



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
respecting its participation at the Executive Committee  
Meeting and the CPA 61st General Assembly**

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

**London, United Kingdom  
October 1 - 5, 2015**

# Report

Mr. Russ Hiebert, M.P. attended the EXCO meeting in London, United Kingdom on behalf of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from October 1 – 5, 2015.

## **Cancellation of the 61st CPC**

The cancellation of the 61st CPC was necessitated by the need to maintain the integrity of the CPA constitution. The Headquarters Secretariat took the unprecedented steps to apply to the UK Charity Commission to grant the Members of the Executive Committee the power (under Section 105 of the UK Charities Act 2011) to be able to conduct the business of the General Assembly and change or cancel the venue of the 61st CPC if there was a good cause to do so. During an Emergency Teleconference meeting on 19 August, 2015 the members of the Executive Committee agreed there was good cause.

## **Executive Committee Meeting:**

**CPA Selection Panel Report:** Hon. Russ Hiebert represented the Canadian Region on this panel. The report laid out the process and details of the interview and selection process, and recommended two names to the Executive Committee, one as their first selection and an alternate should the first selection no longer be available. The Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the General Assembly the name of Mr Karimulla Akbar Khan.

The panel also recommended, following legal consultation, that the contract be for a four-year fixed term. The Executive Committee passed this after a lengthy discussion.

**Amendments:** Several constitutional amendments were put forward for discussion covering several topics:

- Role of the Chairperson as the spokesperson for the Association
- Role of the Secretary-General as the individual responsible for running and administering the affairs of the Secretariat;
  - both of these items were intended to clarify the role and function of each position to ensure the situation with the previous Secretary General is avoided. The amendments were tabled until the next General Assembly; and
- The inclusion on the Executive Committee of a Small Branches Chairperson.

After a lengthy debate of procedure and makeup of the General Assembly the Executive agreed to set aside consideration of the amendments until a larger membership was present at the GA.

**New Freehold Office Property:** The Executive Committee at its mid-year meeting in April, 2015 requested the Acting Secretary-General to produce a report outlining: **Firm Mortgage Offers; Funding and Repayment; and Purchase of Property and Use of Commercial Estate Agents.** The report was presented and the discussion exposed several major areas of concern the least of which is the lack of a business case and a business plan. The final outcome was no further work was to be done on this until the new Secretary-General was in place.

**CPA Status – Update:** The General Assembly in Sri Lanka in September 2012 resolved that:

The Branches of the CPA should establish a new non-charitable organization (with non-diplomatic status) in order to reflect more accurately the international profile of the organization, maintain the unity of the Commonwealth family of Parliaments and Legislatures, espouse aims and objectives similar to the existing organization and also promote democracy and human rights which are not charitable purposes.

This entire initiative was brought forward by the late Secretary-General and has been hotly debated since 2012 and is still so. To make a very long discussion as short as possible there are many areas of concern: the overall purpose of changing the Associations charitable status; the tax implications; constitutional amendments; structure and membership; funding of a new Association; disbursement of existing funds; royal patronage; etc.

The Executive Committee was unable to make any forward movement. Russ Hiebert recommended that the next and only step should be a discussion with the Queen. This will be passed to the incoming Secretary-General.

**Future Meeting:** There are no hosts identified for any future meetings of the Annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences or the Executive Committee meeting. There are hosts for the Annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminars from 2016 through 2022 although no dates have been set.

**Elections:** Proposals to Amend the Rules for Conducting Contested Elections were presented. The amendments concern elections to take place at General Assembly; Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Business Meeting; and Small Branches Conference. As the Constitutional Amendments to include a Small Branch Chair were tabled this report was also tabled.

Following the General Assembly the Executive Committee was to meet and elect a new Vice-Chair to replace the outgoing Vice-Chair Honourable Datuk Seri Dr. Ronald Kiandee, MP from Malaysia. The constitution requires that the CV of those wishing to run be circulated to all members of the Executive Committee two (2) days prior to the election. In a separate email the Acting Secretary-General requested the CV's be submitted to him three (3) days prior to the election. This caused great debate and frustration as a representative missed the Acting Secretary-General's request. A representative from the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region had met the Acting Secretary-General's time request. The two and a half hour discussion/debate was centered on what constitutes a two (2) day period. In the end both candidates were permitted to run.

At the first meeting of the new Executive Committee the Honourable Shirley M. Osborne, MLA from Montserrat was elected as Vice-Chairperson. Also of note is that the former chairperson Rt Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst, MP will be returning as a representative of the British Islands and Mediterranean Region.

**61st General Assembly:**

The Executive Committee was constituted as the General Assembly to adopt all matters, which were passed or noted without discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable David Smith, Senator  
Canadian Branch of the  
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Executive Committee Meeting and the CPA 61 <sup>st</sup> General Assembly
<b>DESTINATION</b>	London, United Kingdom
<b>DATES</b>	October 1-5, 2015
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	N/A
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Russ Hiebert, M.P.
STAFF	N/A
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>Borne by CPA Headquarters</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>Borne by CPA Headquarters</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>Borne by CPA Headquarters</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>