



Canada - China Legislative Association
Association législative Canada - Chine



Canada - Japan Inter - Parliamentary Group
Groupe Interparlementaire Canada - Japon

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation
at the 27th Annual Meeting
of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)**

**Canada-China Legislative Association (CACN) and
Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP)**

Siem Reap, Cambodia

14–17 January 2019

Report

From 14–17 January 2019, 13 Canadian parliamentarians attended the 27th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The meeting was hosted by the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia. A joint delegation from the Canada–China Legislative Association and the Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group attended the Annual Meeting. It included:

- The Honourable Joseph A. Day, Senator, Co-Chair of the Canada–China Legislative Association and Head of the Canadian delegation;
- The Honourable Jim Munson, Senator, Co-Chair of the Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group;
- Mr. Terry Sheehan, M.P., Co-Chair of the Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group;
- The Honourable Percy E. Downe, Senator;
- The Honourable Victor Oh, Senator;
- The Honourable Yuen Pau Woo, Senator;
- Mr. Chandra Arya, M.P.;
- Mr. Blaine Calkins, M.P.;
- Mr. Michael Cooper, M.P.;
- Mr. Ali Ehsassi, M.P.;
- Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P.;
- Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.; and,
- Mr. Geng Tan, M.P.

The delegation was accompanied by David Chandonnet, Executive Secretary, and Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor.

Overview of the APPF

The [Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum](#) (APPF) brings together parliamentarians from across the Asia-Pacific region. Currently, 27 national parliaments of the following states are members: Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, the United States of America, and Vietnam. Brunei is a permanent observer country. Canada is a founding member of the APPF and hosted the 5th and the 24th Annual Meetings in Vancouver in 1997 and 2016, respectively.

As a regional parliamentary forum, the APPF is a mechanism that enables parliamentarians to discuss issues of common concern, to deepen their understanding of the region and the interests and experiences of its diverse countries, to further regional cooperation, and to build relationships between and among parliamentarians from its member countries. The forum's proceedings are generally organized around debates on

political, security, economic, social and cultural issues facing the region, the results of which manifest in the adoption of a joint communiqué and resolutions.

The APPF was founded by former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, who is the **APPF Honourary President**. The inaugural meeting was held in Tokyo in 1993.

The APPF's **secretariat** functions are undertaken by the **host parliament** for a one-year term from May in the year preceding the Annual Meeting to be hosted by that parliament until the following April. The host's responsibilities primarily include the development of the program and the draft agenda for the upcoming Annual Meeting. Those duties are carried out under the direction of the **APPF President**, who is appointed by the host parliament to represent the APPF during its one-year mandate. The host parliament is selected on the basis of discussion among the members.

In accordance with the APPF's Rules of Procedure, the **Executive Committee** is responsible for matters relevant to the management of the APPF. It is chaired by the APPF President and convenes prior to the opening ceremony of the Annual Meeting to make decisions relating to the approval of its program and agenda, as well as the draft resolutions submitted for consideration, the establishment of the Drafting Committee and designation of its Chair, and the formation of relevant Working Groups. The Executive Committee also confirms the host parliament of the next Annual Meeting. It is comprised of representatives of two countries from each of the APPF's sub-regions: Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, Oceania and the Americas. New members are elected at the Annual Meeting to fill any positions vacated by a country whose four-year term has ended. The Executive Committee is advised by the Honourary President.

The **Annual Meeting** is the APPF's "highest decision-making organ." Its agenda identifies topics that will be the focus of **Plenary Sessions** that are organized along more general themes typically relating to political and security matters; economic and trade matters; regional development cooperation; and the APPF as an institution. In addition to plenary debates, the substantive work of parliamentary delegations at the Annual Meetings entails consideration and adoption of **resolutions** on various topics relevant to the member parliaments. Any participating delegation may submit any number of draft resolutions prior to a deadline set by the host parliament. During the Annual Meeting, the draft resolutions are examined by the **Drafting Committee**. In instances where multiple draft resolutions have been submitted on the same or similar topics, **Working Groups** create new joint texts for the Drafting Committee's consideration. The Drafting Committee and the Working Groups carry out their decisions on the basis of consensus. Representatives from all delegations can participate in the Drafting Committee and each Working Group. Meetings of the Drafting Committee and Working Groups take place concurrent to the Plenary Sessions. The Drafting Committee also finalizes the Annual Meeting's **Joint Communiqué**. The final resolutions and Joint Communiqué are approved by the plenary at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

The 27th Annual Meeting¹

¹ All documents related to the 27th Annual Meeting, including the amended Rules of Procedure, the final resolutions, and the Joint Communiqué may be found on the host parliament's website.

