



## **Report**

**Visit of the Honourable George J. Furey, Q.C.,  
Speaker of the Senate,  
and a Parliamentary Delegation,  
Argentina, Chile and Peru**

**August 28 - September 7, 2018**

The Honourable George J. Furey, Q.C., Speaker of the Senate, led a parliamentary delegation on a visit to Argentina, Chile and Peru from August 28 to September 7, 2018.

The delegation has the honour of tabling its

## **Report**

The official delegation comprised the following members:

- The Honourable George J. Furey, Q.C., Speaker of the Senate;
- The Honourable Jim Munson, Senator;
- The Honourable Donald Neil Plett, Senator;
- The Honourable Marc Gold, Senator;
- Mr. Stuart Barnable, Chief of Staff to the Speaker; and
- Ms. Vanessa Moss-Norbury, Secretary to the delegation.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the visit to South America were to:

- strengthen bilateral relations with Argentina, Chile and Peru;
- reaffirm and expand on existing trade relationships;
- promote Canada's bid for a seat on the UN Security Council in 2020; and
- encourage ongoing parliamentary dialogue by further promoting parliamentary exchanges.

In order to engage with a variety of interlocutors, the delegation was keen to meet with a cross section of members of South American society, including legislators, academics, NGOs, business people, as well as young people. The delegation was also interested in learning more about the culture and people of these countries.

### **Background - Argentina**

Argentina is a constitutional democracy with over 44 million inhabitants. The term of office of the presidency, along with that of the Vice-President, is four years, with re election allowed once. The most recent presidential election was held in October 2015 with the election of President Mauricio Macri, while the next election is slated for October 2019. To counter the effects of his predecessors' populist economic model, President Mauricio Macri's administration is focused on restoring the competitiveness of the Argentinian economy and re-establishing the country as a credible and stable partner on the world stage. Bilateral engagement between Canada and Argentina has increased considerably since the election of President Macri in 2015.

Canada and Argentina are bilateral and multilateral partners. Both countries are members of the Group of Twenty (G20), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank. The countries share similar perspectives on issues that include human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, and climate change.

Unexpectedly, the visit coincided with a period of volatility and turbulence in the Argentinian foreign exchange market, manifesting itself in a sudden and significant drop in the value of the Argentine Peso. During the period, the central bank annual benchmark interest rates went to 60%, and there was an eventual cabinet shuffle while the delegation was visiting. The financial instability became a significant subject of discussion during exchanges, particularly with legislators.

### **Meetings - Argentina**

During its visit to Buenos Aires, the delegation met with the following:

- Her Excellency Gabriela Michetti, Vice-President;
- Senator Federico Pinedo, Provisional Senate President;
- Mr. Pablo Avelluto, Minister of Culture;
- Mr. Luis Petri, Second Vice President of the Chamber of Deputies;
- Senator Miguel Ángel Pichetto, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate;
- Senator Cristina Del Carmen López Valverde, Chair of the Canada-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship Group;
- Senator Omar Ángel Perotti, Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs and Worship Committee of the Senate;
- Ms. Silvia Lospennato, President of the North-America Parliamentary Friendship Group;
- Undersecretary Leopoldo Sahores, Undersecretariat for Issues of the Americas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Miguel Morley, President of the Argentina-Canada Chamber of Commerce; and
- Mr. Pablo Secchi, Director of Poder Ciudadano.

### **Meeting with Her Excellency Gabriela Michetti, Vice-President; Senator Federico Pinedo, Provisional Senate President; Senator Miguel Ángel Pichetto, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate; and Senator Omar Ángel Perotti, Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs and Worship Committee of the Senate**

Vice-President Gabriela Michetti welcomed the delegation to a meeting that was also attended by Speaker Furey's counterpart, Provisional Senate President Federico Pinedo and Senators Miguel Angel Pichetto and Omar Perotti of the opposition. As such, a broad spectrum of views were represented.

Discussions opened with respective views on the excellent bilateral relationship between the two countries and their shared political and social values. Vice-President Michetti expressed her appreciation for the visit and her hope that it would result in even more interparliamentary exchanges. The conversation then turned to the economy, and the sudden fluctuation in the exchange rate as well as the decision by the Argentine Central Bank, taken just hours before the meeting, to raise interest rates. The Argentinian participants affirmed their unity in the face of economic uncertainty, as well as their optimism that the government, with the support of the opposition, would seek to find a new equilibrium and balance for the economy in the name of stability.

