



## **Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation: Co-chair's visit**

**Canada-China Legislative Association**

**Hong Kong, China**

**August 18, 2007**

# Report

## Meeting in Hong Kong

CCLA Report of visit by Co-Chair Senator Joseph A. Day to Hong Kong on his way to the Association of South East Asian Nations 28<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

A full program was arranged for Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> of August, 2007. The day began with a briefing at the Consulate General of Canada for Hong Kong with the Acting Head of Mission, Jean Roberge (the Consul General, Mr. Gerry Campbell was travelling). Also in attendance at the meeting was Mr. Tim Edwards, Acting Head of Public Affairs.

During the meeting the role of the Canada-China Legislative Association role vis-à-vis the Canada-Hong Kong Parliamentary Friendship Group was explained to the Consul General.

An extensive discussion took place on the evolution of the role of Hong Kong as the service centre for a large percentage of the manufacturing activity taking place in the Pearl River Delta of South East China, including Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

Mr. Jean Roberge gave an overview of changes in the personnel at the Hong Kong office. We also discussed the closing of the Tourism Canada Office in Hong Kong and the potential loss of tourist as a result. Senator Day was given a tour of the renovated facilities at the Canadian Consul General Office in Hong Kong. An extensive review of the constitutional evolution of the Basic Law for Hong Kong was provided and a discussion of moving towards universal voting for the election of the Chief Administrator, and also for the Legislative Council. There is a strong division of opinion with respect to whether there should or should not be universal voting for all members of the Legislative Council or a continuation of the existing system of the Council being made up of appointed representatives of various interest groups such as; university professors, doctors, lawyers, business personnel, etc., together with some generally elected councillors.

There has recently been an election of a new Chief Administrator, Honourable Sir Donald Tsang. The next election for the Chief Administrator will take place in five years, namely 2012. Next year there will be the election for the Legislative Council and even though it was the intention to move towards universal suffrage after the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the reversion of Hong Kong to China in 2007, it now appears that there will not be a change in the method of election for the Legislative Council during the elections in 2008. We were provided, however, with a working document entitled The Green Paper, which proposes the way ahead for choosing councillors in Hong Kong.

A meeting took place with Mme. FEI Fih, who is one of the 26 Hong Kong representatives to the National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing.

Mme. FEI Fih had recently visited Canada as part of the CCLA Chinese delegation in June of 2007. She reiterated the view of the members the CCLA that they were very content with their visit to Canada, including a visit to Ottawa followed by visits to Montreal, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

An extensive discussion took place with Mme FEI Fih with respect to the relationship between the representatives of the NPC for Hong Kong and the Chief Administrator and the Legislative Council for Hong Kong. Ms. FEI Fih indicated that she is hoping to continue as a representative for Hong Kong in the next NPC to be formed in March 2008, and that she intends to request continued membership in the CCLA. We look forward to her continued participation in CCLA matters.

The next meeting which took place was to the Legislative Council and in particular with the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr. Stephen Lam. Mr. Lam's role is to work on behalf of Council and the Chief Administrator in developing new rules with respect to voting as promised after 10 years of operating under the Basic Law for Hong Kong.

A good discussion also took place on issues with respect to the accountability of appointed officers and whether Secretaries (Deputy Ministers) should be political appointees or professional civil servants. Mr. Lam is of the view that the US model where the Secretary is a political appointment who is expected to leave when the Chief Administrator leaves, is the most appropriate model for Hong Kong. He provided a publication entitled "Consultation Document on Further Development of the Political Appointment System." This is an interesting document on the issue of accountability and the appointment process as viewed by Hong Kong as a highly autonomous unit known as a "Special Operating Entity" within China, subject to the Basic Law for Hong Kong.

Also in attendance at the meeting was the Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Elaine T.L. Mak.

Hong Kong has a long standing relationship with Canada. There are many Hong Kong citizens now living in Canada but also there are an estimated 250,000 Canadians living in Hong Kong. Likewise, many Hong Kong students are studying at Canadian universities. It is believed that there are approximately 100,000 Hong Kong citizens who have a Canadian university degree. There are approximately 550 Canadians buried in Hong Kong who were part of the defenders of Hong Kong against the Japanese invasion during the Second World War. Trade between Canada and Hong Kong continues to grow, with total bilateral trade including both goods and services close to \$3 billion CAD. Hong Kong is a major door to China for Canadian businesses. Many Canadian companies have offices in Hong Kong to service the greater Chinese market. Finally the airport in Hong Kong is going through a major expansion. It handles more air cargo than any other airport in the world and the sea port in Hong Kong is one of the largest container terminals in the world (Singapore being the other leading port). It may be worthwhile having a CCLA delegation get a briefing and a clear understanding of the relationship between Hong Kong and the mainland during one of our future visits to Hong Kong.

Respectfully submitted,

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Hon. Joseph Day, Senator  
Co-Chair

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Mr. Bob Mills, M.P.  
Co-Chair



## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-China Legislative Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Co-Chairs Annual Visit
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Hong Kong, China
<b>DATES</b>	August 18, 2007
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Joseph Day, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$198.80
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$1,186.50
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	\$0.00
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$191.38
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	\$90.50
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,667.18</b>