

Canada - Africa
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada - Afrique

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Bilateral Mission to the
Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of Malawi**

Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association

**Maseru, Lesotho and Lilongwe, Malawi
January 19 to 22, 2015**

UPDATE

Subsequent to the Association's mission, in keeping with the provisions of the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, the Kingdom of Lesotho held early National Assembly Elections on February 28, 2015.

International observers were deployed across the country by the African Union, the Commonwealth of Nations and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Observers deemed the elections to have been generally well organized and implemented in an atmosphere of peace, order and security. The SADC Electoral Observation Mission concluded that the elections were, "peaceful, transparent, credible, free and fair, thus reflecting the will of the people of the Kingdom of Lesotho."

Although no party won an outright majority, the opposition Democratic Congress party managed to form a governing coalition with six smaller parties. Pakalitha Mosisili was sworn in as Lesotho's new Prime Minister on March 17, 2015.

Following the elections, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon congratulated the people of Lesotho, the Independent Electoral Commission and SADC for their efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution of Lesotho's political challenges. The Secretary General added that, "The successful completion of this process will be an important step in Lesotho's return to political normalcy."

The Association associates itself with this statement, and points to several issues raised in this report that it believes will, if properly addressed, assist towards the consolidation of Lesotho's peace and stability, and the strengthening of its democracy.

REPORT

MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION

The Canada–Africa Parliamentary Association was represented by the Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, Co-Chair of the Association; the Honourable Mauril Bélanger, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair of the Association; Mrs. Lois Brown, M.P., Vice-Chair of the Association; the Honourable Jim Munson, Senator, Director of the Association; and Ms. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Member of the Association. The delegation was accompanied by the Association Secretary, David Gagnon.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

The Canada–Africa Parliamentary Association (hereinafter referred to as the Association) undertook bilateral missions to Maseru, Lesotho, and Lilongwe, Malawi, from 19-22 January 2015.

The Association's objectives were:

- to strengthen bilateral relations and parliamentary cooperation;

- to engage with parliamentarians in support of democratic development, good governance, and rule of law;
- to encourage the furtherance of human rights and parliamentary diplomacy; and,
- through contacts with parliamentarians, government officials, civil society groups, and the media, to acquaint the delegates with the situation in the country and with Canada's activities in the region.

In Lesotho, the mission also had the following objectives:

- to engage with parliamentarians on the Maseru Facilitation Declaration and the Association's support for that process;
- to appeal for non-violent, free, fair and peaceful elections, meeting international standards and SADC principals for elections; and,
- to strengthen relations with regional organizations, most particularly the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

In Malawi, the mission also had the following objectives:

- to update delegates on parliamentary processes following the Association's previous visit to Malawi in January 2013; and,
- to demonstrate solidarity with the people of Malawi during the flooding.

To meet its objectives, the delegation met with parliamentarians and government officials; representatives of political parties; committee chairs; Canadian, United Nations and SADC representatives; representatives of Lesotho's Independent Electoral Commission; civil society groups; and, members of non-governmental organizations.

KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

A. Issues and Relations with Canada

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a mountainous and landlocked country, surrounded by South Africa. It is one of the smallest countries in Africa, with an area of 30,355 km².

The population of the Kingdom is approximately 2 million, and the capital, Maseru, has a population of approximately 240,000. The official languages are Sesotho and English, but Zulu and Xhosa are also spoken. The population is primarily Christian (80 percent), although 20 percent of people practice indigenous religions.

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The hereditary King is the Head of State, but has little or no apparent executive or legislative powers. Executive power is vested in the Cabinet, which is headed by a Prime Minister who, as the leader of the political party or coalition with the most support in the National Assembly, is formally appointed by the King. Letsie III is the reigning King.

The legislative branch consists of the Senate and the National Assembly. The bicameral legislature consists of the non-elected, 33-member Senate, which comprises 22 traditional chiefs and 11 members appointed by the King on the advice of the Council of State, and

the elected 120-member National Assembly. Members of the National Assembly and the Senate serve terms no longer than five years. There are currently 32 women in the Assembly and nine in the Senate.

