

Canada - China  
Legislative Association



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## **Report of the Delegation**

### **ANNUAL VISIT BY THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE CANADA-CHINA LEGISLATIVE ASSOCIATION TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

#### **March 22 – April 1, 2006**

#### **Beijing, Guangzhou, Hainan Island and Hong Kong**

#### **Context:**

The Co-chairs of the Canada China Legislative Association (CCLA) visited Beijing, Guangzhou, (Province of Guangdong); Hainan Island, and Hong Kong from March 22-April 1, 2006 as part of their annual visit to the People's Republic of China. The annual visit by the Co-chairs of the CCLA was very timely and built upon the past accomplishments of the Association. The importance of parliamentary relations was emphasized by His Excellency Hu Jintao, the President of the People's Republic of China when he met with members of the CCLA during his visit to Canada in September 2005. President Hu referred to the successful seven past bilateral meetings between Canadian and Chinese legislators and paid particularly homage to inter-parliamentary exchanges saying that they were an important component that played an irreplaceable role in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation. President Hu stressed that the Canada China relationship was building on its past achievements and moving towards a strategic partnership aimed at promoting the long term and steady development of bilateral relations. This view was echoed by the Chinese Chair of the CCLA, Mr. Lü Congmin, who informed the Canadian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Mr. Robert Wright, that the CCLA relationship is maturing and renewing itself through such visits. The visit underlined the importance China attaches to Canada. It should be noted that Canada is considered one of China's 14 key parliamentary partners alongside the United States of America, select European Union countries, Japan, Russia, South Korea, South Africa, Australia, and India.

#### **Objectives:**

- To renew the CCLA relationship in light of the Canada China strategic partnership;
- To apprise the Chinese counterparts of the political situation in Canada;
- To discuss the objectives and parameters for a China CCLA visit to Canada in June; and
- To promote friendship and dialogue with Chinese counterparts.

**Meetings:** Beijing: Mr. Sheng Huaren, Vice-chair and Secretary General of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Mr. Lü Congmin, Vice-Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee, National People's Congress; Ms. Janet DeSilva, Chair Canada China Business Council (Beijing Chapter); Mr. Simon Pang, Atomic Energy Canada; Guangdong Province: Mr. Chen Jian, Vice chairman of the Standing Committee on Guangdong People's Congress; Madame WEN Lan Zi, Director General of Guangdong Ethnic Religious Affairs Office; Canadian Business representatives in Guangdong; Hainan Province: Mr. Chen Sun Wen Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Hainan People's Congress; Ms. Liu Jin Deputy Director General of the Foreign and Overseas Affairs Office of Hainan Province; Mr. Zhang Jin Cheng, General Manager, Hainan Fruit Vegetable Food Allocation Co.

In addition, the Co-chairs received extensive briefings from Ambassador Robert Wright and his staff, the Consul General Tim Coughlin and his staff (Guangdong Province); Consul General Gerry Campbell (Hong Kong) and his staff. In addition, the Co-chairs visited Beijing Public School 25; Clifford School and Clifford Hospital (Guangzhou); the Canadian International School (Hong Kong) and the Centre for Health Protection (Hong Kong).

# Report

## ▪ Beijing

The Co-chairs started their visit in Beijing and examined ways throughout their meetings of reinvigorating the cycle of exchanges between Canada and China, placing particular emphasis on the upcoming CCLA visit from China this June. The discussions considered concrete ways by which both sides could advance the CCLA partnership more strategically. Prior to the official meetings, the Co-chairs received a detailed briefing from Ambassador Wright and program managers of the Embassy on the relations between Canada and China.

Ambassador Wright accompanied the Co-chairs in their meeting with Mr. Sheng Huaren. Discussions centred on the maturing relations between Canada and China and the direction undertaken by China under its Eleventh Five Year Programme which strives for balanced economic growth and scientific development. Mr. Sheng provided an overview of China's efforts to attain economic balance over the next five years with an emphasis on rural development. China, he reported, will control the speed of development and aim for a GDP growth of 7.5% as opposed to a GDP growth of 9 and 10 % over the last ten years. He stressed that energy sufficiency and environmental protection are key components of China's balanced growth. China aims to reduce its energy consumption by 20% over the next five years. He emphasized that China's development should not be seen as a "threat" to the world but rather as an opportunity for the world to gain access to a huge market. Canada, it was noted, remains a destination of choice for many NPC officials. The education cooperation agreement with the University of Regina (Masters of Public Administration) renewed last Fall during Premier Lorne Calvert's visit to Beijing was referred to as a fine example of cooperation between the two countries. Finally, he encouraged the enhancement of parliamentary and economic ties between China and Canada.