The 27th Annual Meeting of the APPF was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 14-17 January 2019. The APPF President and representative of the host parliament was Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia. The Annual Meeting was attended by approximately 150 parliamentary delegates from 20 member parliaments and 1 observer country (Brunei).

The overarching theme for the 27th Annual Meeting was *Strengthening Parliamentary Partnership: Peace, Security and Sustainable Development*. The agenda included a meeting of the Executive Committee and plenary sessions during which delegates exchanged views on specific aspects of the overarching theme. Moreover, delegates considered 43 draft resolutions that had been submitted by 10 member parliaments on a variety of political and security matters, economic and trade matters, and regional development cooperation among other themes. In addition, as per the amended *Rules of Procedure* adopted at the 26th Annual Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam, the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians was included for the first time as a regular item on the agenda.

At the Inaugural Ceremony, delegates received a Royal Message from His Majesty Norodom Sihamoni. Other addresses were delivered by Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Say Chhum, President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia; and Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia. In addition, the Honourable Takuji Yanagimoto congratulated the 27th APPF Annual Meeting on behalf of the Honourable Yasuhiro Nakasone, Honourary President of the APPF. The Honourable Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Vietnam and former President of the APPF, also addressed the delegates. Delegates respected a moment of silence in commemoration of past APPF President, Dr. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of the Fijian Parliament, who passed away in December 2018.

The 13 members of the Canadian delegation addressed matters pertinent to Canadian foreign policy over the course of their participation in the APPF's Annual Meeting. In addition, the delegation was briefed by Allison Stewart, Chargé d'affaires, Office of the Embassy of Canada in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on current domestic developments in Cambodia and their implications for Canada–Cambodia relations.

A. Executive Committee

The business of the Executive Committee was undertaken by its current members:

- Russia and Mongolia (Northeast Asia);
- Indonesia and Laos (Southeast Asia);
- Fiji and Papua New Guinea (Oceania);
- Chile and Canada (the Americas);
- Cambodia (host of the 27th Annual Meeting of the APPF); and,
- Japan (appointed by the Honourary President).

The meeting was chaired by Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the APPF. The Executive Committee approved the agenda for the 27th Annual Meeting, confirmed the organization of the Drafting Committee and established four Working Groups (see below). The Executive Committee also reviewed

its upcoming vacancies as the terms of Chile and Mongolia come to an end. In terms of future Annual Meetings, Australia was confirmed as the host parliament for the 28th Annual Meeting in January 2020. The Executive Committee also took note of the Republic of Korea's offer to host the 29th Annual Meeting in 2021.

Activities of the Canadian delegation:

Canada's four-year mandate as a member of the Executive Committee ends in 2021. The Canadian delegation was represented at the meeting by the Head of Delegation, **Senator Day**, as well as **Senator Oh** and **Mr. Jowhari**. In Senator Day's remarks, he emphasized the size of the Canadian delegation, a clear sign of the Canadian Parliament's commitment to the APPF and its interest in the Asia-Pacific region, and the wide range of backgrounds Canadian delegations were bringing to the APPF.

B. Plenary Sessions

The plenary sessions of the 27th Annual Meeting were chaired by Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the APPF, and co-chaired by Nguon Nhel, First Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, as well as Khuon Sudary, Second Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia. During these sessions, delegates exchanged perspectives on the following topics:

I. Political and Security Matters

- Building Trust for Peace, Security and Sustainable Development in the Region
- Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crime in the Region
- Strengthening Parliamentary Cooperation in Promoting the Responsible Use of Cyberspace for Social Progress

II. Economic and Trade Matters

- Enhancing Cooperation Among Member States to Build Strong Institutions for Promoting Trade and Inclusive Growth
- Promoting Financial Access and Vocational Training for Small-Medium Enterprises for Employment and Peace
- Enhancing Connectivity in the Asia-Pacific Through E-Commerce

III. Regional Development Cooperation

- Enhancing Parliamentary Roles in Response to Climate Change
- Promoting Cooperation on Disaster Risk Reduction
- Enhancing Parliamentary Cooperation in Promoting Cultural Diversity and Tourism in the Asia-Pacific