In the parliamentary election of May 2012, none of the 18 parties won a majority. Parliamentarians appointed Thomas Thabane of the All Basotho Convention (ABC) party as prime minister, who formed the first-ever coalition government with the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), and the Basotho National Party (BNP). In June 2014, the leader of the LCD announced an agreement with the Democratic Congress Party and decided to pass a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Thabane, leader of the ABC. The Prime Minister decided to suspend Parliament. The next general elections, originally set for 2017, will be held early, on 28 February 2015, with a view toward resolving Lesotho's current political issues.

Lesotho is classified as one of the United Nations (UN) 48 Least Developed Countries. Lesotho ranked 162nd out of 187 countries and UN-recognized territories on the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) 2014 Human Development Index. Lesotho has 23.6 percent HIV/AIDS prevalence rate – the second highest in the world, next to Swaziland; approximately 360,000 people are living with HIV, 38,000 of them children. The average life expectancy in Lesotho is 48.7 years.

Lesotho's economic activity is composed of agriculture (7.4 percent of GDP), industry (34.5 percent of GDP) and services (58.2 percent of GDP). Over the past decade, the structure of Lesotho's economy has changed significantly. The economy is based less on agriculture and more on manufacturing and mining, as well as services. The country's primary natural resources include water, agricultural land, building stone and diamonds.

Relations between Canada and Lesotho date back to Lesotho's independence in 1966. Following a ten-year absence, Lesotho reopened its High Commission in Ottawa in 2006 with the aim of expanding trade and improving its relationship with the Government of Canada and Canadian non-governmental organizations. Canada-Lesotho merchandise trade amounted to \$7.6 million in 2013, the majority of which came from Canadian textile imports from Lesotho.

B. Meetings

1. Meeting with High Commission

High Commissioner Gaston Barban updated the delegation on the Canada-Lesotho relationship. While the relationship remains modest, Canada has supported Lesotho's development and humanitarian priorities.

Upcoming elections in the Kingdom of Lesotho remain a primary preoccupation. The High Commissioner briefed the delegation on the role of SADC and the work of South African Vice President Cyril Ramaphosa, in his capacity as SADC Facilitator and Deputy President, in bringing about the Maseru Facilitation Declaration. Amid indications that the elections could be destabilized and the outcome delegitimized, efforts are underway to encourage a process that is fair, transparent and peaceful.

Noting that political destabilization would entail likely setbacks for development indicators, a full briefing was provided on HIV/AIDS, infant mortality and maternal health issues in Lesotho. Some 23 percent of Lesotho's population are infected with HIV/AIDS, giving it the second highest prevalence rate in the world. This rate does not appear to be decreasing.

It was noted that the country's geography further impedes development. The country's many plateaus are particularly difficult to reach given lacking infrastructure. On the other hand, Lesotho's water-rich highlands provide a valuable resource that is in high demand from South Africa, and which will continue to be an important source of income.

The textile industry and its connection to Chinese companies and ventures were noted. The Southern African Customs Union (SACU) was highlighted as an important source of revenue for Lesotho, accounting for some 30 percent of national revenues and 50 percent of GDP.

Given the proximity of South Africa, which is visible from parts of Maseru, remittances from Lesotho nationals working in South Africa are also important. Hydroelectric and other infrastructure projects are critical to local development in the sparsely populated and difficult-to-reach highlands.

2. Meeting with His Majesty King Letsie III

The delegation noted its appreciation for the visit to Ottawa of Her Majesty Queen Masenate Mohato Seeiso in December 2014, as well as her association with Canadian NGO Help Lesotho.

His Majesty King Letsie III provided an overview of the situation in Lesotho, as well as a historical perspective on the Kingdom.

