



Canada - China Legislative Association
Association législative Canada - Chine



Canada - Japan Inter - Parliamentary Group
Groupe Interparlementaire Canada - Japon

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation in the
26th Annual Meeting of the
Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)**

**Canada-China Legislative Association (CACN) and
Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP)**

**Hanoi, Vietnam
January 18-21, 2018**

Report

From 18–21 January 2018, 13 Canadian parliamentarians attended the 26th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in Hanoi, Vietnam. The meeting was hosted by the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. A joint delegation from the [Canada–China Legislative Association](#) and the [Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group](#) attended the Annual Meeting. It included:

- The Honourable Joseph A. Day, Senator, Co-Chair of the Canada–China Legislative Association and Head of the Canadian delegation;
- Mr. Terry Sheehan, M.P., Co-Chair of the Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group;
- Mr. Geng Tan, M.P., Co-Chair of the Canada–China Legislative Association;
- The Honourable Yuen Pau Woo, Senator;
- The Honourable Victor Oh, Senator;
- The Honourable Percy E. Downe, Senator;
- The Honourable Jim Munson, Senator;
- Mr. Ali Ehsassi, M.P.;
- Mr. Angelo Iacono, M.P.;
- Mr. Majid Jowhari, M.P.;
- Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.;
- Mr. Michael Cooper, M.P.; and,
- Mr. Peter Julian, M.P.

The delegation was accompanied by David Chandonnet, Executive Secretary, and Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor.

Overview of the APPF

The [Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum \(APPF\)](#) brings together parliamentarians from across the Asia-Pacific region. Currently, 27 national parliaments of the following states are members: Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica,

Ecuador, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, the United States of America, and Vietnam. Canada is a founding member of the APPF, and hosted the 5th and the 24th Annual Meetings in Vancouver in 1997 and 2016, respectively.

As a regional parliamentary forum, the APPF is a mechanism that enables parliamentarians to discuss issues of common concern, to deepen their understanding of the region and the interests and experiences of its diverse countries, to further regional cooperation, and to build relationships between and among parliamentarians from its member countries. The forum's proceedings are generally organized according to debates on political, security, economic, social and cultural issues facing the region, as well as the adoption of a joint communiqué and resolutions.

The APPF was founded by former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, who is the APPF Honourary President. The inaugural meeting was held in Tokyo in 1993.

The APPF's secretariat functions are undertaken by the host parliament for a one-year term from May in the year preceding the Annual Meeting to be hosted by that parliament until the following April. The host's responsibilities primarily include the development of the program and the draft agenda for the upcoming Annual Meeting. They are carried out under the direction of the APPF President, who is appointed by the host parliament to represent the APPF during its one-year mandate. The host parliament is selected on the basis of discussion among the members.

In accordance with the APPF's Rules of Procedure, the Executive Committee is responsible for matters relevant to the management of the APPF. It is chaired by the APPF President and convenes prior to the opening ceremony of the Annual Meeting to make decisions relating to the approval of its program and agenda, as well as the draft resolutions submitted for consideration, the establishment of the Drafting Committee and designating its Chair, and the formation of relevant Working Groups. It also confirms the host parliament of the next Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee is comprised of representatives of two countries from each of the APPF's sub-regions: Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, Oceania and the Americas. New members are elected at the Annual Meeting to fill any positions vacated by a country whose four-year term has ended. The Executive Committee is advised by the Honourary President.

The Annual Meeting is the APPF's "highest decision-making organ". Its agenda identifies topics that will be the focus of Plenary Sessions that are organized along more general themes typically relating to political and security matters; economic and trade matters; regional development cooperation; and the APPF. In addition to plenary debates, the substantive work of parliamentary delegations at the Annual Meetings entails consideration and adoption of resolutions on various topics relevant to the member parliaments. Any participating delegation may submit any number of draft resolutions prior to a deadline set by the host parliament. At the Annual Meeting, the draft resolutions are examined by the Drafting Committee. In instances where multiple draft resolutions have been submitted on the same or similar topics, Working Groups create new joint texts for the Drafting Committee's consideration. The Drafting Committee and the Working Groups carry out their decisions on the basis of consensus. Representatives from all delegations

can participate in the Drafting Committee and each Working Group. Meetings of the Drafting Committee and Working Groups take place concurrent to the Plenary Sessions. The Drafting Committee also finalizes the Annual Meeting's Joint Communiqué. The final resolutions and Joint Communiqué are adopted by the plenary at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

The 26th Annual Meeting¹

The 26th Annual Meeting of the APPF was held in Hanoi, Vietnam from 18–21 January 2018. The APPF President and representative of the host parliament was Her Excellency Nguyen Thị Kim Ngan, President of the National Assembly of Vietnam. The Annual Meeting was attended by 165 parliamentary delegates from 20 member parliaments.

