamentarians from Morocco, Niger and Canada to join the Secretariat in preparing the opinion for the Summit of La Francophonie in Kinshasa in October 2012.

Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee

The Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee (ECCAC) met in Brussels on July 10, 2012 and was chaired by **Didier Berberat**, Senator and State Councillor (Switzerland).

Following adoption of the agenda and the minutes from the Brussels meeting held in March 2012, Chair **Berberat** presented his activity report.

Dr. **Omar Ndoye**, Member (Senegal) and Committee Rapporteur for HIV/AIDS, presented his activity report.

Bertrand St-Arnaud, M.N.A. (Quebec), presented his study on the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (CIDECE) and the follow-up to the Quebec City Declaration. The Committee then heard from **Luc Jabon**, President of the Coalition francophone belge pour la diversité culturelle and **Claude Michel**, Treasurer of the Coalition française pour la diversité culturelle.

With respect to the reference guide on the use of French in international organizations, a recurring topic at ECCAC, parliamentarians heard from **Dominique Hoppe**, President of the Association des fonctionnaires francophones des organisations internationales. On the subject of the draft French-language promotion policy, **Michel Grégoire**, Adviser to the Office of the Secretary General of La Francophonie, made a statement to the Committee.

As part of the report on the first Forum mondial de la langue française, the Committee heard from **Manon Loison** (France) and **Saadou Idi Moustapha** (Niger) from the APF youth delegation at the Forum.

Before completing its work, the Committee discussed the drafting of the opinion for the Summit of La Francophonie and adopted the resolutions tabled:

- Resolution on the digitization of literary works;
- Resolution on the heritage of Timbuktu (Mali) and Georgia;
- Resolution on funding for the response to HIV/AIDS;
- Resolution on sustainable development awareness;
- Resolution on La Francophonie as regards cultural and economic matters.

The resolutions are available at the following address:
<http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?rubrique151>.

Plenary session

The *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* met for a plenary session at Palais d'Egmont in Brussels, held on July 11 and 12, 2012 and chaired by **Roch Marc Christian Kaboré**, President of the APF and Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso.

Following adoption of the agenda, the Assemblée confirmed the reinstatement of the Côte d'Ivoire Branch and heard from Kigbafori Guillaume Soro, Speaker of the National Assembly, who thanked the APF and provided a brief historical overview of the events that led to the suspension of the Côte d'Ivoire Branch. Then, **Jean-Charles Luperto**, President of the Parliament of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, welcomed everyone. The Prime Minister of Belgium, **Elio Di Rupo**, briefly addressed the Assemblée and described the situation in Belgium, pointing out that the country was less and less affected by the European financial crisis.

The President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*, **Roch Marc Christian Kaboré**, gave his inaugural message, during which he highlighted the 45th anniversary of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* and its progress since 1967. He indicated that he would like the APF to focus on its political dimension. Mr. **Kaboré** also noted that the topic chosen for the annual session, media and information and communication technology (ICT), must engage La Francophonie and provide the impetus to conquer the linguistic divide that has emerged over time.

The Assemblée then heard from the Secretary General of La Francophonie, **Abdou Diouf**, who began by expressing his delight at the reinstatement of the Côte d'Ivoire in La Francophonie. He took the opportunity to reiterate the importance of ICT to democracy, both nationally and internationally, and to tell parliamentarians he hoped they would invest in this new technology and media as quickly as possible in order to preserve democracy and contribute to it. After the Chair of the APF delivered a message from the Secretary General of the UN on the 45th anniversary of the APF, Secretary General Diouf summarized the activities undertaken by La Francophonie over the past year. He concluded by answering numerous questions from the Assemblée on a variety of topics, including the funding of La Francophonie, raised by the Honourable **Andrée Champagne**, Senator and President of the Canadian Branch. In his response to the question on funding, the Secretary General urged “parliamentarians to encourage their respective governments, in reviewing their budget allocations, to contribute more to La Francophonie, by means of voluntary contributions, which would directly support OIF and agency programming when establishing missions.”²

The plenary session heard the contributions of the branches listed in the general discussion on media, and information and communication technology, vehicles to promote La Francophonie around the world. On behalf of the Canadian Branch, the Honourable **Andrée Champagne** spoke on the first sub-topic regarding the role of media and ICT in the promotion of the French language. Using related Canadian examples, she expressed her deep desire for “francophones around the world to come together so that French could fully assert its place on the Web and in all emerging Web 2.0 technologies.”

The Assemblée adopted the activity report by **Jacques Legendre**, Senator (France) and APF Parliamentary Secretary General, and the financial report by **Michel Wolter**, Member (Luxembourg) and APF Treasurer, presenting the 2011 financial statements and the amended 2012 budget.

The Assemblée adopted draft reports and resolutions from standing committees and the Network of Women Parliamentarians. It should be noted that the Honourable **Andrée Champagne**, First Vice-President of the APF, will take over from President **Roch Marc Christian Kaboré** as chair of the plenary session until the work has been completed.

Member and Rapporteur **Bernard Trottier** (Canada) presented Resolution No. 20 regarding natural resources and conflicts on behalf of the Political Committee. The following resolutions were adopted:

- Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs Committee
 - Resolution on the digitization of literary works
 - Resolution on the heritage of Timbuktu (Mali) and Georgia
 - Resolution on funding for the response to HIV/AIDS
 - Resolution on sustainable development awareness

² Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, Questions directed to the Secretary General of La Francophonie, Abdou Diouf, <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?article1689#16>.

- Resolution on La Francophonie as regards cultural and economic matters
- Cooperation and Development Committee
 - Resolution on economic governance, transparency and corporate social responsibility
 - Resolution on land regulations from a food sovereignty perspective
- Political Committee
 - Resolution on natural resources and conflicts in La Francophonie
 - Resolution on the demographic challenges in La Francophonie
 - Resolution on the political situations in La Francophonie
 - Resolution on the ombudsman, mediator and other national human rights institutions
- Network of Women Parliamentarians
 - Resolution on female genital mutilation
 - Resolution on women's economic independence
 - Resolution on respect for women's rights

The resolutions and transcripts of the speeches are available on the APF website: <http://apf.francophonie.org/spip.php?rubrique151>.

The Assemblée took formal note of the activity reports of the regional Chargés de mission. It discussed the APF Opinion for the upcoming Summit of La Francophonie, being held in Kinshasa in October 2012. The Opinion will have two parts, one focusing on sustainable development and the other on the activities of La Francophonie. It was agreed that certain aspects of the report and resolution proposed by the Canadian Branch regarding natural resources and conflicts in the francophone world would be included in the Opinion.

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 any 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. Andrée Champagne, PC, Senator
 President of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF)

Travel Cost

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
ACTIVITY	Bureau Meeting and XXXVIIIth Ordinary Session of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
DESTINATION	Brussels, Belgium
DATES	July 8 to 12, 2012
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Andrée Champagne Hon. Pierre De Bané
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Shelly Glover Bernard Trottier Pierre Dionne Labelle
STAFF	François Michaud Jean-Luc Bourdages
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 24,776.43
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 7,677.73
PER DIEMS	\$ 3,422.81
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 114.00
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 87.20
TOTAL	\$ 36,078.17