

Canada – China
Legislative Association



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

Canada-China Legislative Association (CACN)

Beijing, People's Republic of China

October 21-25, 2018

OVERVIEW

The Canadian co-chairs of the Canada–China Legislative Association (CCLA), Senator Joseph A. Day, and Mr. Joe Peschisolido, Member of the House of Commons (M.P.) conducted the CCLA annual co chairs mission to Beijing, China from 21–25 October 2018. The co-chairs were accompanied by Ms. Elizabeth Cahill, Association Advisor to the CCLA.

The objectives of the co-chairs' program were to:

- promote Canada–China relations and Canadian values and priorities;
- plan upcoming December 2018 visit to Canada of a delegation from the National Peoples Congress (NPC);
- meet with relevant Canadian and Chinese diplomatic officials; business, industry and civil society representatives; government, legislative and political officials at local levels;
- learn more about Chinese-Canadian business, cultural and political links, and promote enhanced cooperation at local levels; and
- identify opportunities for future cooperation.

The co-chairs' study program emphasized the themes of cooperation between Canada and China in the agriculture, tourism, health and culture sectors as well as commercial ties more generally, including education.

Accordingly, the co-chairs held working meetings with:

- Mr. WANG Chen (Vice-chair of the NPC and Politburo¹ member);
- Mr. CHEN Guomin (Vice-chair of the NPC Foreign Affairs Committee and leader of the delegation that will be visiting Canada in December);
- Mr. XIE Yuan (Vice-chair of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries);²
- Mr. ZHAO Weiping (Vice-president of the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs);³
- The organizing committee of the Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games;⁴
- Mr. Travis Joern (Managing Director of Canada–China Business Council);⁵
- Representatives from the Chinese Taoist Association and the Chinese Islamist Association; and

¹ The Politburo is a group of 25 people who oversee the Communist Party of China. It is elected by the National People's Congress. Mr. [WANG Chen](#) was elected to the Politburo in the fall of 2017.

² The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries was established in 1954 and is one of the earliest national people's organizations engaged in people-to-people diplomacy. Its purposes are to enhance people's friendship, furthering international cooperation, safeguarding world peace and promoting common development.

³ The [Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs](#) was established in 1949 by the late Premier [ZHOU Enlai](#). The Institute studies the world situation, international issues and foreign policies, and carries out exchanges with foreign dignitaries, scholars, relevant research institutions and social organizations in order to enhance mutual understanding and promote friendship.

⁴ Beijing will host the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

⁵ The Canada China Business Council was founded in 1978 and is a membership-based business association that facilitates trade and investment. The Council works closely with the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service to support offices across China.

- The Wellness Institute in China. ⁶

The delegation also participated in the Annual Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign pancake breakfast and silent auction at the Canadian Embassy. The delegation was accompanied to its meetings by Canadian diplomats and trade commissioners from the embassy in Beijing.

Overall, the Chinese interlocutors warmly welcomed the CCLA delegation. They repeatedly emphasized the importance of legislative ties in the Canada–China relationship. They expressed their support for deeper ties between Canada and China at all levels, as well as stronger cooperation in the winter sports, health and education sectors. Thus, the co-chairs’ visit provided an invaluable opportunity to strengthen and build synergies in the Canada–China relationship among all stakeholders and at various levels.

Briefing with Canadian Embassy Officials in Beijing

The co-chairs began their visit with briefing from the Ambassador, the Honourable John McCallum, and officials from the Canadian Embassy. Embassy officials were pleased to know that Mr. WANG Chen, Vice-chair of the National Peoples Congress (NPC) and Politburo member, had confirmed a meeting with the co-chairs. Embassy officials briefed the co-chairs noting that Mr. WANG is close to President XI Jinping.

The co-chairs also received a briefing on the ongoing free-trade talks and emerging opportunities especially related to winter sports (Beijing will be hosting the 2022 Winter Olympic Paralympic Games), green technologies and pollution abatement. Finally, the co-chairs were briefed on the evolving human rights situation in China.

Promoting Canada–China Relations and Canadian Values

A. Meeting with Vice-chair of the National Peoples Congress and Politburo Member, Mr. WANG Chen

The co-chairs renewed their acquaintance with Mr. WANG Chen at the NPC Great Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square. Vice-chair WANG recently visited Ottawa in spring of 2018 where he met with the entire CCLA Executive.

In Beijing, all parties committed to sustaining the momentum established by the leaders of the two countries through recent high-level visits to strengthen ties further. They noted that interparliamentary links play a particularly valuable role in deepening relations and highlighted that meetings such as those between CCLA members need to be undertaken more frequently and consistently.

The parties discussed recent developments related to Canada-China free trade talks. Mr. WANG referenced the recent telephone call between Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and her Chinese counterpart Minister WANG Yi. They also discussed specific industrial sectors such as agriculture, energy and transportation.