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Every Canadian delegate attended the plenary sessions, dividing their time with other responsibilities as required given that many activities were taking place concurrently. In addition, several Canadian delegates actively participated in the discussions of the plenary sessions. Regarding **political and security matters**:

· In the context of the agenda item, “Building Trust for Peace, Security and Sustainable Development in the Region,” **Senator Munson** drew the attention of the plenary to the human rights situation facing the **Rohingya people in Myanmar**, stressing that the APPF as a forum had addressed human rights issues in Myanmar at its 16th Annual Meeting in 2008. He underscored the implications for regional security of the large-scale displacement of the Rohingya and the violation of their human rights. He noted Canada’s efforts to address the humanitarian crisis, including by way of diplomatic engagement. He called on parliamentarians to support all efforts to resolve the crisis and bring lasting peace and security to the region. Senator Munson’s intervention complemented the submission by the Canadian delegation of a draft resolution on the topic (see below).

· **Senator Oh** focused his remarks on various international and regional efforts to address **terrorism and transnational crime** in the Asia-Pacific region. In this respect, he highlighted some of the ways that Canada is working to combat terrorism and transnational crime, including the launch of a strategy on countering radicalization to violence. Notably, this strategy partners with technology companies to counter violent extremism online and emphasizes early prevention. Senator Oh also highlighted Canada’s support for countries in Southeast Asia through its Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program, and well as its participation in the Financial Action Task Force to address money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

· **Senator Woo** underscored the importance of a free, open and secure Internet so that **cyberspace** can serve as a vehicle for political, social and economic development. Accordingly, in seeking to protect online security and to combat cybercrime and other online threats, he noted that Canada recently launched a new cybersecurity strategy among other national initiatives. Canada also works closely with partners around the world, including in the Asia-Pacific region, in order to enhance cybersecurity and establish global norms of behaviour. Senator Woo stressed that, in accordance with current international law, Canada will also take action against cyber mercenaries and non-state entities that engage in offensive cyber actions.

During the plenary session on **economic and trade matters**:

· **Senator Oh** emphasized that **promoting economic inclusiveness** ultimately requires countries to increase global market access for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to ensure the full participation of all individuals in their society, including women, youth, and minorities. In this respect, he noted that the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) is a significant recent initiative that will promote economic inclusivity. From the perspective of Canada, the CPTPP contains many provisions and standards that, in their implementation, will reduce barriers for SMEs and enhance the participation of women, and Indigenous peoples in the economies of the 11 member states, while also setting new obligations for labour and the environment. While different approaches are debated in the public discourse about the global trading system, Senator Oh stressed that the APPF serves as an invaluable mechanism for reinforcing shared values and commitments regarding more open, progressive and inclusive trade mechanisms such as the CPTPP.

· **Mr. Ehsassi** focused his remarks on the constraints faced by **SMEs** in Canada and the APPF region, which are preventing SMEs from expanding their businesses and networks

abroad, notwithstanding the known and vital role that SMEs play in international trade and national prosperity. For example, he stressed that SMEs are more affected by drastic changes in trade relationships between countries than larger firms, particularly in terms of tariffs and non-tariff measures. Accordingly, Mr. Ehsassi called on APPF member states to strengthen their cooperation to work together to ensure that SMEs in the region have access to financial support, and to training that would allow them to enjoy the benefits of participating in the global economy. Mr. Ehsassi highlighted some of Canada's recent initiatives, including CanExport and Business Women in International Trade, as examples of programs that can promote the participation of SMEs and women in export opportunities.

- In his remarks during the exchange on **connectivity and e-commerce**, **Mr. Jowhari** underscored the “digital divide” that exists between urban and rural or remote communities in terms of modern telecommunications services and the implications of this divide for creating unequal levels of participation in e-commerce and other utilities. Accordingly, he emphasized the importance of improving connectivity to ensure more equal access, in part by establishing an integrated, transparent, and rules-based telecommunications regulatory system. Mr. Jowhari also noted that, when connectivity improves, the number of individuals accessing e-commerce and other services increases. He stressed that such access is especially beneficial to marginalized groups, such as women, minorities, Indigenous peoples, and differently-abled persons. Mr. Jowhari's intervention complemented the submission by the Canadian delegation of a draft resolution on the topic (see below).