### **Meeting with Mr. Pablo Avelluto, Minister of Culture**

Canada and Argentina have a long history of cooperation in the realm of culture. The delegation took this opportunity to hear more about this connection as well as to learn about the structure of Minister Avelluto's department.

Minister Avelluto described the four main elements of his ministry's work, including heritage, namely: the maintenance and promotion of museums; the support of artists and their work; the use of culture as a means of promoting citizenship and participation; and the promotion of cultural industries as a part of the economy. There was discussion about selected cultural exchanges between the two countries, particularly with artists from Quebec. It was agreed that an increase in cultural exchanges would be beneficial to bilateral relations by broadening Canada and Argentina's mutual understanding.

### **Meeting with Assistant Deputy Speaker, Luis Petri and Ms. Silvia Lospennato, Chair of the North America Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Chamber of Deputies**

After being welcomed by an honour guard, several Deputies with an interest in Canada joined the hosts of the meeting to welcome the Canadian delegation. Discussion centered around Canada and Argentina's shared values such as respect for human rights, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and the desire for greater parliamentary cooperation. Speaker Furey and the delegation again expressed their support and optimism that Argentina would successfully recover from the current economic turbulence.

Discussion ensued regarding deepening bilateral relations, particularly in the areas of bilateral trade, and the oil and gas sector. Speaker Furey expressed that Canadian businesses are impressed with economic reform efforts in Argentina.

The delegates were interested to hear from one of the participant deputies, Mr. Eduardo Amadeo, who talked about his story of exile in Quebec during Argentina's military dictatorship, and the help he received from the International Development Research Centre.

### **Meeting with members of the Canada-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Senate**

The delegation met with members of the Senate Canada-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship Group, chaired by Senator Cristina López Valverde. The other members in attendance were Senators Marta Varela, Silvia Giacoppo and Julio Martínez. Both Canadian and Argentine Senators spoke about their respective regions after which Speaker Furey conveyed his thoughts on the value of inter-parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary friendship groups. He added that with trade becoming an increasingly important element of the relationship between Canada and Argentina, it was even more important to have inter-parliamentary connections. In that respect, he noted that the economy was facing a difficult period and that he was glad to see the government and opposition working together. He also stressed Canada's support for a strong Argentina.

### **Meeting with Undersecretary Leopoldo Sahores, Undersecretariat for Issues of the Americas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Mr. Sahores was accompanied by several members of his staff, most notably Mr. Luis Fernando Del Solar Dorrego of the North America Directorate. The delegates were welcomed by Mr. Sahores who spoke of the recent high-level visit of Argentine Vice-President Gabriela Michetti to Canada in October 2016; Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's visit to Buenos Aires in November 2016; and most recently, the June 2018 visit by President Macri to the G7 summit in Charlevoix, Quebec. Discussions quickly turned to the financial turbulence in recent days. Optimism was expressed that the situation was being monitored closely and that recent economic reforms and the upcoming budget would help to improve the fiscal situation. Speaker Furey conveyed that the delegation brought with it a message of hope for Argentina's progress even though Argentina was facing difficulties, and that Canada had a very positive view of the country and its firm contribution to multilateralism. Other topics of discussion included the crisis in Venezuela, developments on NAFTA and the current political realities in Argentina.

### **Luncheon with Mr. Miguel Morley, President of the Argentina-Canada Chamber of Commerce**

The delegation was keen to learn about the challenges and opportunities facing Canadian businesses in South America. Mr. Morley gave an overview of the business environment in Argentina, referring to the ongoing economic instability and the political panorama. In broad terms, Mr. Morley noted that in his view, the Macri government had instituted correct and necessary economic reforms and that current difficulties aside, he was hopeful.

### **Meeting with Mr. Pablo Secchi, Director of Poder Ciudadano**

As Executive Director of the anti-corruption NGO Poder Ciudadano, the local chapter of Transparency International, Mr. Pablo Secchi provided the delegation with an overview of access to information, anti-corruption efforts, and the rule of law in Argentina. The delegation learned that as a non-partisan organization, they are largely free from threats or reprisals when they carry out their activities. He also added that much remains to be done in terms of improving Argentina's access to information and anti-corruption efforts. Mr. Secchi noted that Canada has been a source of funds for Poder Ciudadano and stressed that the Embassy had been an important ally in its work.

