

# Llywydd visit to the Assemblée Nationale du Quebec

## Visit Report

May 2025

On 22 May 2025, the Llywydd undertook an official visit to the Assemblée Nationale du Quebec at the invitation of Speaker Nathalie Roy. The invitation followed the postponement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Summit of Women Presiding Officers, due to be held on the same date, and the Llywydd was invited to undertake the visit in recognition of the ongoing partnership between the two legislatures. As part of the visit, the two Speakers would sign an MOU and share updates in a number of areas from our two parliaments.

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# 1. Previous & upcoming engagement

February 2020 – Llywydd-led delegation from the Senedd to the National Assembly for Quebec.

October 2023 – Meeting (at CPA Ghana Conference) between Senedd delegation (Adam Price MS & Carolyn Thomas MS) and National Assembly for Quebec delegation.

June 2024 – Official visit to the Senedd by Speaker Natalie Roy and accompanying delegation.

November 2024 - The Llywydd and Speaker Natalie Roy shared a stage at the CPA Annual Conference in Sydney (NSW) where they both delivered keynote addresses on the topic of “The Retention of Women in Politics”. An informal meeting was also held between the Senedd and Quebec delegations.

June 2025 – Delegate from the National Assembly for Quebec invited to participate in the Senedd hosted CPA BIM Regional Conference.

July 2025 – Delegate from the Senedd invited to participate in the Quebec hosted CPA Canada Regional Conference.

## 2. Meeting with the Speaker of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly

The Llywydd met with Speaker of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly, The Hon. Francine Landry, who was in Quebec City attending a conference of Speakers of Francophonie Legislatures, a network that she currently chairs. The bilateral meeting was the first between the two Speakers, though delegations from the Senedd have visited the Assembly in previous years.

The New Brunswick Legislative Assembly is the only bilingual legislature in Canada (operating in both French and English – the Quebec NA is monolingual in that it operates in French only), and the Speakers discussed their bilingual operations as part of their bilateral meeting.



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*The Llywydd and The Hon. Francine Landry,  
Speaker of the New Brunswick Legislative  
Assembly*

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Both legislatures are in the relatively unique position of having women speakers and heads of government – the Speakers touched upon this as their conversation covered the role of elected women in their respective parliaments. They also discussed at length the use of hybrid proceedings in parliamentary business, with Speaker Landry taking a particular interest in the Senedd's ongoing hybrid operation.

The Speakers agreed to continue a dialogue in this area with the potential for ongoing conversations at the upcoming Canadian Regional CPA Conference, which the Senedd has been invited to.

### 3. Parliamentary Programme

Llywydd received a warm welcome at the Assemblée Nationale, and was greeted by Speaker Nathalie Roy, MNAs, and a guard of honour, alongside the Draig Goch flying above the assembly buildings.



During the visit, the Llywydd also had the opportunity to meet delegates of the Assemblée Parliamantaire de la Francophonie who were attending a meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians. Attendees included members from the Ontario Legislative Assembly, the National Assembly of Senegal, and notable Raquel Sans, Vice-President of the Parliament of Catalonia, who visited the Senedd in 2024.



## **Recognition in Plenary**

Following a welcome by MNAs in the grand hall, the Llywydd received an official recognition at the beginning of the day's routine proceedings, with Speaker Roy noting on the record the signing of the MOU that was to follow.

Questions that day included questions on Housing & Health Portfolio. During the visit, routine proceedings took place in the former home of the Senate, as renovations are underway in the assembly chamber.

The renovations will include an alteration of the seating arrangements to a semi-circle/horseshoe formation, a move away from opposing benches, and a built-in electronic voting system. Proceedings take place monolingually, in French, and contributions and responses by ministers are timed.

## **Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding**

The Speakers reconvened to sign the Memorandum of Understanding in the presence of some select Members of the National Assembly and a number of officials. The MOU recognises the recent and ongoing friendship between the two legislatures and agrees to promote the development of bilateral relations and strengthen those relationships. The Speakers recognised that the MOU goes beyond the relationship at Speaker to Speaker level and encompasses working relations between officials and members of our legislatures, present and future.