During the plenary session on **regional development cooperation**:

- **Ms. Ratansi** emphasized the role of parliamentarians in ensuring appropriate global and national responses to combat **climate change**. She underscored the findings of recent scientific research that indicate an increased risk of climate crises if action is not taken by the international community today. She noted Canada's commitment to a climate change strategy, particularly given its own contributions to climate change given its status as an energy-producing nation. She profiled recent policies undertaken in Canada to address climate change, including its carbon pricing strategy, the development of a Clean Fuel Standard and support for public transport, energy efficiency, and clean technology innovation. Ms. Ratansi emphasized that environmental issues require collective action and called on the countries of the Asia-Pacific region to deepen their cooperation in order to manage its consequences.

- **Ms. Ratansi** underscored the importance of promoting cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region in order to reduce the risk of disasters that occur. In this respect, she noted the suffering that natural disasters have caused in the Asia-Pacific region with respect to the destruction inflicted on communities and the loss of livelihoods for many people, particularly those who were in vulnerable situations already. Such disasters include notably the earthquakes in Indonesia, New Zealand, Mexico and Chile; the typhoons in the Philippines; and the tsunamis in Japan and elsewhere. What is more, across the region countries have experienced cases of widespread flooding, landslides, and forest fires. Ms. Ratansi highlighted the role that Canada has played in helping countries to build their resiliency against such risks and in offering relief assistance when disasters have occurred. She urged APPF states to strengthen their cooperation toward such efforts.

· **Mr. Tan** underscored the benefits of **fostering cultural and tourism cooperation** to help build an appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions in the Asia-Pacific region and to contribute to building trust among people in the region. He also noted the role that culture and tourism play as economic drivers in the region, offering as an example Siem Reap and the presence of numerous temples in the area that are visited by millions of tourists every year. Mr. Tan reiterated that past APPF declarations have recognized the role of cultural and educational exchanges from a strategic perspective as a means of strengthening mutual understanding and respect between people of different nations. He also stressed the importance of cultural diversity in Canada and the contribution that the cultural sector and tourism make to Canada's economy.

C. Draft Resolutions and Working Groups

Delegations from 10 member parliaments (Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, South Korea, and Russia) submitted 43 [draft resolutions](#) for consideration at the 27th Annual Meeting. Those drafts covered a wide range of topics, including: gender equality, peace and security, stability on the Korean Peninsula, terrorism, cyber space, economic cooperation and trade, SMEs, connectivity and e-commerce, regional cooperation in culture and tourism, and climate change. Four Working Groups on Peace and Security, Economics and Trade, Regional Development Cooperation, and Gender Issues were established to consolidate the texts of draft resolutions that were submitted on the same theme.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The Canadian delegation submitted three draft resolutions for consideration at the 27th APPF:

· The draft resolution on **Ending the Grave Human Rights Violations in Myanmar's Rakhine State** was the second time a Canadian delegation submitted a resolution on the topic. It strongly condemned the violence perpetrated against the Rohingya minority by agents of the Myanmar government and others, which the resolution declared constitutes ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It called on the Myanmar government to end the violence, protect the Rohingya minority, grant citizenship to them, and respect their human rights. The draft resolution emphasized the importance of addressing the specific needs of affected women and girls. It also stressed that the repatriation of refugees and displaced groups should be voluntary and carried out under safe conditions according to international law. Finally, the draft called on APPF parliaments to support the establishment of an inclusive, diverse and stable society in Myanmar and to sustain diplomatic pressure on Myanmar's government to cease all violence in Rakhine State.

· The draft resolution on **Connectivity and E-Commerce Growth** emphasized the links between improved connectivity and access to medical care, education, social applications and the digital economy. It acknowledged that e-commerce can be a vehicle for strong and sustainable economic growth as well as for poverty reduction, notably from the perspective of marginalized groups such as women, minorities, Indigenous peoples, and differently-abled persons. In addition to calling on APPF members to implement actions that encourage e-commerce and connectivity, the draft resolution recommended that they also ensure that national laws and regulations related to connectivity and e-commerce align with international guidelines and standards.

· The draft resolution on **Promoting Cooperation and Responsible Management of the Arctic Region** highlighted the uniqueness of the Arctic ecosystem and the widespread impact of climate change on the Arctic's marine environment as well as on the lives, livelihoods and traditions of its inhabitants. It called on APPF members to refrain from any behaviour that would contravene the established sovereign rights and jurisdiction of Arctic states and the international legal framework that applies in the Arctic Ocean, or that would undermine inter-state cooperation in the Arctic. It also reiterated the importance of science diplomacy and the necessity of working in collaboration with Arctic Indigenous peoples and local communities in these and other endeavours.

