



## INTERPARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY REPORT

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### 38TH SESSION OF THE AMERICAS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE FRANCOPHONIE | 38E SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE RÉGIONALE AMÉRIQUE DE L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Host	State of Louisiana & Council for the Development of French in Louisiana
Location	Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States of America
Dates	September 4 to 8, 2023
Activity Type	Conference
Participants	1 Member of the Legislative Assembly, 1 Assembly support staff

#### PARTICIPANTS

- Nicholas Simons, MLA, Chair of the B.C. Section of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie)
- Artour Sogomonian, Clerk Assistant, Parliamentary Services | Secretary to the B.C. Section of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie)

#### PROGRAM SUMMARY

The 38th annual session of the Americas Regional Assembly of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie was co-hosted by the State of Louisiana and the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana in Baton Rouge, Louisiana from September 4 to 8, 2023. It was attended by Nicholas Simons, MLA and Artour Sogomonian, Clerk Assistant, as B.C.'s representatives.

This year's theme was *The Place of the French Language – From School to Work to Politics*. The main objectives of this annual gathering are to promote the use of the French language in the Americas where there is a Francophone presence; encourage the strengthening of ties among the Francophone communities in the Americas; and exchange information and debate issues of common interest, particularly to parliamentarians.

The annual session began with the Meeting of Section Chairs, attended by Nicholas Simons and Artour Sogomonian. An overview of the work of the Americas Region was provided. Various administrative matters were discussed, including financial planning and revisions to the Americas Region rules. B.C.'s delegation participated in the review of the Americas Region strategic planning exercise for 2023-2027, which sets priorities in youth engagement; eco-friendliness; modernization and innovation; diversification; and the promotion of democratic values.

All business sessions were attended by Nicholas Simons and Artour Sogomonian and were on:

- Between Borders and Identities: Towards New Horizons of Belonging in the Francophonie;
- The Renaissance of the French Language in School: The Case of Louisiana;
- The Growth of Francophone Cultural Tourism; and
- The Role of Politics and Diplomacy in Perpetuating the Francophonie in the Americas.

Education was a common and recurring theme throughout all business sessions and discussions during the conference. Delegates were particularly interested in the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF). Nicholas Simons shared information about the investments made into French language education in British Columbia, particularly capital funding for the CSF. Grants for Francophone schools to collaborate with the child care sector in B.C. in the creation of Francophone child care spaces was also discussed.

The challenges of teaching, learning, and speaking French in communities where the linguistic community is surrounded by, and inundated with other predominant languages, was also a commonly discussed issue.

Prior to the conclusion of the session, the Americas Regional Assembly debated and adopted:

- Declaration for the Promotion of Franco-Creolophone Languages;
- Declaration of Solidarity with the Africa Region; and
- Declaration of Commitment by the Americas Region to the Francophonie.

Nicholas Simons participated in deliberations on the declarations.

**EXPENSES**

The following combined expenses are for all participants.

Travel Expenses	\$7,957.71
Conference Fees	\$557.00
Subsidy	Nil
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,514.71</b>