The co-chairs stressed the importance of Canada and China forging ahead to deepen their trading relationship, focussing on areas of shared interest. The co-chairs also emphasized that Canadians want to strengthen the relationship between the two

⁶ The [Wellness Institute](#) is a health, wellness and biotechnology Canada–China joint venture.

countries but are concerned about the human rights situation in China especially in light of recent reports related to the persecution of religious and ethnic minorities.

B. The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

The co-chairs were received warmly by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFF). The meeting took place at the CPAFF compound in central Doncheng District, Beijing. Vice-chair XIE spoke at length of Dr. Norman Bethune's high profile as a leader in developing China's health sector. He noted that Dr. Bethune is a source of inspiration for deepening modern day cooperation between Canada and China.

The Vice-chair took the opportunity to highlight the work that his association does with different levels of government including Canadian provincial and municipal governments as well as universities. The co-chairs gained important insights into the role the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries can play in furthering trade and cultural ties between Canada and China at sub-national levels. The co-chairs also took the opportunity to explain the role of parliamentary diplomacy and how the ties between Canadian parliamentarians and Chinese National People's Congress members can promote understanding, cooperation and trade between the two nations.

C. Chinese People's Institute for Foreign Affairs

Vice-president ZHAO Weiping warmly hosted the Canadian delegation for a working dinner at the Chinese People's Institute for Foreign Affairs (CPIFA) compound adjacent to the Forbidden City. This meeting was a follow up to CPIFA President WU Hailong and Vice-president ZHAO's visit to Canada in September 2018. In September, the CPIFA leadership attended a University of Alberta-China Institute Conference in Banff and then travelled to Ottawa where they met informally with the CCLA co-chairs. The meeting in Beijing with the co-chairs focussed on cementing the relationship and areas for future collaboration especially in areas of trade, investment and regional cooperation.

D. Visits to the White Cloud Taoist Temple and the Dongsì Mosque

The co-chairs also took the opportunity to visit two faith communities while in Beijing. A guided tour of the White Cloud Taoist Temple was provided by the temple master in conjunction with the Chinese Taoist Association. The temple is a historic site that dates back to Tang Dynasty (618 A.D.–907 A.D.) and serves both as a historical tourist attraction and a place of worship.

A guided tour of the Dongsì Mosque was provided by the Imam in conjunction with the Chinese Islamic Association. The Mosque was constructed during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) and is an architecturally significant structure. The Mosque also contains a library with an extensive collection of rare Korans. While it is open to the public, it serves mostly as a place of worship for the local Muslim community.

Planning for the upcoming visit of a delegation from the National Peoples Congress

Meeting with Vice-chair of the NPC Foreign Affairs Committee CHEN Guomin

The co-chairs met with the Vice-chair of the NPC Foreign Affairs Committee CHEN Guomin in a lengthy sit-down meeting followed by a working lunch at the NPC Great Hall

of the People in Tiananmen Square Mr. CHEN is an alumnus of Carleton University where he undertook graduate research on the role of parliamentary committees in the legislative and democratic process. He also worked on Parliament Hill as an intern.

In 2018, in addition to being elected to the NPC Standing Committee and Vice-chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. CHEN was also recently elected to a leadership position with the Inter Parliamentary Union in Switzerland.⁷ Mr. CHEN thanked Canada, especially Mr. David McGuinty, M.P., and Senator Salma Ataullahjan, for its support at the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Mr. CHEN has also been recently elected as the Vice-chair of the China Disabled Persons' Federation.

During the lengthy meeting, the co-chairs and Mr. CHEN agreed that the NPC delegation would visit Ottawa and New Brunswick in early December 2018. They also discussed the possibility of a CCLA bilateral visit to Southern China in January 2019. Mr. CHEN emphasized that the parliamentarians were most welcome in January and encouraged them to visit more often.

The co-chairs and Mr. CHEN also discussed in detail the topics of focus for upcoming bilateral visits. Mr. CHEN noted his lifelong interest in the role and activities of parliamentary committees. He noted that he is eager to connect with different parliamentary committee members to learn more about the structures and how they study and improve proposed legislation. He is also interested in learning more about how the work of committees evolves to support parliamentary democracy. In addition, Mr. CHEN expressed interest in discussing financial risk and regulation, poverty alleviation and pollution abatement.

For their part, the co-chairs expressed interest in agriculture, education and transportation. Senator Day recommended that the NPC delegation see more of Canada on their upcoming visit, including New Brunswick. He noted that this would also further regional cooperation between the two nations. The co-chairs also noted the opportunity the 2022 Beijing Winter games create to promote cooperation and promotion of winter sports and active living between both countries.

Canada–China Cooperation in Health Sector

The Wellness Institute

As China develops economically, there is increasing incidence of chronic health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Moreover, China like Canada is also faced with both the challenges and opportunities of an aging population. These dynamics are laying the foundation for a new area of cooperation between Canada and China to promote and support wellness and healthy lifestyles.

The Canada Wellness Institute located in the Seven Oakes Health Centre in Winnipeg is a world renown healthcare provider that supports healthy lifestyles as a model for chronic disease management and prevention. More recently the Canada Wellness

⁷ The [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#) is an organization made up of national parliaments from around the world. Its mission is to protect and build global democracy through political dialogue and concrete action.

