



NEWS RELEASE

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CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS VISIT SHANGHAI AND SUZHOU

Shanghai – Today, five members of the Canada–China Legislative Association (CACN) completed the first part of their week-long, multi-city parliamentary mission to China. The delegation is being led by the Association’s Co-Chair, the Hon. Joseph A. Day, Senator, and includes Chandra Arya, M.P., Michael Cooper, M.P., Majid Jowhari, M.P., and Geng Tan, M.P.

The delegation’s program in Shanghai and Suzhou began on Monday, 7 January 2019. It focused on education cooperation and academic partnerships, as well as commercial opportunities in the context of Shanghai’s strategy to become a hub for innovation. Meetings were also held with representatives of local People’s Congresses to discuss various aspects of Canada-China relations.

“The timing of this mission, the planning for which began in October 2018, gave our delegation the opportunity to raise concerns on behalf of Canadians about the arbitrary detention of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor,” Senator Day stated. “That we were able to express those concerns directly to our interlocutors in Shanghai in a frank and open manner is a testament to our long-standing relationships and the value of parliamentary diplomacy in Canada-China relations.”

For the high-level meeting with the leadership of the Shanghai People’s Congress, the delegation was accompanied by Canada’s Consul General in Shanghai, Weldon Epp. The discussions centred around expectations that the rights of the two Canadians be respected as guaranteed in the bilateral consular agreement between Canada and China, as well as calls for their immediate release. When the legal proceeding in respect of Meng Wanzhou, Huawei’s Chief Financial Officer, was raised during that meeting, delegates emphasized that Canada is a country governed by the rule of law, and that legal proceedings are free from political interference.

Delegates will have meetings in Shenzhen and Hong Kong before joining other Canadian parliamentarians at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 14–17 January. Canada is one of 27 member countries of the APPF. This annual meeting will be the first opportunity for Canadian delegates to discuss the implementation of the Comprehensive and Progressive

Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership with the ten other signatories, all of whom are members of the APPF. The agreement entered into force at the end of December 2018.

Facts:

- CACN was established in 1998. Regular visits and meetings between Canadian and Chinese legislators provide a forum for promoting mutual understanding, exchanging information about the domestic and international priorities of each country, and discussing common interests and concerns.
- A CACN delegation last visited eastern China, and Shanghai specifically, in 2014.
- A delegation from the National People's Congress visited Ottawa in December 2018 to participate in the 22nd Bilateral Meeting of CACN.

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