### **Other activities**

During their visit to Buenos Aires, the delegation had the opportunity to meet with senior officials from the Canadian Embassy in Argentina, who provided information on the current political and economic situation in Argentina, including the recent financial instability. The delegation also toured the Sitio de Memoria Museum at the ex ESMA (Military School of Mechanics), which is now a memory museum that provides insight into the illegal detention, torture and extermination of Argentine citizens during the last military

dictatorship. To gain insight into the Argentine culture, the delegation toured the Festival of Light Photography Exhibit and the National Museum of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires.

### **Background - Chile**

The Republic of Chile is a presidential constitutional republic with a population of approximately 18.4 million. Chile's independence from Spain, declared in 1810, was fully achieved by 1818. The president serves as the head of state and head of government for four-year terms. Although a presidential candidate is prohibited from consecutive re-election, they may run in future non-consecutive elections. Current President Sebastián Piñera is serving his second term, having previously been elected in 2010.

Chile has a bicameral system comprised of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Senators are elected to the 43-seat Senate by proportional representation for terms of eight years, while half of the Senate is renewed every four years. The number of Senate seats will be expanded to 50 as of the November 2021 general elections. The members of the 155-seat Chamber of Deputies are elected by proportional representation for four-year terms.

Canada and Chile enjoy a robust and vibrant relationship that continues to mature across a range of emerging issues.

### **Meetings - Chile**

During its visit to Santiago and Valparaíso, the delegation met with the following:

- Mr. Carlos Montes Cisternas, President of the Senate;
- Ms. Maya Fernández Allende, President of the Chamber of Deputies;
- Mr. Roberto Ampuero, Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- Senator Ricardo Lagos Weber, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate;
- Senator Álvaro Elizalde, President of the Canada-Chile Inter-Parliamentary Group of the Senate; and
- Mr. René Arrayet, Director of the Law Evaluation Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

### **Meeting with Mr. Carlos Montes Cisternas, President of the Senate**

President Cisternas gave the delegation an overview of some of the reforms currently underway in Chile's Senate. In particular, discussions centered on reforms related to the tax system as well as human rights. He explained that there was currently a bill under debate related to the rights of transgendered people which had drawn protests to the Senate on the day of the meeting.

When the conversation turned to education, they discussed a past exchange program for elementary school teachers that had been met with great success. Speaker Furey and President Cisternas agreed that educational exchanges between the two countries was an area that should be expanded upon.

An additional topic of interest was the business relationship between Canada and Chile and how Canadian businesses can better adapt to the realities of the business climate in Chile in relation to culture as well as labour.

### **Meeting with Ms. Maya Fernández Allende, President of the Chamber of Deputies**

President Fernández Allende welcomed the delegation to the Chilean Chamber of Deputies. She went on to speak about some of the issues with which the current legislature was seized, including tax reform and human rights for transgendered people. She described the recent contentious debates and went on to say that although tensions were high, tentative agreements had been reached.

Discussions turned to the modernization of the Canada Chile Free Trade Agreement, originally signed in 1996, of which President Allende had been part of the negotiating team. At the time of the meeting, the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate were reviewing the proposal to modernize the agreement. It was widely agreed that Parliamentary Exchanges such as these, serve the important purpose of strengthening ties between countries and between institutions.

### **Meeting with Mr. Roberto Ampuero, Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Speaker Furey began the meeting by thanking the Minister for Argentina's early support for Canada's bid for a seat on the UN Security Council in 2020, after which he asked the Minister for an update on developments on the modernization of the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement. The Minister replied that the agreement was progressing successfully through Congress and that support was ongoing. This began an exchange on the Canada-Chile trade relationship in general and the prospects for further cooperation. It was agreed that a multilateral approach to trade was an important piece to achieve appropriate diversification in trade relationships.

Discussion turned to the maritime lawsuit filed by Bolivia against Chile. Minister Ampuero indicated that it was currently before the International Court of Justice. To give context to the delegation, he then provided an overview of the history of the 1904 Treaty of Peace and Friendship, signed after Bolivia lost 400 km of coastline to Chile during the War of the Pacific (1879 -1884).