In the meeting with Mr. Lü Congmin, discussion focused on the upcoming China CCLA visit in June, 2006. Mr. Lü confirmed that the visit would be held June 4-10, 2006 with stops in Vancouver, Calgary, and Ottawa. He expressed interest in viewing the oil sands in Fort McMurray and having a substantive but informal roundtable discussion with colleagues in Ottawa. Suggested items of discussion: Hu Jintao's April visit to the U.S., Chinese relations with Russia, Iran, and North Korea, China's legal framework, energy, environment issues, regional development challenges, and Canada-China bilateral relations. A formal invitation was extended to the Co-chairs to lead a parliamentary delegation to visit China later in 2006. Mr. Lü also hosted the Co-chairs to an official dinner and breakfast.

Ambassador Wright hosted a luncheon for the Co-chairs attended by Mr. Simon Pang, Atomic Energy Canada Ltd. They discussed the Chinese energy market and the current state of play of CANDU technology in China and the competition from American PWR technology. The Co-chairs also met with the Chair of the Canada-China Business Council (CCBC) Beijing Chapter, Janet De Silva, also President of Sunlife Financial (China), and fellow CCBC Board member Julie Kong of Baker and McKenzie, to discuss the present situation at CCBC, issues facing Canadian business in China, and the challenges of small and medium-sized business.

The Co-chairs visited Beijing Public School #25 where they presented a special plaque to Principal Liu and Yufang Sun of Beijing Public School #25, honouring the school for its contributions to the 2005 Terry Fox Run in Beijing.

- **Guangdong Province**

The Co-chairs led a very successful visit to Guangzhou (Province of Guangdong). The visit commenced with a very detailed briefing by the Consul General, Mr. Tim Coughlin, and his program managers. The Consul General accompanied the Co-chairs throughout the program in Guangzhou and Hainan Province. The official program opened with a meeting with Mr. Chen Jian, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Guangdong People's Congress. As in all meetings, the Co-chairs were warmly welcomed, signaling the importance China attaches to its relationship to Canada. Guangdong Province, it was noted, has a long history of trade and commerce having been part of the Silk Road. The Province is now China's major manufacturing centre in light industry. It enjoys a GDP of 13% GDP and accounts for 9% of China's total GDP, 25% of its FDI and 34% of total exports. The Co-chairs were informed that the annual income is \$ 2882.00 lagging far behind Canada's with an average annual income of \$36,000.00 leaving Mr. Chen to conclude that although Guangdong is wealthy, it is still developing. Some the challenges the Province faces are energy shortage, environmental pollution and regional imbalances. He explained that this is the 11th 5 year plan, and the GDP Growth is expected to be 9% over the next five years. Annual income is expected to double by 2010 to \$5,000.00. Guangdong is aiming to become energy sufficient and the Government wishes to remove the disparities between countryside and urban areas.

The Co-chairs provided an overview of the composition of the Canadian Parliament. They related Canada's experience in ensuring regional economic wealth and offered the view that Canada could also share knowledge about environment and energy questions. The amazing changes in Guangdong over the past five years were noted. The Chinese provided an overview of the powers of the provincial NPC. The meeting closed on the importance of increasing contacts between Parliamentarians. An invitation was offered to the Canadian Co-chairs to return to Guangdong with a parliamentary delegation.

The Co-chairs also visited Clifford School, a full time Chinese and English bilingual school offering programs from grades 1 to 12. The School signed a memorandum of understanding with the Manitoba Education Department to deliver a dual high school diploma (Manitoba and Chinese High School Diploma). The School was founded by Clifford Estates Ltd in 1995, has a student population of 2200 students and over 60 international teachers, with more than half being from Canada. The question of visa issuance and processing timeframes for students wishing to study in Canada was raised. The Co-chairs undertook to raise this issue with the Consular Office in Hong Kong. The Co-chairs also visited the privately funded Clifford Hospital, the first accredited international hospital in the China.

