



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

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TO: Finance and Economic Development Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Comité des finances et du développement économique

FROM: Jean Cloutier

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SUBJECT: International Association of Language Commissioners (IALC) Annual Conference

OBJET : Conférence annuelle de l'Association internationale des commissaires linguistiques (AICL)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to report to the Committee on the highlights of the 6th Annual IALC Conference attended by Councillor Cloutier.

CONFERENCE DETAILS

The Ontario Ombudsman hosted the sixth annual Conference of the International Association of Language Commissioners in Toronto, Canada on June 26 and 27.

The theme of this year's conference was Protecting Linguistic Minorities, Building Stronger Societies. This event brought together high-level representatives from six continents, including international organizations and state governments as well as language commissioners, ombudspersons, experts and members of community organizations, to discuss the challenges and successes of minority language protection around the world.

CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

The conference had numerous workshops and plenary panels. Topics included minority language preservation and linguistic duality.

I attended the following workshops:

1. Accountability and Designing Legislative Frameworks;
2. Complex and intertwined national identity, language policy and ethnic consciousness: A long road to revitalizing the Hakka Language;
3. Institutional Variations, Ombudsmen, Language Commissioners and Commissions;
4. The Catalan process 2010-2019: rights conflict, civil society and language;
5. The IALC and the Future of Linguistic Rights Worldwide, a conference summary; and
6. Plenary Closing Keynote Address by The Right Honourable Justice Richard Wagner, *The Supreme Court of Canada*
7. Closing words by Paul Dubé, Ombudsman of Ontario

The two-day conference explored the pivotal role of language ombudspersons in the protection of minority-language communities and as indispensable tools for societal integration, peace building and conflict prevention in multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic societies.

The conference highlighted the realities of Indigenous language preservation and discussed best practices in ensuring minority language rights as well as common barriers facing ombudspersons and language commissioners in their everyday work.

CONCLUSION

The conference was enriching, informative and useful, and allowed the City to further develop its relationship with the Ombudsman's Office and our provincial and federal partners.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Conference Program

Jean Cloutier
Councillor, Ward 18, Alta Vista

CC: Michèle Rochette, Manager, French Language Services