He described the political crisis that occurred in 2014, and indicated that he felt there was no alternative but to prorogue parliament given constitutional limits to his powers. He indicated his support for the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, and said that he was encouraging peaceful elections to resolve the political situation.

Acknowledging the high rate of HIV/AIDS, His Majesty highlighted concerns that Lesotho will not meet some of the Millennium Development Goals.

His Majesty described his role as the Champion of Nutrition for the African Union, as well as his family's roots in rural Lesotho and his interest in agriculture and rural development. He underlined that there are opportunities for Canada to work with Lesotho to improve agriculture and rural development in the country.

His Majesty also noted the importance of projects in the highlands to the country's future economic security.

His Majesty highlighted the importance of Canada and Lesotho's bilateral and Commonwealth links, and indicated his desire that a stronger relationship be built between the two countries at the international level.

3. Meeting with The Right Honourable Dr. Thomas Motsoahae Thabane, Prime Minister, and leader of the All Basotho Convention (ABC) Political party

The Right Honourable Dr. Thomas Motsoahae Thabane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, and leader of the All Basotho Convention (ABC) political party, underlined Canada's relationship with Lesotho through our Commonwealth linkages.

He talked about Lesotho's social development, outstanding challenges, and economic situation.

The Prime Minister also provided his perspective on the causes of the 2014 political crisis and assured the delegation that he and his party were committed to a peaceful election.

Discussion ensued on the electoral process, and the role of political parties.

The delegation stressed the need for government and opposition parties to adhere to the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, and underscored the imperative of keeping citizens' needs in focus during the upcoming electoral process.

4. Meeting with The Honourable Morena Letapata Makhaola, President of the Senate

The Honourable Morena Letapata Makhaola, President of the Senate, provided his assessment of the political structures within Lesotho and the issues that led to the 2014 political crisis.

He indicated that he felt confident that the election would be held, and that it would meet international standards, allowing the country to move forward.

The delegation again reiterated its position that the Maseru Facilitation Declaration must be upheld, and highlighted the expectation that all parties will cooperate to deliver a peaceful and transparent election that reflects the people's will.

The President also described the role and function of the Senate as a second chamber.

5. Meeting with The Honourable Sephiri Enoch Motanyane, Speaker of the National Assembly

The Honourable Sephiri Enoch Motanyane, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Lesotho, welcomed the delegates to Lesotho.

He described Lesotho's parliament, and reviewed the issues that have led to the calling of early elections. He indicated that the country was in a state of electoral readiness.

The Speaker also detailed economic, development and social issues, and noted education as a high priority.

The delegation again reiterated the need to adhere to the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, including its provisions for the holding of peaceful elections meeting international standards of freedom and fairness.

6. Meeting with The Honourable Mr. Mothetjoa Metsing, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho

The Honourable Mothetjoa Metsing, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, noted the many challenges facing Lesotho as it seeks to restore its democracy.

He expressed particular concern with the number of high-level appointments that had been made by the government during the election writ period. He noted that many of the appointments appeared to have been designed to facilitate political interference in the judiciary and other state institutions.

Mr. Metsing expressed some concern for the need of government to work in consultation with the other parties in the coalition if present difficulties are to be resolved.

The delegation again appealed for the peaceful conduct of general elections, as set out under the Maseru Facilitation Declaration.

7. Meeting with The Honourable Mohlabi Kenneth Tsekoa, Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Honourable Mohlabi Kenneth Tsekoa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, expressed cautious optimism over the Maseru Facilitation Declaration and processes leading to the early general elections.

Noting the support that had been provided by SADC during Lesotho's recent political tensions, he acknowledged that Lesotho would eventually need to develop the capacity to overcome its challenges through its own state institutions. He emphasised in particular the need to depoliticize Lesotho's military, police and civil service.

8. Meeting with The Honourable Monyane Moleleki, Leader of the Opposition

The Honourable Monyane Moleleki, Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly of Lesotho, provided his interpretation of what led to the 2014 political crisis and the issues that need to be addressed. He highlighted in particular a perceived lack of willingness by the government to cooperate with opposition members.