Canadian delegates were among the most active participants in the efforts of all four Working Groups.

Working Group on Peace and Security:

During deliberations on the draft resolutions on "Building Trust for Peace, Security and Sustainable Development in the Region," (Cambodia, Chile and the Russian Federation), **Senator Downe** successfully proposed that the paragraph submitted by the Russian delegation referring to the "anti-democratic" nature of "political sanctions against parliamentarians" be deleted from the consensus text.

Regarding the Working Group's consideration of the draft resolutions submitted on "Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crime in the Region," (Australia, Cambodia, Mexico and the Russian Federation), **Mr. Calkins** was successful in proposing operative wording in the draft resolution on counter-terrorism and transnational crime that calls on APPF members "to continue and enhance cooperative bilateral and multilateral efforts to combat human and drug trafficking, as well as implement national international measures, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime."

The Working Group on Peace and Security also negotiated a consolidated text on the topic of "Strengthening Parliamentary Cooperation in Promoting the Responsible Use of Cyberspace (Information Space) for Social Progress," (Cambodia and Chile). Both **Senator Downe** and **Mr. Calkins** contributed to the clarification of wording referring in one instance to manipulated news and misinformation, and in another, to the unlawful surveillance of online communications that violates an individual's privacy rights.

Regarding the draft resolutions on "Peace on the Korean Peninsula," (Japan and the Republic of Korea), **Senator Downe** and **Mr. Calkins** also contributed to efforts on the part of the Working Group to find consensus language on different points of contention that arose during debates on those issues. The Working Group was also attended by **Senator Day, Senator Munson, Ms. Ratansi and Mr. Arya.**

Working Group on Economic Cooperation:

Mr. Jowhari represented the Canadian delegation in steering Canada's draft resolution on the topic, "Connectivity and E-Commerce Growth." The Working Group negotiated a consensus text out of the drafts that were also submitted on this topic by Cambodia and Chile. While many paragraphs from the three drafts overlapped, Mr. Jowhari successfully proposed that several points from the Canadian draft be included in the final consolidated

text, namely those referring to the importance of improved connectivity in ensuring access to medical care, education, social applications and the digital economy; the role that parliaments play in promoting a constructive environment related to connectivity; the importance of bridging the “digital divide,” particularly where women and youth are concerned; and, the need to ensure that national laws and regulations are fully and consistently upheld, and that they reflect international guidelines.

Other members of the Canadian delegation, notably **Senator Oh, Mr. Ehsassi, and Mr. Arya** also attended the Working Group on Economic Cooperation and participated in its deliberations on the following topics: “Building Strong Institutions to Promote Trade and Investment for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth,” (Australia, Cambodia, Japan and the Russian Federation); and “Promoting Financial Access and Vocational Training for Small-Medium Enterprises for Employment and Peace,” (Cambodia, Chile, and Mexico). With respect to the former group of draft resolutions, the Canadian delegation was successful in removing from the final consolidated text reference to the “inadmissibility of using economic compulsion measures (sanctions) contradicting international law” as proposed by the Russian delegation. More generally, the delegation ensured that the final texts of all of these resolutions made references to women and youth as important stakeholders in the region’s economic growth. In light of its contributions, Canada was included as a co-sponsor of the final consolidated text of all these resolutions.

Working Group on Regional Development Cooperation:

Senator Woo represented the Canadian delegation during the Working Group’s examination of Canada’s draft resolution on the **Arctic region**. Following amendments that affirmed that many of the concerns raised in the draft resolution are shared by the Antarctic region (proposed by Chile), and that called for national laws of the Arctic States concerning polar navigation to be respected (proposed by the Russian Federation), the Working Group reached consensus on the text and the draft resolution was subsequently adopted by the Drafting Committee.

