



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the International Parliamentary Conference on Peace-
Building: Tackling State Fragility**

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

**London, United Kingdom
January 31 – February 6, 2010**

Report

Senator Mobina Jaffer and Mrs. Pat Davidson, MP, represented the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at the International Parliamentary Conference on Peace-Building: Tackling State Fragility (herein referred to as “The Conference”).

The Conference occurred from January 31 to February 6 with sessions being held at the Houses of Parliament in London, U.K. for the first four days and the remaining two days hosted by the Northern Ireland Assembly in Belfast, Ireland. The meetings in Northern Ireland were held at the Stormont Building.

The Conference brought together 83 parliamentarians from 37 parliaments and legislatures of Commonwealth and non-commonwealth nations.

The aim of the Conference was to strengthen the role of parliamentarians in promoting sustainable peace, security and development throughout the world with special focus on fragile nation-states.

The objective of the Conference was to ensure delegate parliamentarians were challenged to:

- Hold Executives to account on their strategies to tackle state fragility and re-establish the basic functions of the state (security, rule of law & economic management)
- Negotiate transitional justice without compromising fragile peace
- Establish strong citizen-state relations for non-violent dispute mediation and greater political transparency and accountability, especially through engagement with civil society and media
- Employ human rights principles and instruments to support peace-building initiatives through parliamentary networking and alliance-building across party lines and local, national, regional and international levels.

Topics & Themes of the Conference:

The topics and themes studied at the conference were as follows:

1. Peace-building strategies across borders
2. Revitalizing economies and human security
3. Improving access to justice
4. Rebuilding citizen-state relations
5. Moving forward

Scope:

Peace-building is defined as overcoming the root causes of violent conflict, strengthening the links between hostile groups and rebuilding society with a view to achieving long-term stability through peace, democracy and development. Peace-building is more than rebuilding infrastructure; it involves re-establishing the institutions

and mechanisms which underpin a functioning society: a society where competing needs and interests are managed through negotiation and consensus building rather than resorting to violence.

Typical peace-building activities include:

- Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of soldiers
- Reintegration of internally displaced persons, refugees and other conflict affected people
- De-mining and removal of other war debris
- Managing the delivery of emergency relief and reconstruction of infrastructure
- Security and justice sector reform
- Economic development
- Reconciliation and transitional justice
- Supporting the development of an active and vibrant media and civil society

Developed and developing nations have an important role to play in ensuring the protection of the intrinsic nature of human rights, justice and economic security when dealing with fragile nation-states.

At the Conference, the scope of discussions encompassed a wide array of issues affecting fragile states and how delegates in attendance at the Conference could develop strategies to effectively manage these areas of concern.

The countries in attendance fell into three categories while participating at the Conference:

1. Countries in conflict currently
2. Countries providing aid
3. Countries that were recently in conflict

Perspectives:

Throughout the Conference, different perspectives were examined including the following:

- The causes of fragility
- Drivers of violent and non-violent change
- Avoiding a return to violent conflict
- Policy areas to prioritize in post-conflict periods
- International engagement
- Challenges to rebuilding economy & society after conflict
- Reducing foreign aid dependence
- Developing local entrepreneurship

- Reinstating rule of law to produce peace dividends
- Negotiating justice and reconciliation
- Gender-based violence issues as per resolutions 1325*, 1880* and 1889*
- Strengthening accountability
- Rebuilding public confidence

The Northern Ireland Experience

As part of the Conference, delegates were taken to Belfast, Northern Ireland, and were able to experience first-hand the following;

1. The destruction of communities in conflict
2. The long-lasting impact on the trust of a community after experiencing conflict such as occurred in Northern Ireland
3. The incremental process of negotiating towards peace in an atmosphere of conflict

Conclusions:

There were three issues identified: Violence, conflict and peace. Some policies interact with conflict, while some cause conflict. Other policies resolve conflicts.

An effective peace process must involve all groups. It is important to involve marginalized groups in the post-conflict remediation period.

Poverty has been identified as a main determinant in the cause of conflicts in fragile states. There needs to be long term strategies put in place to deal with the post-conflict issues faced by fragile states.

At the conference, it was determined that parliamentarians indeed have an important role to play in addressing the remediation of fragile states. Parliamentarians determine legislation while providing representation and oversight, while having direct control over budgeting and taxation authorities.

Communiqué:

1. We **83** parliamentarians from **37** Parliaments and Legislatures¹ of Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries, met at the Houses of Parliament in London and at the Northern Ireland Assembly in Belfast 31 January to 6 February 2010 to participate in the International Parliamentary Conference on Peace-building: Tackling State Fragility. Our purpose in engaging in this expert-guided opportunity for international parliamentary dialogue and diplomacy was to highlight the central role parliamentarians and parliamentary institutions play in peace-building; demonstrate our commitment to peace-building; and by sharing our respective experiences strengthen our capacities as parliamentarians

1 Austria, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Canada, Cyprus, East African Legislative Assembly, El Salvador, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, India, Kenya, Kosovo, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan (national and provincial), Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somaliland, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, UK (Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly), Zambia

to support sustainable peace, security, human rights and development at home and internationally.