### **Meeting with Senator Ricardo Lagos Weber, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate**

Senator Weber, along with members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, welcomed the delegation with the news that the committee had completed its review of the modernization of the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement and that the expectation was that the agreement would be approved by the Senate. There was mutual acknowledgment that modernization was the path forward to expansion and common benefits. The participants discussed certain areas that had been of concern during the review process, including dispute resolution, poverty reduction and agricultural trade. They expressed satisfaction that key issues had been addressed and the agreement was advantageous to both economies and would contribute to social progress.

## **Meeting with Mr. René Arrayet, Director of the Law Evaluation Committee of the Chamber of Deputies**

Mr. Arrayet kindly offered the delegation an overview of the functioning of the Law Evaluation Committee. He explained that the Committee's mandate is not an oversight body on the work of Congress, but rather a means to review bills in a systematic fashion. To achieve this review, the committee consults with citizens from a wide array of Chilean society, including union leaders, academics and stakeholders, amongst others. Their aim is to gather public opinion on various topics of public interest. The consultations take place in a moderated forum with a methodology aimed at reaching conclusions about whether a law needs corrections. When asked by the delegation about pressure from outside bodies, Mr. Arrayet explained that the Committee is at arm's length and is not subject to pressure.

## **Other activities**

The Canada-Chile Inter-Parliamentary Group of the Senate graciously hosted a luncheon for the delegation at the Congress, located in Valparaíso. Senator Álvaro Elizalde, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Group and selected members welcomed the delegation and spoke of the interesting projects underway in their country. Discussions were centered around the strong bilateral relations between the two countries as well as common values and goals.

The delegation also participated in an armchair discussion and lunch with alumni of Canadian Educational Institutions. A wide array of colleges and universities were represented, and the event provided the delegation with the opportunity to hear from former students about their experiences at Canadian schools. The format began with short presentations followed by a Q&A session with Speaker Furey on topics ranging from respective legislative systems to differences in educational structures.

## **Background - Peru**

The Republic of Peru is a presidential constitutional republic with a population of approximately 32 million. The president is directly elected for a five-year term and must obtain more than 50% of the votes to be elected. A second round of voting is sometimes necessary. The president may not run for a second consecutive term but is eligible for non-consecutive terms. Members of Congress are directly elected every five years under a proportional representation system with closed party lists. Legislative powers are vested in the Congress of the Republic, which is composed of a single chamber of 130 members.

The current president is Martín Vizcarra of the party Peruanos por el Cambio. In March 2018, Mr. Vizcarra replaced Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, who had resigned. During his first address to the nation in July 2018, President Vizcarra announced plans to hold a referendum on judicial and political reforms aimed at countering a pattern of corruption and scandal. Proposed reforms relate to campaign financing, the re-election of legislators and the resurrection of a second legislative chamber (which had been previously abolished in 1992). Plans for these reforms served as a backdrop for many of the discussions in meetings during this visit.



Canada has a long history of development assistance, trade relations, and democratic engagement in Peru. Peru is a reliable partner for Canada in defending democracy, multilateralism, and free trade in fora such as the United Nations, the Organisation of American States, the Lima Group, the Pacific Alliance, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

### **Meetings - Peru**

During its visit to Lima, the delegation met with the following:

- Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru;
- Mr. Daniel Salaverry Villa, President of Congress, Congress of the Republic of Peru;
- Mr. Néstor Popolizio, Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- Dr. María Cristina Melgarejo Paucar, Congresswoman and President of the Canada-Peru Parliamentary Friendship League;
- Mr. Luis Galaretta, Congressman and former President of Congress;
- Mr. Allan Wagner, Director, Academia Diplomática del Perú;
- Dr. Walter Albán, Senior Professor, Law Department, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú; and
- Mr. Percy Medina, Head of Mission, Idea Internacional.

### **Meeting with Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru and Foreign Minister, Néstor Popolizio**

The delegation was warmly received at the Presidential Palace by President Vizcarra and Foreign Affairs Minister Néstor Popolizio. The President began the meeting by highlighting Canada and Peru's shared values of democracy and human rights, as well as the countries' mutual objectives of empowering women, eliminating violence, and ensuring responsible economic development. Speaker Furey extended his appreciation for strong and growing commercial relations, and cooperation in key areas such as education.

