



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Meeting of the Executive
Committee and at the Meeting of the Network of Women
Parliamentarians of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la
Francophonie* (APF)**

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

**Tangier, Morocco
February 24 to 26, 2016**

Report

The parliamentary delegation of the Canadian Branch, which participated in the intersessional meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF),¹ held in Tangier, Morocco, from February 23 to 26, 2016, is honoured to present its report. The delegation consisted of **Joël Lightbound, Member of Parliament** and Chair of the Canadian Branch, and **Sylvie Boucher, Member of Parliament** and Network Rapporteur, accompanied by Line Gravel, Branch Executive Secretary.

Seventeen branches were represented at these meetings. There were 26 participants, accompanied by 17 staff members.

Steering Committee

The Chair of the network, Lydienne Epoube, Member of the National Assembly of Cameroon, opened the proceedings by thanking the representative from Morocco, Saida Chaker Metalssi, for her warm welcome and by welcoming the new members of the Steering Committee, including **Sylvie Boucher, Member of Parliament from Canada**.

Following approval of the draft agenda and the minutes of the Steering Committee meeting held on July 7, 2015, the participants heard from the Chair, Lydienne Epoube.

The rapporteurs then briefly introduced the new topics they wanted to address in July 2016. Gila Martow, Member of Provincial Parliament for Ontario, will present a report on adult women's literacy, and Chantal Guittet, Member of the French National Assembly, will present a report on discrimination against women with respect to the transmission of property and inheritance. **Sylvie Boucher**, from Canada, will present a new report entitled, *Violence against Women and Girls*.

The meeting concluded with the adoption of the agenda for the meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians.

Network of Women Parliamentarians²

The work of the Network of Women Parliamentarians took place over two days, and 26 parliamentarians from 17 countries participated. At this meeting, for the first time in the history of the Network of Women Parliamentarians, two male delegates—one representative from Switzerland, Mathias Reynard, National Advisor, and one representative from Canada, **Joël Lightbound, Member of Parliament**—participated in the deliberations of the Network of Women Parliamentarians as full members. The Chair of the Network, Lydienne Epoube, said she was pleased about this fact and congratulated this new generation of male feminists. The Chair of the Network then thanked Saida Chaker Metalssi, Member of the Moroccan House of Representatives, for her warm welcome.

¹ For more information on the APF, visit : <http://apf.francophonie.org/-Presentation-.html> [French only]

² For more information on the Network of Women Parliamentarians, visit : <http://apf.francophonie.org/-Le-Reseau-des-femmes-8-.html> [French only]

Following the approval of the draft agenda, the rapporteurs introduced the new topics they want to address in July 2016. The topics are similar to those of the Steering Committee: Gila Martow, Member of Provincial Parliament for Ontario, will present a report on adult women's literacy, and Chantal Guittet, Member of the French National Assembly, will present a report on the transmission of names, nationality and property.

Sylvie Boucher, from Canada, will present a new report entitled, *Violence against Women and Girls*. **Ms. Boucher** proposed a new draft report specifically connected to one of the targets in SDG 5³ to "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation." This report will examine an issue that does not always get the attention it deserves: promoting men's awareness of violence against women and girls. This type of approach is a new angle for the Network, which welcomed it. **Joël Lightbound** mentioned that it would be interesting not only to look at *awareness*, but also to study the impact of the *desensitization* of young men with respect to violence against women and girls, especially in popular culture. **Sylvie Boucher's** proposed report was enthusiastically received by the *Assemblée*.

The second day, the Network considered the new sustainable development objectives and gender equality. The following topics were discussed:

- 1) SDGs and women's rights: what impact?
- 2) Roles of parliaments with respect to these objectives
- 3) Empowerment of women: right to economic resources
- 4) Unpaid domestic labour and women's rights

The presentations were as follows:

- 1) SDGs and women's rights: what impact?
- 2) Role of parliaments with respect to these objectives

Ayshanie Labé, Deputy Resident Representative for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), gave a presentation on these two topics. On September 25, 2015, at the United Nations General Assembly, 193 leaders adopted 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs). One of these 17 goals is goal 5, entitled, "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." Parliaments and parliamentarians have a key role to play in helping to achieve these goals. In particular, they must take initiative and adapt their national legal frameworks to these new goals. This presentation on goal 5 was followed by a question and answer session with the delegates.

³ In September 2015, world leaders adopted new "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs) as part of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3) Empowerment of women: right to economic resources

There were three presentations on this topic by: Christina Robalo-Cordeiro, Director of the Maghreb office of the *Agence universitaire de la Francophonie*; Christiane Robichon, President of BPW France (Business and Professional Women Fédération française); and Nicholas Gravier, Associate Director of Oxfam in Morocco. The presentations were followed by a question and answer session with the participants.

4) Unpaid domestic work and women's rights

Sarah Mantah, a member of *Genre en action*, gave the presentation. The question and answer period that followed included the notion of “care”, the recognition of domestic work as a human rights issue, and the legal framework with respect to international and national legislation.

By participating in these meetings, the Canadian Branch achieved its objectives of meeting its international obligations, presenting a draft report that encouraged information sharing, maintaining international relationships, and promoting its interests. Furthermore, **Sylvie Boucher's** approach to preparing her report on violence against women and girls, along with the attendance of **Joël Lightbound**—as Chair of the Canadian Branch and as one of the first men to attend a meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians—underscored the importance of including men in the fight for gender equality.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Joël Lightbound, M.P.

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	Network of Women Parliamentarians of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)</i>
DESTINATION	Tangier, Morocco
DATES	February 24 to 26, 2016
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Sylvie Boucher Mr. Joël Lightbound
STAFF	Line Gravel, Association Secretary
TRANSPORTATION	\$16,704.44
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 4,304.22
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,483.32
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$22,491.98