Although the opposition was not in favour of the prorogation of parliament, all parties will be participating in the election and are committed to a peaceful resolution of Lesotho's current political challenges.

Mr. Moleleki indicated that the opposition is committed to the Maseru Facilitation Declaration. The delegation underscored the importance of this agreement and its provisions for peaceful, free and fair elections.

9. Meeting with representatives of the South African Development Community (SADC)

SADC Head of Mission, Ambassador Fannie Mfana Phakola, and Deputy Head of Mission, Ambassador V Ngiwete, outlined SADC's role in negotiating the Maseru Facilitation Declaration between the various political parties.

They also described the role of South African Vice President Cyril Ramaphosa and his ten declared visits to Lesotho in his capacity as SADC's Facilitator and Deputy President.

Negotiations to remove the head of the military and the head of the police from Lesotho as part of the Maseru Facilitation Declaration seemed to have relieved some of the tensions and differences between the parties. The representatives expressed confidence that the Agreement will be adhered to.

Discussion was held about the attempted return of the head of the police (which did not succeed).

It was noted that, following the election, it will be incumbent upon Lesotho's parliament and government to take measures to continue ongoing efforts underway to de-politicize the police and the military.

10. Meeting with the Independent Electoral Commission

Justice Mahapela Lehohla, Chairman, and Dr. Makase Nyapisi and Mamosebi Pholo of the Independent Electoral Commission, outlined the electoral process, highlighted the Commission's election readiness, and indicated that the electoral rules are reasonably up-to-date.

The delegation was reminded that Lesotho is a small and predominantly rural country that enjoys a high degree of inter-personal familiarity. This allows for reasonably safe vouching under existing electoral laws.

The chair of the Independent Electoral Commission, who is the retired chief justice of the court of the country, felt that Lesotho's laws were in keeping with international standards and SADC policies. Outside observers have been welcomed, and local groups and parties have committed to providing additional observation.

While it would appear that there was an expectation of funding from SADC, the increase in the budget from the Lesotho government made the commissioners feel they can deliver a robust election process.

Although all the commissioners are new, they assured the delegates that they fully understand their duties and that, despite being appointed, they are confident of their independence and have a positive association with all major political parties.

Other issues, including resources and access to media, were also discussed.

11. Meeting with United Nations Agencies

The delegation met with various representatives working for United Nations agencies:

- UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Karla Robin Hershey
- WFP Resident Representative, Ms. Mary Njoroge
- UNICEF Resident Representative, Dr. (Mr.) Tesfaye Shiferaw
- UNAIDS Resident Representative, Dr. Alti Zwandor
- UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Ms. Agi Veres

Each representative outlined his or her agency's work in Lesotho, particularly around concerns such as HIV/AIDS and the lack of nutrition. The difficulty of reaching certain communities due to the terrain in Lesotho was highlighted as a chief obstacle to the work of development agencies. Issues related to the return of many Basothos who cross into South Africa for work were also detailed.

The political situation and the role of civil society were highlighted as matters of concern. Although their agencies play no role in the politics of the country, the representatives indicated that they are working with the government to ensure that observance of the Maseru Facilitation Declaration continues.

12. Meeting with non-governmental organizations

The delegation held a working lunch with various non-governmental organizations:

- Mr. Booi Mohapy, Executive Secretary, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
- Ms. Mamotsiba Makara, Programmes Assistant, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
- Mr. Shadrack Mutembi, Country Director, Help Lesotho
- Ms. Maseretse Ratia, Senior Program Officer, Help Lesotho
- Mr. Tampose Mothopeng, Director, Lesotho Matrix Support Group
- Ms. Lineo Mothopeng, Program Manager Advocacy and Dialogue Program, Lesotho Matrix Support Group
- Mr. Tsoeu Petlane, Director, Transformation Resource Centre
- Mr. Tsikoane Peshoane, Democracy Education Programme Officer, Transformation Resource Centre

A variety of development issues and concerns, and the role of civil society in addressing some of these challenges, were raised. Governance and parliament, marginalized communities and the lacking social development in Lesotho were highlighted as predominant concerns around which NGOs have begun to coordinate increasingly effective responses.