In their meeting with Madame WEN Lan Zi, Director General of Guangdong Ethnic Religious Affairs Office of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of Ethnic and Religious

Affairs, the Co-chairs obtained a briefing on the status of religion in modern China. They were informed that 86 million Chinese were of religious faith and that citizens enjoy freedom of religious belief as defined in the Regulations on Religious Affairs. The Co-chairs visited the Guangxiao Temple, the most ancient and profoundly influenced Buddhist Temple in Southern China and the Huaisheng Mosque, one of the oldest Mosques in China, having been founded over 1300 years ago.

The Co-chairs held a very informative luncheon meeting with Canadian business representatives in Guangdong where they discussed the reasons for investing in the Pearl River Delta and obtained the companies insights into experiences in China across a range of sectors.

- **Hainan Province**

In their meeting with Mr. Chen Sun Wen, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Hainan People's Congress, the Co-chairs learnt that Hainan Island became a province and a special economic zone of China in 1988. The Island, they were informed, has a population of 8 million habitants and its capital is Haikou. Canada has a long friendship with Hainan, recent years have witnessed an increase in trade and development particularly since the twinning relationship with Prince Edward Island in 2001. Hainan Island, they were told, is the least developed province in China. The Province experienced growth of 10% from 2000-2005 and 7.5% from 1995-2000. Sixty percent of the Island's crop is rubber and the Island provides a winter source of food for China. The Island is serviced by two International Airports. It is developing a tourism industry with over 300 hotels and 38,000 beds. The potential for joint tourism ventures with Canada was noted. The Co-Chairs provided an overview of the Canadian political scene. The Consul General noted that China had accomplished in a brief period of twenty years what took the Western industrial revolution one hundred years to do. The Co-chairs met with the General Manager of Hainan Fruit Vegetable Food Allocation Co, Mr. Zhang Jin Cheng during which they obtained a briefing on the fishing industry in Hainan and the linkages with Canadian companies.

- **Hong Kong**

As in previous parts of the program, the Co-chairs commenced the visit by receiving excellent and thorough briefings by the Consul General and his staff regarding Canada Hong Kong relations and immigration issuance policies and timeframes. The Co-chairs then visited the Canadian International School which follows an Ontario education curriculum and the Centre for Health Protection. The latter demonstrated Canada's continued interests in working in association with Hong Kong authorities on health matters and seeking their assessment of information sharing with Mainland China.

## Conclusion

The Co-chairs' visit provided opportunities to renew the CCLA relationship in light of the Canada China strategic partnership: to apprise the Chinese counterparts of the political situation in Canada; to discuss the objectives and parameters for a China CCLA visit to Canada in June and, perhaps most importantly, to promote friendship and dialogue with their Chinese counterparts. China is an emerging economic force on the world scene; it is of great importance for Canadian parliamentarians to be abreast of developments of China.

In closing, the Co-chairs wish to thank their host, Mr. Lü Congmin, Chair of the China CCL, National People's Congress. Canada is fortunate to have such a good friend; Mr. Robert Wright, Ambassador of Canada to China and his staff. The Co-Chairs particularly wish to note the excellent work of Ms. Jennie Chen, Third Political Secretary, Embassy of Canada; Mr. Tim Coughlin, Consul General, Guangzhou and his staff, notably Ms. Angel Xu, Assistant to the Consul General; Mr. Gerry Campbell, Consul General, Hong Kong and Mr. Patrice Cousineau, Program Manager and Consul, Hong Kong; Mr. Ted Lipman, Director General East Asia Bureau and Mr. James Christoff, Senior Political officer, East Asia Bureau. The cooperation of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is greatly appreciated and is indispensable to the work of the Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Joseph A. Day, Senator, Co-Chair  
Canada-China Legislative Association

Mr. Tom Wappel, M.P., Co-Chair  
Canada-China Legislative Association

## **Travel Costs**

<b>NAME OF ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-China Legislative Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Annual Co-Chairs Visit to China
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Beijing, Guangzhou, Hainan Island and Hong Kong
<b>DATES</b>	March 22 – April 1, 2006
<b>NAMES OF SENATORS</b>	Hon. Joseph A. Day, Senator
<b>NAMES OF MEMBERS</b>	Mr. Tom Wappel, M.P.
<b>NAMES OF STAFF</b>	Mr. Normand Radford
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$19,932.27</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 4,261.42</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 378.88</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 1,504.13</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 999.12</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 2,078.80</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,154.62</b>