



**REPORT OF THE
CHAIR OF THE CANADIAN BRANCH OF THE
COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
TO THE
PRE-CONFERENCE VISIT TO THE CPA HEADQUARTERS**

**London, United Kingdom
August 28 to September 2, 2006**

The Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association who attended in a pre-conference visit to the CPA Headquarters in London, United Kingdom from August 28 to September 2nd has the honour to present his report.

Report

As the newly elected Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the incoming Regional Representative, it was important for me to make a pre-conference visit to the CPA Headquarters prior to arriving in Abuja, Nigeria for the 52nd CPA Conference.

The visit provided me with the opportunity to become more familiar with the many issues facing the CPA at international level as well as gain an understanding of the operations of the CPA Secretariat. Over the past several years, the CPA Canadian Branch has been well represented on the International Executive Committee (EXCO). As the relatively new Chair of both the Canadian Branch and the Canadian Region of the CPA, it was necessary for me to learn as much as possible in the shortest period of time prior to taking up my new responsibilities as the incoming Regional Representative and Chair of the Canadian Regional Council. Following consultations with the members of the Canadian Branch Executive Committee, it was agreed that I stop in London enroute to the 52nd CPA Conference in Abuja, Nigeria.

While in London and prior to meeting with the officials at the CPA Secretariat, I met with the newly installed Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Mr. James R. Wright. As the new High Commissioner to the United Kingdom – installed only a day before we met – and myself, as the incoming Regional Representative on the International Executive Committee our common bond of holding new and important posts gave us much to discuss.

During my time in London, I was able to meet with Denis Marshall, the outgoing Secretary General of the CPA and several senior officials on the Secretariat staff. Mr. Marshall was able to assist me greatly in detailing the operational and financial operations of the CPA as well as what would be expected of me as a Regional Representative on EXCO.

The Canadian Branch of the CPA contributes a significant amount of money in the form of an annual international contribution to the operations of the Secretariat and as such, I was reinforcing our need for a strong voice on the EXCO Sub-Committee on Finance. As I have expressed my desire to fulfill this position on EXCO, it was vital that I have an in-depth understanding of the financial management of the Association and its many bilateral and multilateral initiatives and programs. My meetings with Denis Marshall and the new Financial Comptroller, Mr. Joe Oromodion contributed greatly to my understanding of the financial management systems in place. This became evident during my first meeting with other members of EXCO at the end of the 52nd CPA Conference in Abuja.

I cannot emphasize enough the need for any member of EXCO to be very familiar with the current system in place regarding the financial management of the CPA on the international level. The Association is already encountering some difficulties in determining venues for future CPA Conferences, a problem directly associated with the costs of hosting these annual events. As Canada had hosted the 50th CPA Conference and provided the Secretary General with a detailed report containing several

recommendations on how to reduce the expenditures associated with hosting this annual activity, I felt it imperative to ensure that a Canadian be represented on any work group established to study the problem. My meetings with Denis Marshall and Niall Johnston served to help establish the guidelines for such a work group.

While in London, I had the opportunity to meet with several members of the CPA United Kingdom Branch prior to our departure for Abuja. It was enlightening to discuss issues of mutual interest concerning the future directions for the CPA and the operations of the UK Branch in general. The funding for the CPA UK Branch is provided through the UK Foreign Affairs rather than through Westminster, a system that has both pros and cons attached to their program of activities.

As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, my stay in London also provided me with the opportunity to meet with my counterparts at the United Kingdom Department of Defence to learn its relationship to Parliament.

Following my meetings in London, I then travelled to Abuja, Nigeria to attend the 52nd CPA Conference. A report on the workings of the Conference will be presented later separately.

In closing, I would like to thank the staff of the CPA Secretariat for taking time from what was a very busy period to meet with me and answer my many questions concerning the operations of the Secretariat and Association in general.

Respectfully submitted,

Russ Hiebert, MP
Chair

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

TRAVEL COSTS

ASSOCIATION	Canadian (Federal) Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
ACTIVITY	Pre-Conference Visit to the 52 nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference
DESTINATION	London, United Kingdom
DATES	August 28 – September 2, 2006
SENATORS	
MEMBERS	Mr. Russ Hiebert, MP
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 0
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1,185.95
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 860.28
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 2,046.23