

Canada - Africa
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada - Afrique

**Report of the
Canadian parliamentary delegation
of the
Canada-Africa parliamentary association**

Fifth ordinary session of the Pan-African parliament

May 1 and 2, 2006

Midrand, South Africa

The delegation of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association that visited South Africa on May 1 and 2, 2006, on the occasion of the fifth session of the Pan-African Parliament, in Midrand, South Africa, has the honour to present its report.

Report

The Association was represented by the Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator and Association Co-Chair. She was accompanied by Mr. Rémi Bourgault, Executive Secretary.

Objective

The Pan-African Parliament Bureau had invited the Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, in her capacity as Co-Chair of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, to participate in the opening ceremony for the fifth session and to address parliament. The visit was also intended to strengthen the ties between the Pan-African Parliament and the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association.

While in South Africa, the delegation met with the following Pan-African Parliament officials:

- The Honourable Gertrude Mongela from Tanzania, President of the Pan-African Parliament
- The Honourable Van Dunem Fernando Jose de Franca from Angola (representing southern Africa), First Vice-President
- The Honourable Farhat Mohammed Lutfi Fathi from Libya (representing Northern Africa), Second Vice-President
- Mr. Murumba Werunga, Clerk of Parliament

Fifth session of the Pan-African parliament

The fifth ordinary session of the Pan-African Parliament took place from May 2 to 12, 2006.

The agenda for the fifth session of the Pan-African Parliament included the following points:

- Presentation and debate on the Rationalization of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa;
- Presentation and debate on Peace and Security in Africa, focusing on:
 - The Great Lakes region;
 - Darfur in the Sudan;
 - Côte d'Ivoire;
 - Democratic Republic of the Congo;
 - Chad

- Presentation and debate on the PAP/Civil Society linkages in enhancing the effective implementation of the policies and programme of NEPAD/APRM
- Presentation and debate on the implementation of the Strategic Plan of Pan-African Parliament for 2006-2010
- Consideration of the audit report of PAP for 2004 and 2005

During its visit, the Canadian delegation had the opportunity to attend the inauguration ceremony. During that inauguration ceremony, which was attended by a number of ambassadors and high commissioners, President Mongela gave a speech in which she described the challenges to be met during this fifth ordinary session.

Speaking about the Strategic Plan adopted during the fourth session, the President mentioned that the PAP committees had participated in the development of the work plans to be debated and voted on at the end of the session. She expressed her gratitude to the committees for their hard work and their contribution to the development of the work plans.

Funding issues remain a problem for the PAP; however, registration in the trust fund is almost complete. An increase in funds would mean an increase in resources and a strengthening of capacities, factors that would make a real contribution to the growth and continued development of the entire continent.

The Canadian delegation attended the swearing-in of the new members, including the parliamentarians from Somalia.

The Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, then addressed the meeting. Her remarks are as follows:

Honourable Speaker of the Pan-African Parliament, Honourable Members, Your Excellency, Distinguished Guests, Dear Colleagues,

As the Co-Chair of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, I am delighted to be able to address your parliament.

This is the first time that a Canadian representative has had the opportunity to speak to this distinguished assembly. It is therefore a great honour to represent Canadian parliamentarians. This is a historic moment. I am deeply grateful to be here.

Canadian parliamentarians, the Government of Canada and the people of Canada take African development very seriously. We share Africa's desire to ensure prosperity, security and democracy, and we want to continue to support Africa as much as we can in its development.

I would like to thank, also, the President on her re-election. It is with pride that, I, at this moment, can address the first women President and I think it is a very historic moment to have a President as a role model as we have here.

This is our second visit as Canadian Parliamentarians and we had the privilege to meet with the new Clerk and the Bureau yesterday and to get a clear picture of your objectives, your practical approach and your strategic plans. These are reassuring signals for the Parliament so it can use its unique opportunity to forge a co-ordinated

and constructive approach to the citizens of Africa, and for a strong regional voice on the international scene. Clearly, your objectives are commendable. After our meeting with the Bureau and receiving your future plans, I would like to indicate that the parliamentarians of Canada, in our association, support the Pan-African Parliament.