The overarching theme for the 26th Annual Meeting was Parliamentary Partnership: Peace, Innovation and Sustainable Development. The agenda included a meeting of the Executive Committee and plenary sessions during which delegates exchanged views on specific aspects of the overarching theme. It also considered 45 draft resolutions that were submitted by 12 member parliaments on a variety of political and security matters, economic and trade matters, and regional development cooperation among other themes. In addition, following the initiative taken by the Parliament of Canada when it hosted the 24th Annual Meeting, a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians was included in the program.

Various Vietnamese and other dignitaries addressed APPF delegates throughout the proceedings. They include: Mr. Tran Dai Quang, President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; Mr. Vuong Dinh Hue, Deputy Prime Minister; Mr. Vu Duc Dam, Deputy Prime Minister; Mr. Bui Thanh Son, Member of the National Assembly and 2017 Chair of the Senior Officials Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum; and Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Heads of Delegation also met with the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam, Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong.

The 13 members of the Canadian delegation addressed matters pertinent to Canadian foreign policy over the course of their participation in the APPF's Annual Meeting. In addition, the delegation was briefed by Ambassador Ping Kitnikone and other officials from Canada's diplomatic mission in Hanoi on current bilateral and regional priorities in Canada–Vietnam relations. These priorities include Vietnam's 2017 tenure as host of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum and prospects for a trans-Pacific free trade agreement.

A. Executive Committee

The business of the Executive Committee was undertaken by its current members:

- Russia and Mongolia (Northeast Asia);

¹ All final documents related to the 26th Annual Meeting, including the amended Rules of Procedure, the final resolutions, the Joint Communiqué and the Ha Noi Declaration, may be found on the main APPF website under the Annual Meetings tab.

- Indonesia and Laos (Southeast Asia);
- New Zealand and Papua New Guinea (Oceania);
- Chile and Canada (the Americas);
- Vietnam (host of the 26th Annual Meeting of the APPF); and,
- Japan (appointed by the Honourary President).

At its meeting, the Executive Committee approved the agenda for the 26th Annual Meeting; adopted the report of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians at the 26th Annual Meeting; and reviewed the vacancies on the Executive Committee. In this latter respect, Fiji was confirmed as the second country on the Executive Committee representing Oceania to replace New Zealand. The Executive Committee also confirmed the organization of the Drafting Committee and established four Working Groups (see below). In addition, it accepted Cambodia's offer to host the 27th Annual Meeting in January 2019. Also at the Executive Committee meeting, the delegation from Japan, as representative of the Honourary President of the APPF, formally proposed an amendment to the Rules of Procedure which stipulated that henceforth a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will be held on the occasion of the APPF Annual Meeting. The proposed amendment was referred to the Drafting Committee. In addition, the Vietnamese delegation introduced the draft Ha Noi Declaration, A New Vision for Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Partnership, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the APPF.

Activities of the Canadian delegation:

Canada's four-year mandate as a member of the Executive Committee ends in 2021. The Canadian delegation was represented at the meeting by the Head of Delegation, Senator Day. During the meeting's discussions, Senator Day gave notice of his intention to propose a friendly amendment to the Ha Noi Declaration in the Drafting Committee that inserts a reference to women and Indigenous groups in the Asia-Pacific community (see below).

B. Plenary Sessions

The plenary sessions of the 26th Annual Meeting were chaired by Madame Tong Thi Phong, the First Vice-President of the National Assembly of Vietnam. During these sessions, delegates exchanged perspectives on the following topics:

I. Political and Security Matters

- Promoting parliamentary diplomacy for peace, security and prosperity in the region and the world
- Combating international terrorism and trans-border crime

II. Economic and Trade Matters

- 2017 Report of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum
- The role of parliaments in promoting seamless regional economic integration
- Food security and agricultural sustainable development

- Supporting micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital age

III. Regional Development Cooperation

- Enhancing joint action responding to climate change
- Resources for sustainable development
- Fostering regional cultural and tourism cooperation

Activities of the Canadian Delegation

Every Canadian delegate attended the plenary sessions, dividing their time with other responsibilities as required given that many activities were taking place concurrently. In addition, several Canadian delegates actively participated in the discussions of the plenary sessions. In the session on political and security matters:

- Senator Day focused on the benefits of parliamentary diplomacy, particularly multilateral parliamentary fora such as the APPF, in a more globalized and complex world. He pointed to the value of such engagement in building mutual understanding, opening new channels for dialogue on a range of issues, and better informing the work of parliamentarians.
- Mr. Ehsassi highlighted the importance of international and regional cooperation in order to address North Korea's human rights record and the threat posed by its nuclear program. He emphasized Canada's commitments to promoting peace and security on the peninsula, as demonstrated in its sanctions against North Korea and its hosting of a multinational meeting to strengthen diplomatic efforts. He underscored the role that parliamentarians from across the region play in reinforcing the necessary unity in advancing these approaches.
- Ms. Ratansi drew the attention of the plenary to the human rights situation facing the Rohingya people in Myanmar. She underscored the implications for regional security of the large-scale displacement of the Rohingya and the violation of their human rights. She noted Canada's efforts to address the humanitarian crisis, including by way of diplomatic engagement. She called on parliamentarians to support all efforts to resolve the crisis and bring lasting peace and security to the region. Ms. Ratansi's intervention complemented the submission by the Canadian delegation of a draft resolution on the topic (see below).

During the plenary session on economic and trade matters:

- Senator Woo focused his remarks on the broader advantages that result from the work of APEC in promoting trade and economic cooperation among its member states. These advantages are found at the regional and national levels, and include prosperity, stability, and social development. He remarked in particular about APEC's centrality in the evolution of multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific region. He also noted that the goals of APEC are shared by and involve many regional stakeholders, including parliamentarians.

- Senator Oh underscored the importance of political will and public scrutiny, including on the part of parliamentarians, in ensuring that free trade agreements reflect the demands of changing national and global circumstances. He noted that this political will and scrutiny are particularly important when competing priorities among stakeholders become more pronounced. He emphasized Canada's commitment to the negotiation of free trade agreements in light of the importance of trade relative to its domestic economy.

During the plenary session on regional development cooperation:

- Mr. Tan emphasized the role of parliamentarians in ensuring appropriate global and national responses to combat climate change and its effects. He noted the economic advantages that can arise from these efforts. He profiled recent policies undertaken in Canada to address climate change and, acknowledging that environmental issues require collective action, called on the countries of the Asia-Pacific region to deepen their cooperation in order to abate its consequences.
- Ms. Ratansi highlighted the importance of the gender perspective in developing the necessary public policies that support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as agreed to by the United Nations. In order to create a more sustainable world, she recalled the need for a network of partners, including parliamentarians from across the region, to find innovative and integrated solutions, such as those offered by a gendered perspective. She noted the value of inter-parliamentary fora such as the APPF in leading regional engagement and exchanges, and fostering joint action among its membership to promote sustainable development in line with the SDGs.
- Mr. Iacono underscored the benefits of fostering cultural and tourism cooperation to help build an appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions in the Asia-Pacific region and to contribute to building trust among people in the region. He noted that past APPF declarations recognize the role of cultural and educational exchanges as a strategic means to strengthen mutual understanding and respect between people. In noting that today's youth will be the next generation of parliamentary leaders, he also underscored that Web 2.0 technologies present innovative and cost-saving opportunities to involve many more youth in cultural and educational exchanges. Mr. Iacono's intervention complemented the submission by the Canadian delegation of a draft resolution on the topic (see below).
- Mr. Julian focused his remarks on the value of promoting respect for social diversity in the region. He emphasized that progress on the issues discussed at the APPF Annual Meeting is enhanced when the diverse elements of society are able to contribute their full potential to their resolution. He concluded that legislators in the Asia-Pacific region have a tremendous impact on removing barriers and changing attitudes that support discriminatory practices as well as passing laws that prohibit discrimination and promote programs that seek to promote equality for all. Mr. Julian's intervention complemented the submission by the Canadian delegation of a draft resolution on the topic (see below).