Institute has become an international brand and is an active partner in a joint venture company in China to develop facilities and online services for wellness promotion and chronic disease management.

Senator Day toured the Wellness Institute in Beijing to learn more about how it was partnering with various Chinese hospitals. The Senator was also able to learn about different digital health technologies that the Institute was developing. Representatives from the Wellness Institute underscored the opportunities for Canadian community-based health-care providers to work with Chinese counter parts to promote digital health technologies and wellness interventions.

Canada–China Cooperation in Winter Sport

Meeting with 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Organizing Committee

The co-chairs met with key officials from the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Organizing Committee to discuss potential for deepening China-Canada cooperation in the sport and tourism sector, particularly as Beijing will host the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2022.

The co-chairs toured one of the three sites being developed for the 2022 games. The organizers are committed to hosting a game that is inclusive and sustainable. To this end the site the co-chairs visited is the renovation and refurbishment of a decommissioned Shougang steel factory. The factory, once one of the largest in China, was closed in the early 2000s. The outdated technology produced high levels of pollution and made it unsafe to continue operations. The main buildings of the mill are in the process of being repurposed. They will serve as office space for the event organizers, training facilities for athletes as well as venues for the events themselves.

The co-chairs were given a presentation outlining the plan for the 2022 Games which, like the Vancouver games in 2010, will take place in three different sites in and around Beijing. The co-chairs also toured training facilities and were able to meet with the Chinese National Curling Team. The officials explained their ambition to develop the sport and tourism industry further to embrace more foreign visitors but also to encourage more Chinese to actively participate in winter sports.

The co-chairs and Organizing Committee officials all underscored the role that sport plays in strengthening mutual understanding as well as being a key driver of relations across a range of sectors, including trade. The officials also noted the importance placed by the Chinese in this event because of its opportunity to promote active living and wellness. This is an important policy priority as China transitions from an export lead developing economy to a consumer driven middle-class economy.

Canada–China Commercial Cooperation

Canada–China Business Council

The co-chairs met with Travis Joern, Managing Director of the Canada–China Business Council (CCBC). They discussed the commercial ambitions set out by the leadership of Canada and China in recent high-level meetings and their potential impact on stronger ties. The co-chairs were encouraged by the potential for deeper cooperation in terms of knowledge transfer of management and medical skills, pharmaceuticals, senior care,

nutrition and health, and agriculture technology. They also noted the importance of a favourable business, legal and regulatory climate to attract foreign investors and other potential commercial partners, including visa facilitation and establishing representative offices.

Mr. Joern highlighted the cooperation between the CCBC and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and its Trade Commissioners Service. The CCBC works closely with GAC in its Chinese regional offices. The CCBC provides support and expertise to Canadian businesses who are already investing and selling to China but also to enterprises who are interested in exploring business opportunities with China.

Mr. Joern highlighted the importance of people to people ties and relationship building as the key to doing business in China. He said, “it is necessary for Canadian companies interested in the Chinese market to not only come to China – but to come often.”

Canada–China Cooperation in Education

The First Inaugural Meeting of the Queen’s University Smith School of Business China Alumni Meeting

Senator Day, a Queen’s Alumni, was the guest of honour at the inaugural meeting of the Queen’s University Smith School of Business China Alumni. David Saunders, Dean of the Smith School of Business, was in Beijing to host the event. Alumni attended from both the Queen’s Business School and the Queen’s Master of Finance – Beijing.⁸ In his address, Senator Day was able to convey both the history of educational cooperation between Canada and China as well as the tremendous potential for future opportunities. He highlighted that the establishment of this new alumni association was an important milestone in the history of educational cooperation.

Conclusions

The co-chair’s five-day working visit to Beijing provided an invaluable opportunity to build synergies in the Canada–China relationship among a range of stakeholders and at various levels. In this respect, the visit resulted in a more comprehensive understanding of the present economic and political situation in China. It also provided an opportunity to communicate to Chinese counterparts a more nuanced and detailed picture of the economic and political situation in Canada. It was an especially important meeting in terms of strengthening ties between Canadian parliamentarians and the senior leadership of the National Peoples Congress. The visit also builds upon the work of previous delegations to enhance cooperation in key sectors and strengthen Canada–China relations.

⁸ The [Queen’s Master of Finance – Beijing](#) program is offered jointly by the renowned Smith School of Business at Queen’s University, Canada and the [Hangqing Advanced Institute of Economics and Finance at Renmin University of China](#) in Beijing.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-China Legislative Association
ACTIVITY	Co-Chairs Annual Visit to China
DESTINATION	Beijing, People's Republic of China
DATES	21-25 October 2018
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Hon. Joseph A. Day
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Joe Peschisolido
STAFF	Ms. Elizabeth Cahill, Association Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 23,354.96
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 4,010.34
PER DIEMS	\$ 2,093.60
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 249.83
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 2,635.85
TOTAL	\$ 32,344.58