



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the
International Executive Committee Meeting (EXCO)**

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

**Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia
April 23 to 27, 2017**

Report

Ms. Alexandra Mendes M.P. attended the EXCO meeting in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia, on behalf of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from April 23rd – 27th, 2017.

Those Members of the CPA Executive Committee in attendance:

Hon. Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP – CPA Chairperson (Bangladesh); Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP, Vice Chairperson (Cameroon); Hon. Vicki Dunne, MLA, CPA Treasurer (Australia); Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP – Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson (Malaysia).

Africa Region: Hon. Lindiwe Maseko, MP, *Alternate for* Rt. Hon. Arc Umar Buba Jibril, MP (Nigeria); Hon. Lazarous Chungu Bwalya, MP (Zambia); Rt Hon. Themba Msibi, MP (Swaziland); Hon Bernard Songa Sibilitani, MP (Namibia).

Asia Region: Hon. Lim Biow Chuan, MP (Singapore), Hon. Mian Tariq Mehmood MPA (Punjab, Pakistan); Hon. Imran Ahmad MP (Bangladesh); Hon. Dr Fehmida Mirza, MNA (Pakistan).

Australia Region: Hon. Kezia Purick MLA (Northern Territory, Australia); Hon. Russell Paul Wortley MLC (South Australia); Hon. John Ajaka, MLC (New South Wales) *Acting Regional Representative*.

British Islands & Mediterranean Region: Hon. Derek Thomas MLC (St Helena); Hon. Tim Crookhall, MLC, *Alternate for* Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst, MP (UK); Mr Rhun ap Iorwerth, AM (Wales) *alternate for* Northern Ireland.

Canada Region: Hon. Alexandra Mendes MP (Canada Federal); Hon. Jackson Lafferty, MHA (Northwest Territories, Canada); Hon. Jacques Chagnon MLA (Quebec, Canada).

Caribbean, Americas & Atlantic Region: Hon. Laura Tucker-Longworth, MP, Speaker of Parliament (Belize).

India Region: Hon. Shri Kavinder Gupta, MLA (Jammu and Kashmir); Hon. Dr Sitasaran Sharma, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Madhya Pradesh); Hon. Shri Feroze Varun Gandhi, MP (India).

Pacific Region: Mr Paul Foster-Bell MP (New Zealand); Mr. Nafotoa Talaimanu Ketii, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Samoa); Hon. Niki Rattle (Cook Islands).

South East Asia Region: Mr Lim Biow Chuan MP (Singapore); Hon. Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee, MP (Malaysia); Hon. Datuk Hj. Ab. Wahab bin Ab. Latip, MP *alternate* (Malaysia).

HIGHLIGHTS OF DISCUSSIONS

As per the letter sent to Regional Secretaries by the Secretary General, Mr. Akbar Khan, this meeting of the Executive Committee proved to be a major turning point on issues that had been plaguing CPA for many years:

1. ATTENDANCE AT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

“(...) I am pleased to inform you that the Executive Committee (EXCO), at its last meeting in April 2017 in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia agreed that one staff member appointed by your Region will be permitted to attend future Executive Committee meetings, including subcommittee meetings, to support Regional Representatives during the meeting. The decision is effective from the next meeting of the Executive Committee which is scheduled to take place in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 3 – 4 November 2017. Invitations will be sent to you nearer the time of each future meeting. Please note that the 9 nominated staff members will attend as observers and will be seated behind the Executive Committee Members and not at the EXCO table. Staff members attending the EXCO meeting in this capacity will be expected to meet all costs associated with travel and attendance. (...)”

2. COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE (CPC) FORMAT

The Executive Committee was tasked in December 2016, with reviewing and proposing updated recommendations, by and to the General Assembly, on the future format of the CPC. A meeting of the Working Group on the future of the CPC (on which Canada was represented by Ms. Mendès), was held on April 24th in Darwin, just before the formal start to EXCO. The following recommendations were submitted – and later endorsed by – to EXCO:

1) General

- i) The recommendations made by the Working Party on the CPC will be piloted for a period of two years, and then reviewed by the Executive Committee. The two-year period will run from 2018-2019.*
- ii) The CPC may be hosted by an individual Branch, or by a whole region as a means of cost sharing, although this entirely depends on the Host's preference.*

2) Funding and sponsorship

- i) The Host Branch will identify a range of suitable hotels, will negotiate preferential rates and communicate the rates to Branches. CPC Delegates/Secretaries will book and pay for their own accommodation themselves from the list provided by the Host Branch.*

The Host Branch will hold a block of rooms in each of the identified hotels for a fixed period of time, and will release any rooms that have not been booked and paid for by Delegates/Secretaries.

