

Canada - China
Legislative Association



Association législative
Canada - Chine

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the
Co-Chairs' Annual Visit to China**

Canada-China Legislative Association

**Shanghai, Beijing, Urumqi, Hong Kong
People's Republic of China
May 11 to 15, 2013**

Report

The Co-Chairs of the Canada-China Legislative Association (CCLA), the Honourable Donald Neil Plett, Senator, and Ms. Wai Young, M.P., conducted the CCLA annual Co-Chairs' visit to China from May 11 to 15, 2013. This visit was Ms. Young's first official visit to China as the newly elected CCLA Co-Chair. During this time, the Co-Chairs had the opportunity to visit Shanghai, Beijing, Urumqi and Hong Kong. The Co-Chairs were accompanied by Mr. Roger Préfontaine, Executive Secretary to the CCLA.

Objectives:

The objectives of the visit were:

- To enhance the friendship and cooperation that already exists between the two countries and to strengthen the already firm ties between the National People's Congress and the Parliament of Canada;
- To continue the renewal and reinvigoration of the CCLA relationship following the 16th Bilateral Meeting;
- To meet the newly appointed Chinese Chair of the China-Canada Legislative Association, Mr. Chi Wanchun;
- To discuss and plan with Mr. Chi for the upcoming year's activities;
- To learn more about Chinese-Canadian business, cultural and political links, and to promote enhanced cooperation at all these levels;
- To learn more about ethnic minorities and civil rights, and in particular the situation of the Uyghurs of the Xinjiang autonomous Region.

Shanghai

The delegation was greeted, briefed and accompanied in Shanghai by Canadian Consul General Rick Savone. The Co-Chairs had been invited by Mr. William Hong, Vice-President, Commercial Strategic Development of Teekay Shipping, a Canadian-owned, Vancouver-based company, to visit the newly built ULCC H1250 Hong Kong Spirit while in Shanghai. The Hong Kong spirit is a conventional VLCC carrier (tanker) vessel. It was being prepared for sea trials at the NNCX Shanghai shipyard. The Co-Chairs toured the vessel and the JNCX shipyard and were briefed on Teekay's world-wide commercial operations by senior management.

Beijing

Upon arriving in Beijing, the delegation was greeted and briefed by Ambassador Guy St. Jacques. The Ambassador gave the Co-Chairs a broad overview of Canada-China's trade and political relationships. Canada remains an attractive investment destination for the Chinese, and canola is Canada's main export to China. Further, Canada enjoys a good reputation in China concerning its beef. Canadian beef producers have recently increased

their market share in China through an increase of licenced establishments and there is a large market for Canadian pork and chicken.

The Ambassador also spoke to the Co-Chairs of the air quality problem in Beijing, where it is particularly bad in the winter months. The Co-Chairs were also briefed on the education and student exchange situation between the two countries. There are approximately 70,000 Chinese students in Canada presently, with only 2,300 Canadian students in China. 63 schools in China are now offering the Canadian curriculum and the quality of education is improving.

Meeting with Mr. LUO Liming, Vice-Minister of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission

The Vice-Minister informed the Co-Chairs that the mandate of the Commission was to protect and safeguard the civil rights of local minorities. In China, there are 55 various minorities, a total of 120,000,000 people occupying 64% of the land mass.

The Vice-Minister assured the Co-Chairs that minorities are treated equally and that they have equal access to medicare services. The delegation was told that the Central Government has the support of minorities throughout China, and that the Central Government's objective is to transform society into a well-being state. The delegation was also told that education is subsidized from primary to high schools, with minorities having priority access in certain districts. However, it was noted that the quality of education may vary depending on an urban or rural setting.

Meeting with Mr. Zhang Ping, Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress

After warm greetings from the Vice-Chair, Senator Plett expressed hope that as China is Canada's second largest trading partner with more than 50 billion in trade last year, the already very good relationship between the two countries, will be enhanced. The Senator also welcomed the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) to Canada.

The Vice-Chair thanked Canada for approving the CNOOC deal and affirmed that the relationship had reached a new level in the past few years. He assured the Co-Chairs that Canada is fast becoming one of China's foreign investment preferred destinations.