Although flight delays prevented the delegation from conducting a field visit to a project of Canadian NGO Help Lesotho, representatives of that organization capably described their work.

The Lesotho Matrix Support Group (LGBT) indicated that they do not feel that LGBT rights in Lesotho are confronted with the same challenges as elsewhere in Africa. However, they are aware of these challenges and beginning to address them on a regional basis.

In-depth discussion continued on the topic of Lesotho's educational needs, which are particularly pronounced in highland areas. It was noted that the government has made education a development policy priority.

13. Meeting with a media representative

The delegation met with a media representative, who expressed deep concern for Lesotho's peace and stability in the aftermath of the upcoming elections, as well as for his safety and the safety of his family, because of his media work.

Noting the heavy atmosphere currently prevailing in Lesotho, he indicated that factions existed within the country that were willing to use violence in order to avoid legal prosecution.

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

A. Issues and Relations with Canada

The Republic of Malawi is a landlocked country in southern Africa. It is bordered by Mozambique to the east and southwest, Zambia to the west, and Tanzania to the north. With a total area of 118,484 km², Malawi is a land of plateaus and mountains, with fertile soils and major lakes and rivers. Lake Nyasa (also known as Lake Malawi) is the largest lake, at 580 km in length.

Malawi has a population of about 17.4 million, about 47 percent of which is under the age of 14. The main religions are Christianity (82.6 percent) and Islam (13 percent). Although English is the official language of Malawi, the most commonly spoken language is Chichewa. The country has several ethnic groups, the main ones being the Chewa (32.6 percent), Lomwe (17.6 percent), Yao (13.5 percent), Ngoni (11.5 percent) and Tumbuka (8.8 percent).

The country is divided into 28 districts, one of which, Lilongwe, is also the capital.

Malawi has a unicameral parliament – the National Assembly. Members are elected for a five-year term. The duties and authority of the National Assembly are established in the Constitution. There are 22 parliamentary committees, four of which are set out in the Constitution: legal affairs; budget and finance; public appointments; and defence and security. Women hold 32 of the 193 seats in the National Assembly. The President of the Assembly is The Honourable Richard Msowoya, who was elected by his peers in June 2014 for a five-year term.

In April 2012, President Bingu died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of 78. As stipulated in the Constitution, Vice-President Joyce Banda was sworn in as President of the Republic. Following the presidential elections of 20 May 2014, despite being charged with high treason for attempting to prevent Ms. Banda from becoming president, Professor Peter Mutharika, brother of the late President Bingu wa Mutharika and leader of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), was elected president with 36.4 percent of the vote. Incumbent president Joyce Banda won 20.2 percent of the vote.

Malawi is a low income country whose budget depends on significant support from international donors through programs such as the International Monetary Fund's Extended Credit Facility. The country faces many economic challenges, especially following the 2011–2012 economic and political crises. Between 2006 and 2010 the gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 7 percent annually. However, in 2012, GDP growth

was only 1.9 percent. GDP growth for 2014 is projected at 5.7 percent, up from 5.2 percent in 2013.

The 2013 Human Development Index ranked Malawi 174 out of 187 countries, behind countries like Rwanda (151), Madagascar (155) and Zimbabwe (156).

Malawi performs fairly well in terms of respect for the rule of law. According to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, the country ranked seventh out of 52 countries in 2013, moving up six spots over the past five years. The country ranks 13 out of 52 countries in terms of the participation of civil society and observance of human rights, having gained close to six points over the past five years.

Canada recognized Malawi shortly after its independence from the United Kingdom in 1964. In 1973, Canada established an office in Lilongwe reporting to the then High Commission in Lusaka, Zambia. Canada closed its office in Lilongwe in August 2009. The Canadian High Commission in Maputo, Mozambique, is responsible for representing Canadian interests in Malawi. Malawi's Embassy in Washington, DC, represents Malawian interests in Canada.