2. **We note** previous international commitments to protect civilians in conflict² and recognise that urgent, determined and sustainable peace-building is needed to save lives and tackle state fragility, 40% of conflict-affected states relapse into renewed violent conflict within a decade of peace.
3. **We contend** that parliaments and parliamentarians should be involved in all stages of conflict prevention and resolution - they have a unique and crucial role to play in identifying, preventing and addressing the root causes of violent conflict and promoting sustainable peace-building. As forums to represent, negotiate and build consensus around the differing needs, interests and values of diverse constituencies, parliaments also promote public trust in political rather than violent processes of change.
4. **We recognise and affirm** that in our interdependent world the drivers and effects of persistent violent conflict do not obey national borders. We call for stronger national, regional and international cooperation and coordination to better manage and support peace-building.
5. **We commend** initiatives that facilitate more coordinated and integrated peace-building at the international level such as the 2005 World Summit UN General Assembly Resolution that established the UN Peace-building Commission; the 2008 High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra that launched the International Dialogue on Peace-building and State-building; and the numerous regional initiatives working towards more joined up and effective peace-building.
6. **We especially commend** peace-building initiatives at the regional and international level that involve parliamentarians; we note that these are crucial to strengthening the voice of parliamentarians vis-à-vis their respective Executives, and that inclusive initiatives are few and far between; far more needs to be done to ensure parliamentarians can play their full role in peace-building.
7. *As representatives of 37 Parliaments and Legislatures, we strongly urge our Executives to:*
 - a. **Prioritise and adequately resource strengthening parliament, the judiciary, civil society and an independent media** to increase state legitimacy and public confidence in non-violent processes of change.
 - b. **Inform and build consensus with parliamentarians** around international agreement/treaties, before signing up to them wherever possible.
 - c. **Translate international commitments into national law** with sustained political and material support for their implementation.
 - d. **Participate in international, regional and national initiatives** for more coordinated, inclusive and integrated peace-building.

² Articulated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions, the 2005 World Summit UN General Assembly Resolution and the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1882, 1888 and 1889

- e. **Prioritise the re-establishment of the basic functions of the state as the core of sustainable peace-building:** security, rule of law, revenue management, public services and the promotion of economic growth and poverty reduction.
- f. **Ensure mechanisms for the accountability of the security and policing sectors** are in place as part of post-conflict reforms within peace-building strategies.
- g. **Implement UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888** on women, peace and security, as part of broader strategies to identify and meet the needs and interests of marginalised groups (the elderly, disabled, women, youth, children and minorities).
- h. **Engage armed groups in peace-building** in order to deal with grievances, curb destabilising activity, support reintegration in to society and avoid a return to violent conflict.
- i. **Include women in decision-making bodies addressing peace-building.**
- j. **Ensure provision for gender specific experiences of conflict** - violence against women and men and improved access to productive assets, health and education for women.
- k. **Pursue transitional justice and judicial reforms** as part of long-term peace-building.
- l. **Develop systems to monitor foreign aid and manage external resources** that strengthen rather than undermine democracy and efficient and accountable state organisation.
- m. **Establish an international and Commonwealth media and telecommunications charter** to support inclusive peace-building

8. We parliamentarians, pledge to build on this international parliamentary conference by:

- a. **Establishing and enhancing solidarity between parliamentarians** (cross-party alliances and networks at local, national, regional and international levels) to strengthen the role of parliaments in peace-building and share experiences and lessons learned.
- b. **Promoting and practicing politics which appeal to constituencies as citizens** regardless of ethnic, cultural, gender, regional and religious identities, and by challenging those who promote identity politics which threaten the rights and security of minorities and marginalised groups.
- c. **Initiating and supporting constructive scrutiny of peace-building strategies and their implementation** to ensure these represent the needs and interests of all society (including marginalised groups) and are well coordinated and integrated.

- d. **Holding our Executives to account on the implementation of international treaties and agreements**, including UN Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 on women, peace and security.
- e. **Developing stronger citizen-state relationships** through encouragement and support of a vibrant and active civil society and independent media.
- f. **Raising awareness and engaging in public debate on peace-building strategies** as part of promoting active citizenship, and greater accountability and trust in political and judicial systems.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Russ Hiebert, M.P., Chair
Canadian Branch
of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) for
Sen. Mobina Jaffer and Mrs. Pat Davidson, M.P.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
ACTIVITY	International Parliamentary Conference on Peace-Building: Tackling State Fragility
DESTINATION	London, United Kingdom
DATES	January 31 – February 6, 2010
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Sen. Mobina Jaffer
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Patricia Davidson, M.P.
STAFF	-
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 3,040.37
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 2,440.61
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 717.29
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 872.30
TOTAL	\$ 7,070.57