They signed the MOU in the presence of Deputy Speaker Sylvie D'Amours MNA, member of the opposition Sona Lakhoyan Olivier MNA and Marie-Louise Tardif MNA, who will attend the BIMR regional conference in Cardiff this June as an International Observer.

Marie-Louise Tardif MNA and Sona Lakhoyan Olivier MNA then joined the Llywydd and Speaker Roy for an official lunch, where they discussed reforms in both legislatures and compared the operation of Plenary proceedings in both legislatures. Members were interested to hear about the independent remuneration board, and were particularly interested in the significant increase in elected members due to be returned at the next Senedd election.





## **Bilateral meeting with Speaker Nathalie Roy**

Speaker Roy invited the Llywydd to the floor of the debating chamber, mirroring an invitation extended to VIPs during visits to the Senedd. From the Speaker's Chair, they discussed with clerks the operation of proceedings and the role of officials in supporting the Speakers during Plenary. Clerks demonstrated the electronic messaging system in place between the table clerks and the Speaker, and the speakers discussed the operation of scripts; the Llywydd explained the electronic script available to her and clerks during the chairing of Senedd Plenary proceedings, whilst Speaker Roy explained her preference for paper scripts and demonstrated an example from that morning's proceedings. They then compared notes on chairing proceedings including calling members to speak and calling members to order when necessary.

Llywydd and Speaker Roy then held a formal bilateral meeting to discuss in details various updates from their respective legislatures. Speaker Roy briefed the Llywydd on a number of topics including the rollout of their on-site creche and the work of the special committee on youth & mobile phone use.

The Assembly's on-site creche has been in place since 2023 and is available for use by members, political staff, and staff of the Assemblée Nationale, as well as accredited members of the press. The creche works in partnership with a community daycare, and the hours are in line with parliamentary business. Following a successful pilot project, the creche became a permanent service in

June 2024. The Llywydd noted that this pilot is of particular interest to the Senedd at present, following the Future Senedd Committee's recommendation in this area and the ongoing discussion regarding the introduction of creche facilities in Cardiff Bay. Speaker Roy and officials explained that the creche is currently used by around 10 individuals, and there is also an unsupervised 'family room' onsite for use by older children (around 10 years and older). Officials agreed to share more information with the Senedd on the Assemblée Nationale's creche pilot.

Speaker Roy then introduced the work of a Special Committee on the impact of mobile phones and screens on young people and their health. This Special Committee began their work in September 2024 and published their interim report in April 2025. Over the course of their inquiry, the Committee heard from young people and researchers, and took evidence in roadshows across schools in Quebec. Included in the interim report was a recommendation that the Quebec government prohibit the use of mobile phones, headphones and other personal mobile devices in all primary and secondary schools until the end of classes. Speaker Roy reported that the Education Minister has since enacted the recommendation by ministerial directive, to be implemented in the 2025-26 school year, with legislation to follow. It was agreed that the interim report and more details would be shared with the Llywydd, for further sharing with Welsh Government Cabinet Secretaries and Senedd Committees.

The Llywydd then updated Speaker Roy on the Senedd Chamber expansion plans and the preparations underway for the 2026 elections. This included an overview of the work of the Future Senedd Committee and its recent report. They also discussed the change in First Minister since Speaker Roy's visit to Wales last year, and reflected on the work being done by political parties with regards to gender balanced candidate lists ahead of the next Senedd elections.

## **Working session on organisation of business**

The final working session of the day focussed on the organisation of business at the Assemblée Nationale. Here, Llywydd heard from clerks on the distribution of time for questions and the operation of Committees, including hybrid operations and methods of consultation. On the distribution of question time in Plenary, we were particularly interested to hear of the minimal time available to government backbenchers. We also heard detail of the consultation methods used for the recent Special Committee including a tour of schools across six regions and public hearings.



## **Upcoming engagement**

The Senedd is pleased to host this year's CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference, and has extended an invitation to the Assemblée Nationale du Quebec to attend as an observer and to contribute to the conference's sessions. A reciprocal invitation has been received to the Canadian Regional Conference this summer, which the Senedd's Deputy Presiding Officer will attend.