Other members of the Canadian delegation, notably **Ms. Ratansi and Mr. Tan**, also attended the Working Group on Regional Development Cooperation and participated in its deliberations on draft resolutions that were submitted on the following topics: “Enhancing Parliamentary Roles in Response to Climate Change,” (Australia, Cambodia, Chile, Malaysia, and the Republic of Korea); “Enhancing Parliamentary Cooperation in Promoting Cultural Diversity and Tourism in Asia-Pacific,” (Cambodia and the Russian Federation); and “Promoting Cooperation on Disaster Risk Management,” (Japan). The Canadian delegation led by **Senator Woo** successfully proposed amendments to the draft resolutions on climate change to include reference to climate change’s adverse effects on vulnerable groups, Indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities. Other amendments highlighted the grave threats faced by small island nations and landlocked developing countries in respect of long-term changes to the environment. Accordingly, Canada was included as a co-sponsor of the final consolidated text on climate change. Likewise, Senator Woo played a significant role in ensuring that the consensus text on cultural diversity referred to the protection and preservation of customs and cultural heritage of vulnerable groups, Indigenous peoples, and ethnic minorities. The delegation also contributed to the Working Group’s consideration of the draft resolution on disaster risk management.

In addition, Senator Woo temporarily led the discussions in this Working Group when the Cambodian chair absented himself due to another commitment.

Working Group on Gender Issues:

Ms. Ratansi actively participated in the Working Group that was established to reach a consensus text from eleven draft resolutions that had been submitted by the delegations from Australia, Cambodia, Chile, Indonesia, Mexico, Malaysia and the Russia Federation on **gender issues**. As a result of these efforts, the Working Group reached consensus on three separate resolutions: “Strengthening Regional Partnership for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls for Peace and Sustainable Development,” (Cambodia, Indonesia, Mexico, and the Russian Federation); “Ensuring Inclusive Access to Education, Technical Training and Information Technology for Peace and Sustainable Development,” (Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Mexico); and “Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Decision-Making at All Levels,” (Cambodia and Chile)

A. Drafting Committee

Members of various delegations were heavily involved in the detailed work of the Drafting Committee, including Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The work of the Drafting Committee focused primarily on finalizing the draft resolutions referred to it by the four Working Groups. It also considered Canada’s draft resolution on **the Rohingya people**, the presentation of which was the responsibility of **Ms. Ratansi** on behalf of the Canadian delegation. She argued strongly that the APPF should take a decisive stand on these grave human rights issues. **Senator Day and Mr. Arya** also spoke to Canada’s submission and underlined its relevance to the objectives of the APPF. Although delegates from various countries expressed their shared concern for the humanitarian plight of the Rohingya people, many also suggested that, in light of various developments regarding the humanitarian situation in Rakhine State and the complexity of the issue, the timing for consideration of a draft resolution on such a topic might be better suited at the next Annual Meeting in order to generate consensus. The Cambodian chair of the Drafting Committee addressed the members of the committee on a personal note in sharing that, from the perspective of a country that in living memory experienced one of the most genocidal events in global history, Cambodia appreciates that resolving and recovering from such episodes will require long-term commitment from all stakeholders.

In addition to the deliberations at the Drafting Committee, Canada’s draft resolution on the humanitarian plight of the Rohingya people was also the subject of various efforts and side meetings that were organized by the host parliament in an effort to forge agreement on the issues. In this respect, the Canadian delegation felt strongly that the wording of its proposed resolution accurately reflected the situation on the ground and the concerns of many in the international community. Notwithstanding the support of some countries, delegates at the Drafting Committee could not reach consensus and the draft resolution was not adopted.

In addition to its work on the draft resolutions, the Drafting Committee was also responsible for finalizing the Joint Communiqué stemming from the 27th Annual Meeting of the APPF.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Led primarily by **Senator Day and Mr. Cooper** with constructive roles played by **Senator Woo, Mr. Jowhari, Mr. Calkins, Mr. Ehsassi and Ms Ratansi**, Canadian delegates were among the most active participants in the discussions of the Drafting Committee. Also attending the meetings of the Drafting Committee were **Senator Downe and Senator Munson**.

In particular, the delegation facilitated efforts to finalize consensus language on remaining points of contention in various draft resolutions. **Mr. Ehsassi** negotiated language agreeable to developed and developing economies about the favourable outcomes from trade and investment; **Ms. Ratansi, Mr. Calkins and Senator Downe** reached agreement with the Russian delegation to include terminology referring to “information space” in the draft resolution on cyberspace; and **Mr. Cooper and Mr. Calkins** reached agreement with the Russian delegation on new wording regarding the role that parliamentarians can play in addressing “the glorification of Nazism” to also refer to “other extremist totalitarian ideologies” that fuel contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, consistent with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 72/156. These amendments were adopted by the Drafting Committee.

