

Canadian Group
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien
Union interparlementaire

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Steering Committee of the
Twelve Plus Group**

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

**Brussels, Belgium
February 22, 2016**

Report

1. Introduction

Article 25 of the Statutes and Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Union permits members of the IPU to form geopolitical groups. These groups play an important role in the functioning and activities of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

There are six geopolitical groups formally recognized by the IPU: the African Group (48 members), the Asia-Pacific Group (31 members), the Arab Group (18 members), the Eurasia Group (7 members), the Latin American Group (22 members) and the Twelve Plus Group (47 members). Each group decides on working methods that best suit its participation in the activities of the Union and informs the Secretariat of its composition, the names of its officers, and its rules of procedure.

Canada belongs to the Twelve Plus Group and the Asia Pacific Group. Because Canada belongs to more than one geopolitical group, it submits candidatures for vacant positions within the Union through the Twelve Plus Group.

2. Background on the Twelve Plus Group

The Twelve Plus Group was formed in 1974 (as the Nine Plus Group) by IPU members from the European Community. Its purpose is to coordinate the action and policy of its member Groups and, where possible, to arrive at common positions on IPU matters. The word “Plus” was intended to indicate the openness of the Group to new members of the EC as well as other like-minded nations, such as Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Today, the Group has 48 members, including Central and Eastern European countries.¹

The Twelve Plus Group holds meetings on a regular basis during the IPU’s spring and fall Assemblies. These meetings provide a venue for the Group’s members to discuss the functioning of the Assembly and related meetings. Members also use these meetings to discuss administrative and substantive matters of consequence to the future activities of the Union.

The Chair of the Twelve Plus Group is elected for a term of office of two years. The Chair is advised by a Steering Committee of representatives from approximately seven to nine member countries and normally meets in the weeks prior to an IPU Assembly. The Steering Committee appoints a Vice-Chair among its members by consensus.

According to the Guidelines of the Twelve Plus Group, the Steering Committee shall include: the two most recent predecessors of the current Twelve Plus Chairperson (as long as they are members of their national IPU delegation); members of the Twelve Plus Group serving on the Executive Committee; further members, invited by the Chairperson on account of their particular abilities or merits, who could benefit the activities of the Twelve Plus Group as a whole.

¹ See <http://www.ipu.org/strct-e/geopol.htm> for a breakdown of geopolitical group membership in the IPU.

3. The Meeting of the Twelve Plus Steering Committee

Six parliamentarians participated in the meeting of the Twelve Plus Steering Committee in Brussels, Belgium on February 22nd, 2016. The countries represented were: Belgium, Canada, France, United Kingdom, Sweden and Romania.

The Canadian parliamentarian in attendance was Senator Salma Ataullahjan, from the Senate of Canada.

The agenda for the meeting included issues and questions for consideration by the Twelve Plus Group at the 134th IPU Assembly (Lusaka, Zambia 19-23 March, 2016). The purpose of the meeting was to debate and make recommendations concerning these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, M.P.
President
Canadian Group of the
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Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
ACTIVITY	Steering Committee of the Twelve Plus Group / Seminar on Ending Violence against Women and Girls
DESTINATION	Brussels, Belgium
DATES	February 22, 2016
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Salma Ataullahjan, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$3,709.88
ACCOMMODATION	\$294.24
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$261.60
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$4,265.72