He went on to state that the two economies are highly complementary, that we share many common interests and a great potential for economic development. Canada complies with China's strategic development, he stated, and China attaches importance to its relation with Canada. A discussion ensued regarding the importance of this economic relationship.

Ms. Young thanked the Vice-Chair and expressed hope of expanding the role of CCLA. She stated that the environmental, food safety, financial and agriculture sectors are examples of where the two countries could collaborate even further.

Meeting with Mr. Chi Wanchun, Vice-Chair of the National People's Congress (NPC) Foreign Affairs Committee and new Chinese Chair of the CCLA

General Chi welcomed the delegation and congratulated Ms. Young on her recent election to the position of Co-Chair. He assured the Co-Chairs that he will continue in the footsteps of his predecessor, Mr. Zilin, to work at making the CCLA platform into a model for other countries. This model is based on the elements of a solid foundation, longevity, sincerity and knowledge depth. The Co-Chairs proposed that the next Bilateral Meeting planned for the fall of 2013 include the theme of food safety and that the delegation attend the Food Forum of Shanghai, with annual consultations to be held in Beijing as usual. General Chi agreed with their proposal.

Urumqi

Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

The visit to Urumqi was an excellent opportunity for the Co-Chairs to familiarize themselves with the question of minority rights in China. They were accompanied by Ambassador Guy St. Jacques.

The delegation was greeted by Mr. Wang Yang Ming, Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee of the Xinjiang Autonomous Regional People's Congress. Mr. Wang expressed warm friendship for Canada with a long history of relations going back to the Second World War and Canadian medical doctor Normand Bethume's historical battlefield contribution to the care of Chinese soldiers in the Shanxi-Hobei border region.

He mentioned that Xinjiang is underdeveloped in terms of the economy but offers much potential in natural resources. More than 40 ethnic groups co-habit in the Xinjiang province in harmony with cultural exchanges at various levels being frequent.

Ambassador St. Jacques thanked Mr. Wang for his first opportunity to visit Urumqi. He informed the group that in the early 1990s the Canadian International Development Agency had conducted a number of programs in the region. Some were aimed at the agriculture sector and others to help integrate women in the work force. He encouraged the Deputy Chair to provide economic opportunities for minorities and assured him of the Canadian Government's willingness to be of assistance. Mr. Wang responded by specifying that professional training assistance for cooperation programs in overseas studies would be of great utility. The visit to Urumqi also included a tour of the Xinjiang Islamic Scripture College and the Planning Exhibition Center of the Urumqi New and High Tech Development Zone.

Hong Kong

Senator Plett having had to return to Ottawa, Ms. Young, Co-Chair, ended the Co-Chairs' visit in Hong Kong on her own. She was met in Hong Kong by the Consul General, J. Ian Burchett.

Ms. Young met with members of the Committee on Mission Management of the Consulate General of Canada, and was briefed on trade, immigration and security issues. A roundtable composed of Hong Kong based NGOs on human rights in mainland China was

organised in order to give the Co-Chair an inside perspective on the issue of human rights and criminal justice.

Conclusion

This visit to China was an excellent opportunity for the Co-Chairs of the CCLA to expand their knowledge of and contacts in China. They met with the new Co-Chair of the China-Canada Legislative Association and were able to establish an agenda and agree on the themes for the next annual full delegation Bilateral visit. This was also a unique opportunity for the Co-Chairs to visit the Xinjiang province and gain a better understanding of the status of the Uyghur minority.

Finally, it offered the opportunity to strengthen, reinforce and reinvigorate the already robust relationship that exists between Canada and China as fostered through visits of this kind by the CCLA. A summary of the travel costs is appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Victor Oh, Senator
Co-Chair
Canada-China Legislative
Association

Ms. Wai Young, M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada-China Legislative
Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-China Legislative Association
ACTIVITY	Co-Chairs' Annual Visit to China
DESTINATION	Shanghai, Beijing, Urumqi, Hong Kong
DATES	May 11 to 15, 2013
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Donald Neil Plett, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Wai Young, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Roger Préfontaine, Executive Secretary to the CCLA
TRANSPORTATION	\$22,321.74
ACCOMMODATION	\$2,911.79
HOSPITALITY	\$148.42
PER DIEMS	\$1,379.97
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$930.20
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$1,947.83
TOTAL	\$29,639.95