The Association received excellent briefings during its previous mission to Malawi in January 2013. This mission provided a valuable opportunity to continue that dialogue, and to update parliamentarians on the situation in that country.

B. Meetings

1. Briefing with Mr. Shawn Barber, High Commissioner of Canada to Mozambique, Malawi and Swaziland, and Kimberly Smiddy, Co-Executive Director, Institute for Parliamentary Support in Africa (IPSA)

The High Commission provided a briefing on the state of the flooding in Malawi, which, having begun shortly before the delegation's arrival, proved the overwhelming issue during the mission.

Malawi's parliament and politics in light of the recent election were also detailed.

Recognizing that Malawi is one of Canada's ten countries of focus for the Muskoka Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Initiative, with a focus on the nutrition path, issues and challenges related to maternal health and nutrition, particularly with respect to stunting, were discussed. The poor nutritional value of the food source, rather than the quantity of food available, was noted as the primary concern affecting the population.

2. Meeting with The Right Honourable Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi

The delegation expressed its solidarity with the people of Malawi amid the severe flooding in the country. It was noted that people in southern Malawi, as well as many in neighbouring Mozambique, were disproportionately affected by the flooding and displacement.

In addition to his role as Vice President of the Republic of Malawi, The Right Honourable Saulos Klaus Chilima is Minister Responsible for Disaster and Relief Management,

National Public Events Office and Chairperson of the Civil and Public Service Reform Commission.

In his capacity as Minister Responsible for Disaster and Relief Management, he gave a detailed description of the flooding and related difficulties, including anticipated medium-term relief requirements. More specifically, the Vice President expressed concerns related to a likely food shortage, as crops had been either washed away or were compromised. There is hope that crops in less fertile areas that are now receiving rain can make up for some of the shortfall.

Nutrition is of great concern in Malawi due to the lack of nutrients in a maize-based diet. Conversation continued about alternate and diverse crops and planting methods.

Canada's contribution of up to \$1 million in response to the situation in Malawi and Mozambique, through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, was noted. The minister thanked Canada for the rapidity of its response and noted that this had prompted other countries to follow suit.

As the Minister responsible for the Civil and Public Service Reform Commission, the Vice President outlined anticipated changes to the public service which, in the eyes of many Malawians, will be key to better governance. Efforts to make the public service professional and independent are perceived as being critical to enable ministries to function effectively and improve the implementation of programs and policies. The Vice President indicated that this was the overwhelming concern of the government.

3. Meeting with The Honourable Richard Msowoya, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

The Honourable Richard Msowoya, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly, outlined the parliament and its procedures in Malawi.

Discussion continued about the role of the government and the opposition in parliament.

The Speaker informed the delegation about the "Cashgate" issue and the resulting investigations. He assured the delegation that the investigations were being handled appropriately, as a criminal matter.

4. Meeting with The Honourable Dr. George Chabonda, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The delegation expressed its solidarity with the people of Malawi amid their present crisis. Canada's contribution to disaster relief related to the flooding was noted by the delegation and acknowledged by the Minister.

Parliamentary issues and the ongoing "Cashgate" political difficulty were discussed. The Minister assured the delegation that the politics in this case had been isolated from any criminal prosecution and investigation.

5. Meeting with Parliamentary Committee Chairs

- The Honourable Willard Gwengwe, M.P., Chair of the Committee on Industry, Trade and Commerce;
- The Honourable Dr. Elias Chakwera, M.P., Chair of the Committee on Education, Science and Technology;
- The Honourable Samuel Kawale, M.P., Chair of the Committee on Media, Information and Communication.

The Chairs outlined their committee structures, and were engaged in a lively session of questions and answers on committee composition and the resources necessary for the functioning of parliamentarians.