With respect to the Joint Communiqué, in addition to offering constructive comments on various aspects of the draft, the Canadian delegation was successful in having the Rohingya crisis included in the list of topics addressed during the First Plenary to reflect the subject of Senator Munson’s intervention.

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

This was the first formal Meeting of Women Parliamentarians since the APPF’s Rules of Procedure were amended at the 26th Annual Meeting in Hanoi to institutionalize such sessions. The inaugural meeting had taken place in Vancouver at the 24th Annual Meeting in 2016. Parliamentarians from eighteen countries participated in the discussions in Cambodia: Canada, Australia, Cambodia, Chile, China, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Micronesia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Thailand, and Vietnam. Brunei also participated as a permanent observer of the APPF. The key note address was delivered by Ing Kantha Phavi, Minister of Women’s Affairs of Cambodia. Delegates discussed a range of topics of importance to women parliamentarians according to three agenda items: “Strengthening Asia-Pacific Region Partnership for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls for Peace and Sustainable Development;” “Ensuring Equality for All Women and Men Access to Education, Technical Training and Information Technology for Sustainable Peace and Achieving [Sustainable Development Goals];” and “Promoting Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in Decision-making at all levels.”

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The Canadian delegation was represented at the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians by **Senator Day, Senator Munson, Senator Oh, Ms. Ratansi and Mr. Sheehan.**

In his intervention, **Senator Day** provided an update of policies and programs undertaken in Canada since the previous year's meeting. In particular, he noted that Canada's 2018 federal budget, was the first application of Gender-based Analysis Plus to a federal budget. In this respect, he highlighted the utility of Gender-based Analysis Plus as a tool for advancing policies that target the right issues when gender and other identities and social groups are factors. In addition, he pointed to the elevation of the federal government's machinery of government dedicated to women's issues from an agency to a full department, specifically the Department for Women and Gender Equality. He underscored the shortcomings that remain in Canada regarding gender equality, particularly in terms of representation in executive and leadership positions. Other areas in which further work is needed include economic empowerment and political representation.

Mr. Sheehan focused on gender issues and the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all," from the perspective of women's representation in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. He stressed that in Canada, despite such laureates of the Nobel Prize in Physics as Donna Strickland from the University of Waterloo who won in 2018, greater effort is required to ensure that the advance of technology does not alienate marginalized populations. In this respect, Mr. Sheehan's remarks also highlighted the importance of working with Indigenous groups to ensure access to high quality and culturally appropriate education that gives Indigenous peoples control over their educational systems.

Ms. Ratansi underscored the benefits for society and policy-making that result when women are empowered and included in the decision-making process across all spheres. She updated the delegates about the current proportion of women in the House of Commons (27%) and in the Senate (46.7%). She also reminded them of such recent milestones as the gender-equal Cabinet that has been in place in Canada since 2015. She stressed that, as more women enter politics, it is important that policies reflect the varied needs of women. In this respect, she highlighted recent economic initiatives undertaken in Canada, such as amendments to various federal benefit programs, which allow for greater participation on the part of women in a wide range of fields. She reiterated Canada's commitment to advance these priorities internationally as well through its Feminist International Assistance Policy and its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Final Plenary

The 27th Annual Meeting concluded with the Plenary's adoption of 14 resolutions that resulted from the efforts of the Drafting Committee and the four Working Groups. Accordingly, the APPF countries resolved to take action on a number of issues, including the promotion of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region, economic growth and regional trade, gender equality and women's empowerment, environmental sustainability, parliamentary cooperation, and cooperation in respect of culture and tourism.

All participating delegations signed the Joint Communiqué of the 27th Annual Meeting of the APPF. Among other points, the Joint Communiqué summarizes the discussions that took place in the Plenary sessions on issues relating to political and security matters; economic and trade developments; and opportunities for strengthening regional cooperation. It also includes a report of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. The Joint Communiqué confirms that Australia will host the 28th Annual Meeting of the APPF in 2020.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation

The efforts of the Canadian delegation are reflected in the Plenary's adoption of two of the three resolutions which it submitted for consideration: **Connectivity and E-Commerce Growth; and Promoting Cooperation and Responsible Management of the Arctic Region**. Canada was also included as a co-sponsor of 3 other resolutions that were adopted by the Plenary: **Building Strong Institutions to Promote Trade and Investment for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth; Promoting Financial Access and Vocational Training for Small and Medium Enterprises for Employment and Peace; and Enhancing Parliamentary Roles in Response to Climate Change**.