- ii) The self-funding of accommodation will not lead to a reduction in subscription fees to the CPA HQ Secretariat.*
The Subvention coming from the CPA HQ to the Host Branch will increase from £100,000 (or £115,000 in the year of a Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference) to £200,000 (or £215,000 in the year of a Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference) from 2018.
- iv) 'Appropriate' and non-commercial sponsorship may be sought once due diligence*

has been undertaken and following the approval of the Executive Committee. Clear guidelines on 'appropriate' sponsorship are to be produced by the CPA Secretariat for Host Branches to follow. The guidelines will be shared at the next Executive Committee meeting in the margins of the 63rd CPC in Bangladesh, in 2017 for approval and then adoption by the GA.

- Branches and other partner organisations may purchase space to engage with attending parliamentarians to showcase their work and innovations. The costs of this are to be worked out as part of the guidelines referenced above.*
- v) *attending parliamentarians to showcase their work and innovations. The costs of this are to be worked out as part of the guidelines referenced above.*

3) Duration

- i) *There should be an upper limit of seven (7) days for the CPC, including arrival and departure days, therefore five (5) business days for the CPC.*

4) Disaggregation of meetings

- Meetings taking place at the CPC under the current model should not be*
- i) *disaggregated (such as Governance meetings, and the CWP/Small Branches Conferences).*

5) Frequency

- i) *The CPC will continue to be held annually.*

6) Logistics

- i) *The Opening Ceremony should be significantly shortened, although it should take into account cultural observations of each Host Branch.*
- ii) *Regional Meetings should be held in the margins of the CPC, outside the official CPC programme.*

- For Branches with limited capacity and resources, outsourcing the organisational/logistical elements of the conference could be arranged. In addition,*
- iii) *the CPA Secretariat may be approached to dispatch a Secretariat staff member for a period (agreed between the Secretary-General and the Host Branch) ahead of the CPC.*

7) Tours

- In the event that the Host Branch wishes to arrange an optional tour day (noting that this is entirely at the discretion of a Host Branch), that any tours offered should be*
- i) *held at the end of the CPC official programme to make it an optional 'add-on' for Members wishing to take part.*
 - ii) *A Host Branch, if it wishes to offer a tour day, may charge for attendance if it wishes, rather than feeling an obligation to offer a tour free of charge.*

8) Airfares

- i) *The CPA Secretariat should continue to reimburse airfares in the manner it currently does.*

9) Observers / Accompanying Officials / Spouses

- i) *A mandatory spousal programme should be discontinued and left at the discretion of the Host Branch.*
- Accompanying officials over and above a Branch's Delegate/Secretary entitlement*
- ii) *should be permitted to attend the CPC, at a cost determined by the Host Branch that will offset any associated costs of their attendance.*
- iii) *Observers may be permitted to attend the CPC at the discretion of the Host Branch and at a cost to be determined by the Host Branch.*

10) Learning and Development

- A workshop/session should be held at the CPC to look into how to best support*
- i) *Branches attending international meetings such as the CPC and other inter-parliamentary activities.*
- The CPC should contain an enhanced knowledge sharing and learning component to*
- ii) *add greater value to Members and to heighten the networking opportunities available.*
- iii) *A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework specifically designed for the CPC is to be introduced by the CPA Secretariat*

3. RESTRUCTURE OF THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION'S HEAD-OFFICE

The restructure plan, adopted by the General Assembly at the 2016 CPC in London (UK), has been put in motion and the Secretary General, accompanied by the Human Resources Consultant contracted by the CPA, made a thorough report to EXCO on the various steps of implementation.

Due to the personal and confidential nature of all redundancy-related matters, it was considered prudent not report any specific details in writing, until the full restructure plan has been completed.

It is important to note that the Secretary General, having received a clear mandate from the General Assembly in December 2016, made this report to EXCO as a courtesy. When some EXCO members tried to modify the terms of certain approved measures, they had to be reminded of said General Assembly mandate.

4. CONCLUSION

Perhaps one of the most productive EXCO meetings in recent years, this was, for Canada, the realisation of some long-standing ambitions. The Canadian Delegation was effective in its outreach, well matched in its objectives and generally, very well regarded by our peers.

Respectfully submitted,

Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.

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

Travel Costs*

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
ACTIVITY	Executive Committee Meeting (EXCO)
DESTINATION	Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia
DATES	April 23 to 27, 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Alexandra Mendès, M.P.
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$4,674.57
ACCOMMODATION	\$0.00
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$375.04
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$5,049.61

**Only expenses not reimbursed by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are included.*