Malawi has a very minimal research capacity and office capability. Following discussion about best parliamentary practices, the Chairs expressed their hope for a closer working relationship with Canadian parliamentarians.

The delegation again expressed its support for the citizens of Malawi amid the flooding crisis.

6. Meeting with the Leader of the Opposition, The Right Honourable Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, M.P., and fellow members of Malawi Congress Party (MCP)

A working dinner was held with Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, M.P., Leader of the Opposition, and several members of his party.

Dr. Chakwera provided details about the MCP, his assessment of the election and some of its shortcomings.

He indicated that the MCP had been created with a view towards conducting party activity in a manner distinct from the practices prevailing in other political parties. Noting that parties tended to be regionally-based, he indicated that the MCP is working towards developing an issue-based party platform, while creating structures that will allow the party to function nationally, in all regions of the country.

Much discussion was held about voter education and the role of women in the electoral process and in parliament.

7. Meeting with representatives from the World University Service of Canada

A working lunch was held with Jacob Mapemba, Country Director of the World University Service of Canada, and two Canadian interns who have been in Malawi for a considerable amount of time.

Mr. Mapemba outlined the initiatives that have been created between Canada and the World University Service in Malawi to afford students more opportunities to study in Canada.

Of particular note was a creative program that provides funding for Canadian universities students wishing to volunteer and undertake research in Malawi. Two such students were present and outlined their projects in Malawi.

One of the students was working with both the private and educational sector to try to find ways to encourage investment in Malawi. High taxation and women discrimination were mentioned as hurdles.

Another student described his research on the tea market value chain, and how Malawi could potentially benefit from exporting its tea. This will require overcoming a stigma that views Malawian tea as having a level of quality that is only sufficient for use in blending.

8. Roundtable on Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health

The delegation met with representatives of three NGOs to discuss Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) health issues.

Dorothy Ngoma, President of the National Organization of Nurses and Midwives, was Principal Secretary and the National Coordinator of the President's Initiative for Safe Motherhood during the term of President Joyce Banda. Prior to that, she was Executive Director of the organization she now presides over, and was formerly Vice President, Dean and Lecturer at the Kamuzu College of Nursing at the University of Malawi. She has been an advocate at the national and global level for MNCH including serving as an Oxfam Ambassador.

Catherine Mkangama is Senior Technical Advisor for Nutrition at Save the Children Malawi. Previously she was the Director for Nutrition and HIV/AIDS in the Office of the President and Cabinet and formerly had been the Chief Nutrition Officer and Head of the Nutrition Unit at the Ministry of Health.

Martha Kwataine has been the Executive Director of the Malawi Health Equity Network since 2006. She is an influential advocate for women's health in Malawi.

All three participants detailed their valuable work.

Nutrition was underscored as the main challenge, followed by education. Changes in government were highlighted as presenting a challenge for development, resulting from inconsistencies in implementation and resources.

CONCLUSIONS

A. Kingdom of Lesotho

The delegation's mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho responded to numerous requests from parliamentarians from Lesotho, who have in recent years visited Canada and expressed an interest in beginning a dialogue on parliamentary issues. The visit of Her Majesty Queen Masenate Mohato Seeiso to Ottawa in December 2014 reinforced this invitation. The Association was further assured that a visit before the February 2015 election would be the most opportune time.

Our conclusion, based on our own observations and feedback received in Lesotho, was that our visit was timely, beneficial, and added a valuable dimension to ongoing international efforts to encourage adherence to that Agreement and a peaceful and transparent election.

The current political situation presented an opportunity to engage parliamentarians in Lesotho in dialogue around their role in ensuring the implementation of the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, and to appeal for a peaceful election. The delegation's contacts and assessments made it clear that the political situation in Lesotho continues to warrant concern, with ongoing potential for destabilization and even the use of force or violence.

The delegation repeatedly highlighted the importance of rigorous adherence to the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, including the holding of fair, transparent, and peaceful elections that reflect the will of the people of Lesotho. It also reiterated the imperative that leaders not resort to inappropriate resolution of their political differences. Delegates took every opportunity to underscore that every parliamentarian and candidate has a duty to ensure there is no incitement to destabilization or violence.