I would like to note three areas in our consultations in particular. We heard about your voice, as the voice of the people of your countries. Your collective voice on policies cannot, and I believe, will not be ignored. We underscore from Canada that your Committees and Committee work is very crucial to the success of the Pan-African Parliament. We hope that as parliamentarians from Canada, we can work with you in partnership on many of the goals that you have set for yourself. As democracy takes root, grounded on the rule of law and the respect for human rights, your voice and your actions will be the advice that the African Union cannot ignore, nor can the rest of the world.

Secondly, looking at your strategic plan, you are more or less legislators at this time and it is commendable. You have a blue-print to follow and we can measure your success and thereby, support your actions. In this day and age, parliamentarians are under fierce scrutiny. Executives are taking upon themselves more authority. This is not unique in Africa nor Canada. I believe it is a worldwide movement. Therefore, it is even more critical that you in the Pan-African Parliament, understand your role of oversight, and critique and support, from time to time, to the African Union. There has been a slow erosion of parliamentarians' roles. More international treaties are signed without benefit of input of parliaments. Citizens are demanding more of parliaments, and parliaments need to reclaim or create new tools for oversight.

Therefore, I believe that you, the Members of Parliament here, are unique because you are starting with a clean slate. Many of us have to reclaim standards and set new ones. You can learn from our mistakes. You can consult and build partnerships. You can, in fact, create a blue print for success; an African model, and perhaps, a universal model for all us to reach to. Your opinions, resolutions and recommendations, I assure you, will not be ignored.

As a final comment, I hope humbly and sincerely, that we can assist as Canadians in your pursuit of making the Pan-African Parliament a reality. You have a long way to go and you have choices to make. Rest assured that you have partners in Canada who want to work with you. I extend on behalf of all parliamentarians in Canada our sincere wishes for success in this Session, and for a fruitful model of good parliamentary practice. I look forward to learn from you and to share with you, and I trust that this will be the beginning of the very long exchange.

Thank you.

Since our last visit on the occasion of the third session, the Pan-African Parliament has begun sitting in its new premises built on the Gallagher Estate, in Midrand, South Africa. They have hired an experienced Clerk of Parliament and are moving to function on a less ad hoc basis. Funding from the African Union is problematic.

Other

The Co-Chair provided an informal dinner in the company of several members of the Office of the Canadian High Commissioner in South Africa, Ms Sandelle Scrimshaw. On that occasion, the Co-Chair reiterated the desire to have the Association establish lasting ties to the Pan-African Parliament. It was clear, however, that a financial partnership between the two is not possible, although the Association can always facilitate contacts with the government of Canada and other organizations. It is hoped that a larger Canadian delegation can visit during a future session and organize briefing sessions to encourage discussions between Canadian and Pan-African parliamentarians. Those attending the meal were able to get a general idea of the Pan-African Parliament and the status of the African Union, and to share parliamentary experiences and practices.

Conclusion

Overall, the visit to South Africa was successful because it served to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the Association and the Pan-African Parliament and the opportunity to strengthen democratic and parliamentary practices. The Delegation wishes to thank the Pan-African Parliament for the warm welcome it received during its visit and the Canadian High Commission in South Africa for its support during the Delegation's stay in South Africa.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Travel Costs

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| NAME OF ASSOCIATION | Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association |
| ACTIVITY | Fifth Ordinary Session of the Pan-African Parliament |
| DESTINATION | Midrand, South Africa |
| DATES | May 1 and 2, 2006 |
| NAMES OF SENATORS | Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Senator |
| NAMES OF STAFF | Mr. Rémi Bourgault |
| AIR TRANSPORTATION | \$ 10,841.81 |
| GROUND TRANSPORTATION | \$ 25.00 |
| ACCOMMODATION | \$ 1,032.96 |
| HOSPITALITY | \$ 342.28 |
| PER DIEMS | \$ 579.59 |
| OFFICIAL GIFTS | \$ 71.10 |
| MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES | \$ 45.89 |
| TOTAL | \$ 12,938.83 |