

Canada – China  
Legislative Association



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# **Report of the Canada-China Legislative Association**

## **23<sup>rd</sup> Bilateral Meeting**

**Shanghai, Nanjing, Hong Kong and Macao, China**

**May 18-26, 2019**

## **INTRODUCTION**

At the invitation of the National People's Congress (NPC), a Canadian parliamentary delegation from the Canada–China Legislative Association (CACN) travelled to the People's Republic of China from 18 to 26 May 2019 for its 23<sup>rd</sup> annual bilateral meeting. The delegation was led by the CACN's Co-Chair, the Honourable Joseph A. Day, Senator, and also comprised the following parliamentarians: CACN Co-Chair, Mr. Joe Peschisolido, MP; the Honourable Victor Oh, Senator; the Honourable Renée Dupuis, Senator; Mr. Shaun Chen, MP; Mr. Ali Ehsassi, MP; and Mr. Rob Oliphant, MP. The delegation was accompanied by Mr. David Chandonnet, the CACN's Executive Secretary, and Ms. Elizabeth Cahill, Advisor to the CACN.

In addition to attending the annual bilateral meeting, delegates also had exchanges with legislators of the NPC and followed up on discussions that had occurred from 7 to 11 January 2019 during a Canadian parliamentary delegation's visit to Shanghai, Suzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong, and from 6 to 8 December 2018 during the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual bilateral meeting that had been held in Ottawa. During visits to Shanghai, Hong Kong and Macao, delegates had the opportunity to meet with members of China's business community and representatives from not-for-profit organizations to discuss topical issues and opportunities for further cooperation between Canada and China. Throughout their visit, delegates were accompanied by – and held briefing sessions with – diplomats and trade commissioners from Canada's consulates general in Shanghai and Hong Kong.

In particular, the delegation's objectives for the bilateral meeting and visit included the following:

- regularizing opportunities for dialogue by engaging with legislators from the NPC, the Jiangsu Provincial Peoples Congress and the Shanghai Municipal Peoples Congresses;
- promoting mutual understanding and enhanced cooperation;
- learning more about Chinese-Canadian business, cultural and political linkages, including people-to-people ties; and
- gaining a better understanding of China's current political, economic and social contexts, as well as its history.

In Shanghai and during the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual bilateral meeting in Nanjing, delegates met with Chinese provincial and municipal officials, and representatives from business communities, research and educational institutions, and community groups. In Hong Kong, delegates had discussions with legislators from the Legislative Council of Hong Kong (LegCo), and representatives from business, cultural and civil society organizations. Finally, in Macao, delegates met with representatives from the education and tourism sector, as well as with an official from the Macao Government Tourism Office.

## **THE 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL BILATERAL MEETING OF THE CANADA–CHINA LEGISLATIVE ASSOCIATION**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual bilateral meeting between Canadian parliamentarians and legislators from the NPC was held on 21 May 2019 in Nanjing. In accordance with a pre-agreed agenda, the meeting gave delegates a formal opportunity to discuss a variety of diplomatic and trade issues with their Chinese counterparts. During the meeting, an NPC legislator delivered scripted remarks, followed by remarks from a Canadian parliamentarian on the same subject. After these scripted remarks were delivered, other delegates from the two countries intervened to respond to issues that had been raised.

Mr. CHEN Guomin, who is Vice Chair of the NPC's Foreign Affairs Committee and Executive Vice Chair of the NPC's Parliamentary Exchange, delivered welcoming remarks and introduced the members of the Chinese delegation. Senator Day introduced the Canadian delegation.

Mr. CHEN spoke about the China–Canada relationship. Mr. LIU Xiuwen – Deputy Director of the Budget Committee under the Standing Committee of the NPC – delivered a speech about China's economy, while Mr. CHEN Fuli – member the NPC's Foreign Affairs Committee – spoke about the bilateral trade relationship. As well, Mr. ZHANG Lieying – member of the NPC's Agricultural Committee – delivered a speech about bilateral agricultural cooperation, while Mr. ZHANG Honghe – member of the NPC's Education and Culture Committee – spoke about bilateral educational, tourism and people-to-people relations. Finally, Mr. WEI Guoqiang – Deputy Director of the Standing Committee of Jiangsu Provincial Peoples Congress – delivered a speech about local cooperation.

In addition to the agreed agenda topics, several other issues were discussed. Canadian delegates requested the immediate release of Mr. Michael Kovrig and Mr. Michael Spavor, who were detained by Chinese authorities on 10 December 2018, allegedly for endangering China's national security; they were formally arrested in May 2019 and charged with stealing state secrets. Delegates underlined Canada's expectations that the rights of those two individuals will be respected, as is guaranteed in the Consular Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the People's Republic of China. Moreover, delegates highlighted the importance of the rule of law and respect for human rights, and provided views about the human rights situation in China as it relates to Muslims in Xinjiang, Tibet and religious minorities more broadly.