On behalf of the Canadian delegation, **Senator Day** signed the **Joint Communiqué**.

Additional Activities of the Canadian Delegation

Throughout the days of the APPF Annual Meeting, the Canadian delegation held bilateral meetings with several delegations, including those representing Mexico, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia. In addition, in light of its recent experience as host of the APPF Annual Meeting in 2016, Canadian delegates also met with the Australian delegation, including the Speaker of the Senate, to discuss preparations for the 28th Annual Meeting. In general, these meetings provided an invaluable forum for exercising parliamentary diplomacy and a focused exchange of views on matters of critical importance to Canada.

Senator Downe served as the Canadian chair of the bilateral meeting with delegates from Mexico. He was joined by **Mr. Calkins**. The discussions were wide-ranging and touched on a number of regional and trade issues of mutual interest, including the ratification on the part of Mexico and Canada of the Comprehensive Agreement for Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), as well as perspectives on the ratification of the United States-Mexico-Canada free trade agreement. The on-going negotiations for a free trade agreement between Canada and the Pacific Alliance, of which Mexico is a member, were also raised, as was the challenge of the rise of protectionism in the global economy. The delegates also discussed political, economic and social developments in the hemisphere more broadly. In particular, they discussed opportunities for deepening cooperation in the energy sector.

Senator Munson and Mr. Sheehan, Co-Chairs of the Canada–Japan Interparliamentary Group, chaired a bilateral meeting with members of the Japanese delegation. They were joined by **Senator Downe, Senator Woo, Senator Oh, Ms. Ratansi, Mr. Jowhari, Mr. Calkins, Mr. Arya** and **Mr. Ehsassi**. Given the number of bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest, the discussions centred on peace and security in the region, notably in northeast Asia and on the Korean peninsula, bilateral and regional economic and trade

opportunities in agriculture and the automotive sector, and perspectives on the implementation of the CPTPP.

Mr. Ehsassi chaired the bilateral meeting with delegates from the Republic of Korea. He was accompanied at that meeting by **Senator Day, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Cooper**. Among other global and regional topics raised at the meeting, the discussions focused on regional economic priorities, various regional free trade negotiations, and the state of affairs on the Korean Peninsula. Delegates also discussed energy cooperation, people-to-people ties, the high profile of the Korean experience in Canada as reflected in a popular Canadian situation-comedy television program (“Kim’s Convenience”), and perspectives on ridesharing apps such as Uber.

In addition, **Senator Oh** represented the Canadian delegation at a bilateral meeting with members of the Malaysia delegation, including the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives. This meeting was particularly valuable in light of the recent general elections in that country.

Conclusion

The Canada-China Legislative Association and the Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group attach great importance to the work of the APPF, of which the Canadian Parliament is a founding member. The APPF enables Canadian parliamentarians to build relationships with their counterparts from across the Asia-Pacific, in a forum where they can work together to address the issues facing the region. The Canadian delegation, in part due to it being one of the largest, had a particularly high profile at the 27th Annual Meeting. Specifically, Canadian delegates were heavily involved in the meetings of the Drafting Committee. They also played constructive roles in the Working Groups, actively contributed to the discussions on several topics in the plenary sessions, proposed amendments to draft resolutions and final documents, and ultimately co-sponsored five resolutions adopted by the Forum. The Canadian delegation received many positive comments about its level of engagement. Canadian parliamentarians look forward to participating in the 28th Annual Meeting of the APPF in Australia in January 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Joseph A. Day, Senator Co-Chair Canada-China Legislative Association	Terry Sheehan, MP Co-Chair Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group
---	---

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-China Legislative Association and Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	27th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)
DESTINATION	Siem Reap, Cambodia
DATES	14–17 January 2019
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Joseph Day, Senator Hon. Percy Downe, Senator Hon. Jim Munson, Senator Hon. Victor Oh, Senator Hon. Yuen Pau Woo, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Chandra Arya, M.P. Mr. Blaine Calkins, M.P. Mr. Michael Cooper, M.P. Mr. Ali Ehsassi, M.P. Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P. Mr. Terry Sheehan, M.P. Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, M.P. Mr. Geng Tan, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. David Chandonnet, Association Secretary Ms. Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 119,225.73
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 13,724.53
PER DIEMS	\$ 5,443.75
OFFICIAL GIFTS	-
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 235.44
TOTAL	\$ 138,629.45