The delegation notes the ongoing severity of numerous development challenges facing Lesotho – particularly the high prevalence of HIV in the country, which, at 23 percent, is the second highest in the world. Maternal, newborn and child health are also matters of ongoing concern. Political instability continues to deflect both human and financial resources from such critical development issues.

The mission proved extremely timely, as other foreign policy issues have continued to distract international attention from Lesotho's political crisis. In this context, the delegation extended an invitation to all parties in Lesotho to continue to work with their Canadian counterparts to help ensure the proper and continued development of that country's parliament.

The delegation noted the incredible goodwill that exists towards Canada among all our contacts in Lesotho, much of which derives from our historic Commonwealth ties.

The delegation calls on the Canadian Government to continue to support the Maseru Facilitation Declaration, as the representatives of the Canadian Government in South Africa have done. It would be extremely helpful for Canada's new Foreign Minister to make the same appeal. Support is also needed to ensure the peaceful resolution of differences continues after the election.

B. Republic of Malawi

The delegation arrived in Malawi at an extremely difficult, but timely, juncture, being the first parliamentary delegation on the ground amid the flooding to express its support for the plight of Malawians. Figures remained in flux at the time of the delegation's visit; however, as of 5 February 2015, UNICEF was reporting 276 dead or missing and 336,000 displaced.

The Association first visited Malawi in 2013. Since then, an election has produced a new government, and the ongoing "Cashgate" issue is overshadowing governance in Malawi.

Throughout their meetings with political parties and officials, the delegates repeatedly stressed the need to further gains in good governance. They also highlighted the need to persist with efforts aimed at addressing malnutrition, maternal health, primary school enrolment, gender, and capacity development, in line with Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy and Canada's Muskoka-funded initiatives in the country.

The delegation's messages of support for good governance and parliamentary stability appeared to be well-received by all parties. The delegation continues to underscore the need to separate any legitimate prosecution from political activity, and believes that a continuation of the Association's dialogue with Malawi will help benefit long-term stability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the delegation wish to thank the staff of the Canadian High Commissions in South Africa and Mozambique for their cooperation in organizing the visit.

In particular, they express their gratitude to Mr. Gaston Barban, High Commissioner of Canada to South Africa, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and Madagascar and to Mr. Shawn Barber, High Commissioner to Mozambique, Malawi and Swaziland who accompanied the delegation throughout the meetings and activities.

The enthusiasm and efforts of the High Commission of Lesotho in Canada, which was invaluable in helping to make this mission possible, should also be noted.

The delegation also extends its appreciation for the assistance of the Malawi Embassy in Washington, which is responsible for Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Raynell Andreychuk,
Senator, Co-Chair
Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association

The Honourable Mauril Bélanger, P.C.,
M.P., Co-Chair
Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association

Travel Costs

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| ASSOCIATION | Canada-Africa Parliamentary Associations |
| ACTIVITY | Bilateral Mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of Malawi |
| DESTINATION | Maseru, Lesotho and Lilongwe, Malawi |
| DATES | January 19 to 22, 2015 |
| DELEGATION | |
| SENATE | The Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Senator, Co-Chair; The Hon. Jim Munson, Senator, Director |
| HOUSE OF COMMONS | The Hon. Mauril Bélanger, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair; Mrs. Lois Brown, M.P., Vice-Chair; Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Member |
| STAFF | Mr. David Gagnon, Secretary of the Delegation |
| TRANSPORTATION | \$ 80,640.04 |
| ACCOMMODATION | \$ 8,182.93 |
| HOSPITALITY | \$ 1,119.80 |
| PER DIEMS | \$ 1,431.47 |
| OFFICIAL GIFTS | \$ 1,459.84 |
| MISCELLANEOUS | \$ 211.29 |
| TOTAL | \$ 93,045.37 |