Chinese legislators raised the issues of the 1 December 2018 arrest of Huawei executive Ms. MENG Wanzhou pursuant to Canada's extradition treaty with the United States, and of her subsequent detention and legal proceedings. Canadian delegates explained that Canada is a country governed by the rule of law. They emphasized that Canadian legal proceedings are free from political interference and noted that, while Ms. MENG's case is before the British Columbia Supreme Court, she is out on bail and residing in her Vancouver home.

Moreover, regarding recent Chinese trade actions taken against Canada's canola and pork exports, Canadian delegates provided their view that – within a global trading system – predictable, rules-based trade benefits everyone. They further mentioned that Canada has a world-class food inspection system and high-quality food products. As well, delegates communicated the importance of regaining full market access in China for Canada's agri-food products.

The annual bilateral meeting also provided Canadian delegates with an opportunity to reiterate their understanding of – and support for – a “One China” policy, which recognizes that political and economic systems can differ within China. As well, Chinese legislators shared information about China’s international infrastructure investments and development initiatives under the One Belt One Road Initiative.

Overall, the frank and open discussions between Canadian parliamentarians and legislators from the NPC reflected the broad scope and depth of Canada–China relations. They emphasized both the long history of cooperation between Canada and China, and the importance of the bilateral relationship. They also agreed that, especially in challenging times, parliamentary diplomacy is an important channel through which legislators can engage in discussions, share perspectives and information, and reinforce long-standing political, trade and people-to-people relationships.

### **SITE VISITS AND ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual bilateral meeting was complemented by site visits and additional meetings that provided delegates with insights about China’s global and domestic priorities:

- **Shanghai:** While in Shanghai, delegates toured the fully automated Shanghai Yangshan Deep Water Port and met with municipal officials. They were told that Shanghai is being transformed into a hub for innovation, science and technology, including such digital and creative sectors as gaming, film and animation.
- **Nanjing, Jiangsu:** While in Nanjing, which is the capital of Jiangsu province, delegates learned that Jiangsu province is the country’s most prosperous province and home to numerous universities, colleges and research institutes. As well, they were informed that it is an important part of the Yangtze river delta and a gateway to much of China’s interior. They were also told that, building on the long-standing economic and people-to-people ties that already exist, Canada has the potential to play a role in China’s plan for economic growth that is more inclusive and sustainable.

To improve their understanding of the role of Canadian companies in China’s economy, delegates visited Singapore Nanjing Eco Island, which is an innovation hub for green technologies especially related to water and waste water treatment. During meetings, various stakeholders highlighted water and green technology–related opportunities, including the potential for Canadian companies to capitalize on their reputation for high-quality, reliable and safe products and services. Regarding commercial activities in knowledge-based, value-added sectors, the discussions focused on: engineering; biotechnology; clean technology; renewable energy; and environmental protection.

Canadian delegates and legislators from the NPC visited Jurong, an agricultural community in Jiangsu province that has become a model community for combining the goals of inclusive growth, environmental protection, and sustainable agriculture and horticulture. They were informed that the latest digital technology and e-commerce platforms allow small farmers to increase their income by growing more

profitable crops and by having access to larger distribution networks in order to reach a larger customer base. Moreover, they learned that the region has also developed an agricultural and ecotourism sector that gives tourists an opportunity to – among other things – harvest their own produce and/or play golf as they enjoy a natural environment. These site visits also enhanced their understanding of developments in China’s agricultural sector and highlighted opportunities for Canadian companies in both the agricultural and eco-tourism sectors.

Delegates and legislators also heard about China’s continued commitment to, and interest in, strengthening both academic exchanges, and research and development partnerships, with Canada. They visited, and had discussions at, institutions that illustrate the long-standing and growing educational partnerships between Canada and China, and that see a “Canadian connection” as a core advantage in combining learning, training and employability. For example, delegates and legislators learned about joint projects with Canadian institutions, and connections with Canadian sectors.

Delegates visited both Nanjing University and Nanjing Technical University. Nanjing alumnus, NPC Vice-Chair and Executive Vice Chair of the NPC’s Parliamentary Exchange CHEN Guomin provided delegates with a tour of Nanjing University’s main campus. As well, Canadian delegates toured Drum Tower Hospital, which is affiliated with Nanjing Medical University, and met with the hospital’s senior management. They learned that Drum Tower Hospital was founded in 1892 by William Macklin, a Canadian doctor and missionary.

Furthermore, during their visit to Nanjing Technical University, Canadian delegates met with university administrators and members of the engineering faculty. They were told that the university is working with Canadian counterparts to incorporate wood frames in engineering projects. As well, representatives of Canada Wood China attended the meeting and informed delegates about collaborative efforts to promote wood construction, Canadian forestry products, and the development of standards and codes for modern construction.