C. Draft Resolutions and Working Groups

Delegations from 12 member parliaments (Australia, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, Russia, and Vietnam) submitted 45 draft resolutions for consideration at the 26th Annual Meeting. These drafts covered a wide range of topics, including: gender equality, peace and security, stability on the Korean Peninsula, terrorism, economic cooperation and trade, regional cultural and tourism cooperation, food security, climate change and sustainable development. Four Working Groups on Peace and Security, Economics and Trade, Regional Development Cooperation, and Gender Issues focused on consolidating texts of multiple draft resolutions that were submitted on the same theme.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The Canadian delegation submitted four draft resolutions for consideration at the 26th APPF:

- The draft resolution on Ending the Grave Human Rights Violations in Myanmar's Rakhine State was the first ever submitted to the APPF on the topic. It strongly condemned the violence perpetrated against the Rohingya minority by agents of the Myanmar government and others, which constitute ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It called on the Myanmar government to end the violence, implement recommendations, protect the Rohingya minority, grant citizenship, and respect their human rights, as well as grant international mediators and humanitarian providers unrestricted access to Rakhine State. It emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of affected women and girls. The draft also stressed that the repatriation of refugees and displaced groups should be voluntary and carried out under safe conditions according to international law. Finally, the draft called on APPF parliaments to support the establishment of an inclusive, diverse and stable society in Myanmar and to sustain diplomatic pressure on the Myanmar government to cease all violence in Rakhine State.
- In the context of the climate surrounding the future of a trans-Pacific free trade agreement, the draft resolution on Promoting Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration Through Free Trade Agreements emphasized the links between economic growth, trade, peace and security. It focused on the principles and social dimension of economic growth and trade agreements, including the benefits for and challenges faced by the most vulnerable members of society, such as women and minorities. It also noted progress on various free trade initiatives in the region and called on the APPF members to build the necessary political will to negotiate free trade agreements that are not only consistent with the principles and rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), but also incorporate elements of the modern, multifaceted global economy. These elements include but are not limited to: women's economic empowerment, corporate social responsibility, environmental and labour standards, and sustainable development.
- The draft resolution on Fostering Cultural and Tourism Cooperation highlighted the role of culture and tourism in fostering mutual understanding and respect in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as their economic benefits. It stressed the importance

of sustainable and responsible tourism that protects heritage sites and guards against environmental degradation. It called for action to improve access to cultural and tourism activities, including through the application of information and communication technologies. It also focused on youth and Indigenous communities as well as the benefits of enhancing their role in cultural cooperation and tourism.

- In light of the diversity within and among the APPF member countries, the draft resolution on Promoting Respect for Social Diversity in the Asia-Pacific Region highlighted the principles of social diversity and tolerance and their relevance for democracies, freedoms, protection of human rights, peace and security. It comprehensively delineated the various forms of diversity, including ethnic, religious and linguistic communities, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity. It called on the APPF countries to respect the equality and dignity of all cultures, including those belonging to Indigenous peoples and minority groups through government programs and legislation, and to implement various international agreements as well as APPF resolutions relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also recognized affirmative action, inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue as among various tools that promote tolerance in diverse societies and combat the spread of hatred and other forms of discrimination.
- Canadian delegates were among the most active participants in the efforts of all four Working Groups. In addition, Mr. Jowhari, Mr. Tan, and Mr. Julian chaired several of the discussions in the Economic and Trade as well as the Regional Development Cooperation Working Groups.

Working Group on Peace and Security:

Senator Munson took responsibility on behalf of the Canadian delegation to navigate the APPF's examination of the draft resolution on Myanmar. The Canadian draft resolution served as the basis for negotiating a consensus text with the complementary draft submitted by the Indonesian delegation. Debate on the draft resolution was very intense, with some delegates, notably from Vietnam, China and Cambodia, arguing that the topic was not appropriate for the APPF as Myanmar was not a member. In contrast, Senator Munson and other delegates from Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia argued that concerns about human rights violations have no boundaries and that the encouragement of respect for human rights was very much a regional endeavour no different from other transregional topics considered by the APPF. Ultimately, the Australian delegate who was chairing the Working Group proclaimed that consensus on the draft text was reached and it was subsequently forwarded to the Drafting Committee for consideration. Regrettably, delegates at the Drafting Committee could not reach consensus and the Vietnamese chair declared that the draft resolution co-sponsored by Canada and Indonesia could not be adopted.

Mr. Ehsassi proposed an amendment to the draft resolution on stability on the Korean Peninsula. In light of recent international initiatives and overtures, including a diplomatic forum undertaken by Canada at the time of the APPF meeting, the proposed amendment welcomed these and other efforts and encouraged stakeholders to continue the

momentum for dialogue. After considerable debate involving the Korean, Japanese, and Chinese delegations, the Working Group ultimately adopted the amendment and the consensus text of the draft resolution, which after further intense debate was subsequently adopted by the Drafting Committee.

Senator Woo engaged in the debate to achieve a consensus text on draft resolutions submitted by Russia and Vietnam on the topic, