



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
respecting its participation at the International Parliamentary  
Governance Seminar organised by the UK Branch of the  
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

**Canadian Branch of the  
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**

**London, Cardiff and Brussels  
November 15-25, 2010**

## Report

The Honourable Joan Fraser, Senator, Québec, represented the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) at the International Parliamentary Governance Seminar which took place from November 15-25, 2010.

The seminar consisted of meetings, workshops and discussions with Commonwealth parliamentarians and other experts. Delegates attended from Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia), Bangladesh, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada (Federal Branch and Manitoba), Cayman Islands, Dominica, East African Legislative Assembly/Uganda, Guernsey, India (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh), Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia (Selangor), Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Montserrat, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria (Bayelsa), Pakistan (Federal, Balochistan, NW Frontier Province and Punjab), Rwanda, South Africa (Federal, Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape), Sri Lanka, St. Helena, St. Lucia, Swaziland, Tanzania (Zanzibar), the Seychelles, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom (Scotland).

The aim of the seminar was to enhance understanding of supranational and national governance issues, as well as devolved (sub-national) and municipal questions, within the context of the Westminster parliamentary model. The seminar took place mainly in Portcullis House, adjacent to the Palace of Westminster; and sessions in London were also held at the UK Supreme Court, the Methodist Central Hall and Westminster School. In addition, delegates participated in a two-day visit to Brussels, for study of the European Union and European institutions, and a one-day visit to Cardiff to study the Welsh parliament as well as municipal issues with representatives of the city of Cardiff.

The seminar was an excellent occasion to broaden delegates' understanding of many facets of governance in the Westminster-style context. Of particular interest were the sessions on the various facets of the UK and European justice systems.

The program included sessions on models of governance and the international system. Discussions touched on the United Nations and the international system; the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice; and international development institutions and governance.

The program in Brussels focused on the European Union. Discussions included the organization and work of EU institutions; the European Commission; the European External Action Service and the European Council. In Brussels, a session on supranational governance included a general discussion on the European Parliament and discussions with members of the Committee on International Trade and the Committee on Development. Sessions were conducted on European law and the European Court of Justice.

Back in London, a session on the Westminster system in Commonwealth contexts touched on co-operation and governance within the Commonwealth. Sessions on the Westminster parliamentary system focused on the role of the opposition and parliamentary committees. A session on justice and the rule of law focussed on the court structure in England and Wales and the UK Supreme Court. Topics of justice and

the separation of powers and legitimacy were explored. Principles of good governance were discussed in workshops on evidence-informed policy-making; accountability & transparency; conflict-sensitive policy-making; representing diversity; and engaging the next generation.

In Cardiff, sessions on the topic of devolution were conducted at the National Assembly for Wales & Cardiff City Council. The discussions provided a political perspective on devolution and the National Assembly for Wales. Other topics included First Ministers' Questions and local governance at Cardiff City Council.

Upon return to London, sessions on trust and legitimacy touched on public ownership of regional governance; scrutiny of the Prime Minister and Prime Minister's Questions; elections and electoral systems; and building trust with the electorate. The final session was on effective oversight outside of Parliament including discussions on holding Parliament to account: scrutiny by the media; economic governance; public sector governance; effective oversight outside Parliament; and the role of Parliamentarians.

All of the sessions were useful and instructive, and the UK branch is to be commended both for the high quality of the speakers it attracted and the comprehensive nature of the program. Delegates also attended a reception hosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons, Hon. John Bercow during the seminar. As mentioned, the sections on justice systems were particularly useful. Other highlights include the sections on devolution, the session with Hans Marten on the institutions of the European Union and the briefing by Prof. John Greenaway on governance, as well as the session on engaging young people in the political process – Canada could usefully learn from the impressive work of the parliamentary education unit at Westminster.

The UK branch produced an electronic record of the seminar, which has been forwarded to the Canadian branch of the CPA.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Russ Hiebert, M.P.  
Chair, Canadian Branch  
of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) for  
Senator Joan Fraser

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	International Parliamentary Governance Seminar
<b>DESTINATION</b>	London, Cardiff and Brussels
<b>DATES</b>	November 15-25, 2010
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Senator Joan Fraser
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$ 1,326.60
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$ 3,022.72
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	\$ 0
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$ 1,351.61
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	\$ 0
<b>MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES</b>	\$ 993.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,694.68</b>