- **Hong Kong:** In Hong Kong, delegates were able to build upon the CACN’s January 2019 trip to Shenzhen and Hong Kong to learn more about The Greater Bay Area initiative in the Pearl River delta. While the earlier trip focused on Guangdong province and Shenzhen, this visit’s focus was Hong Kong and Macao. Delegates were told that The Greater Bay Area initiative is aimed at integrating the different systems, customs, laws, currencies and languages that span Guangdong Province on China’s mainland, and the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions.

Delegates attended a reception with Canadian Chambers of Commerce from Hong Kong, Macao and the Pearl River Delta that was hosted by Canada’s Consul General in Hong Kong. Representatives from these three chambers of commerce provided information about recent developments in the region, and shared their perspectives about current risks and opportunities for Canadian companies.

As well, delegates met with legislators from LegCo, and learned about developments in the legal system and in LegCo. They were also informed about evolutions in the “One Country, Two Systems” governance model that have occurred since 1997 when Hong Kong ceased to be a British colony and became a Special Administrative Region under the rule of the People’s Republic of China.

In particular, delegates were told about the proposed Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation Bill which, if enacted, would allow case-by-case extradition to all jurisdictions, including Taiwan, Macao and mainland China. They heard different perspectives about the need for this proposed legislation and the possible implications if it were to become law. Delegates spoke with a range of Hong Kong legislators to learn about the bill and its potential implications for both Canadian citizens living in Hong Kong and Canadian companies doing business in Hong Kong.

Delegates’ site visit in Hong Kong highlighted both the achievements of a Canadian company, and possibilities for future collaboration in the cultural and tourism sectors. They toured the West Kowloon Centre, which was designed by Revery Architecture, a Canadian firm founded by Bing Thom, a Hong Kong–born Canadian. Delegates were told that this cultural centre, which has state-of-the-art universal design concepts, features two performance theatres, fully accessible public gathering spaces, shops and restaurants. The performance spaces are designed to accommodate productions of traditional Chinese opera but can be modified to host a range of musical, theatrical and dance performances.

- **Macao:** Delegates visited the UNESCO world heritage site in Macao and Galaxy Macao, the latter of which is a large family and gaming resort featuring such Canadian suppliers as Votex, Crystal Fountains, Proslide Technology Inc. and PEM Fountain Co. They learned that innovative Canadian companies in the areas of sound, lighting and water park installations are highly regarded in Macao’s resort sector. As well, they were informed that Macao has the world’s largest gaming sector, but that its resorts are aggressively transitioning into forms of entertainment that are family-friendly, including water parks, music festivals and circus performances.

Moreover, delegates visited the International School of Macao, which follows the Province of Alberta’s curriculum and embodies such Canadian values as inclusivity, diversity, democracy and respect for human rights. They met with administrators, faculty members and students, all of whom emphasized the advantages of the school’s use of the Province of Alberta’s curriculum and its accreditation processes. Delegates learned that students can earn high school credentials that are recognized in universities in Canada and abroad, and that there are opportunities for annual study trips. Finally, they were told that the diverse student body comprises students whose families have been in Macao for generations and international students whose families have recently migrated to Macao for employment opportunities, and that the faculty members include several instructors from Canada who are accredited to teach in the Province of Alberta.

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual bilateral meeting and its visit to various locations, delegates were positively received by legislators from the NPC, representatives of organizations and governmental officials, who emphasized their commitment to strengthening China–Canada relations. Moreover, the interest by the people of China in maintaining friendly relations with Canada – the birth country of Dr. Norman Bethune, a highly regarded figure in Chinese history – was repeatedly discussed. Delegates also were able to raise concerns about the high-profile consular cases, and about the use of trade restrictions regarding Canada’s canola and pork products.

In general, the meetings in Shanghai, Nanjing, Hong Kong and Macao provided delegates with invaluable insights about the political and economic situations in China. Furthermore, the bilateral meeting and visit provided them with an opportunity to engage with local Chinese officials with a view to enhancing mutual understanding of priorities and challenges in the bilateral relationship.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Ali Ehsassi, M.P.  
Vice-Chair  
Canada-China Legislative Association

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-China Legislative Association
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> Bilateral Meeting
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Shanghai, Nanjing, Hong Kong and Macao, China
<b>DATES</b>	May 18-26, 2019
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Joseph A. Day, Senator Hon. Renée Dupuis, Senator Hon. Victor Oh, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Joe Peschisolido, M.P. Mr. Shaun Chen, M.P. Mr. Ali Ehsassi, M.P. Mr. Rob Oliphant, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. David Chandonnet, Association Secretary Ms. Elizabeth Cahill, Advisor
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$94,754.76
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$21,543.99
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	\$2,810.46
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$9,711.82
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	\$750.00
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	\$9,425.59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$138,996.62</b>