Discussion turned to the President's proposed judicial and political reforms, and his overall optimism that there was widespread support. President Vizcarra explained that he wanted not only to address the country's material deficits in infrastructure and basic services, but also to ensure effective political and judicial institutions. Part of the proposed reform includes the reinstatement of the Senate, absent since 1992. The President underlined the importance of having a second Chamber to consider and improve legislation, adding that additional costs would more than outweigh the costs of errors which can arise from a unicameral system.

The issue of the exodus of Venezuelan migrants throughout the region was also discussed. It was explained that the surge was creating serious challenges for host countries in many sectors, such as health, education and security, and that there was a need to address not only this, but the root cause, which was the political, economic and humanitarian crises caused by the dictatorship in Venezuela.

### **Meeting with Mr. Daniel Salaverry Villa, President of Congress**

The delegation was welcomed to Congress by its President, Mr. Salaverry Villa. During the course of the meeting, he was joined by former Speaker, Mr. Luis Galarreta as well as Dr. María Cristina Melgarejo Paucar, Congresswoman and President of the Canada-Peru Parliamentary Friendship League. Mr. Salaverry Villa began by conveying his gratitude to Canada for its support for projects and investments in Peru. Discussions turned to the reform plans underway in Peru and the possibility of a national referendum. The President spoke about the process for congressional approval of such reforms and referendum questions, explaining that two thirds of congress would need to approve the reforms in order to move forward with a referendum. It was agreed that laudable efforts were being made to combat corruption and the delegates expressed their ongoing support for Peru in this endeavor.

### **Meeting with Mr. Allan Wagner, Director, Academia Diplomática del Perú; Dr. Walter Albán, Senior Professor, Law Department, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú; and Mr. Percy Medina, Head of Mission, Idea Internacional**

Mr. Wagner, Dr. Albán and Mr. Medina are prominent and influential leaders in the efforts to further President Vizcarra's reforms of the judiciary and political systems. These participants have distinguished backgrounds, including diplomacy, academia and ministerial roles and are experts in democracy and transparency.

The participants gave an overview of crucially needed judicial and political reforms necessary to bring Peru out of the spectre of corruption which has plagued the country. Much of the discussion centred on sources of political contributions and the inadequacy of accountability measures for the use of funds from illegal and sometimes criminal entities. It was pointed out that although there are already laws against illegal contributions, there has yet to be any consequences for parties found to have contravened the laws. The panelists stressed that for real change, there should also be political and criminal sanctions for illegal activities. An online registry to render the information public is one avenue to support transparency. It was indicated that although the public is supportive of reforms to deter corruption, the window is closing to galvanize interest and optimism for success.

### **Other activities**

#### **Meeting with Canadian investors in Peru**

Over breakfast at the Canadian Embassy, the delegation met with leaders in the business community, representing Canadian companies.

#### **Meeting with UNICEF, Youth and Community Leaders from Carabayllo, Peru**

"De Adolescentes" is a Canada-funded development project which focusses on developing improved health and education policies as well as public programmes for marginalized youth. Beneficiary youth leaders presented an overview of both the community in which they live, and the "De Adolescentes" project itself, which is a \$19.8

million project that expects to help approximately 550,000 young people. The young people from Carabayllo gave a passionate presentation which demonstrated optimism and hope for the ways the project is helping them express their views. The delegation left the meeting with the knowledge that the “De Adolescentes” project was helping to empower these young people with skills and experience for political and civic engagement that will contribute to a better future for both the participants and the country.

### **Acknowledgements**

The members of the Canadian delegation would like to extend their thanks to Mr. Patrice Laquerre, Canada’s then Chargé D’Affaires at the Embassy of Canada to Argentina during the visit; Ms. Patricia Peña, Canada’s Ambassador to Chile; Ms. Gwyneth Kutz, Canada’s Ambassador to Peru; and all the Embassy staff for providing them with assistance before and during the visit and meetings.

The delegation would like to thank Global Affairs Canada and the Library of Parliament for the documents they provided in preparation for this visit.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable George J. Furey, Q.C.  
Speaker of the Senate

## **Travel Expenses**

Visit of the Honourable George J. Furey, Q.C., Speaker of the Senate, and a Parliamentary Delegation, Argentina, Chile and Peru, August 28 - September 7, 2018.

<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>\$42,924.33</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$13,945.83</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$5,155.55</b>
<b>PROTOCOL</b>	<b>\$4,693.20</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	<b>\$3,458.78</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$70,121.72</b>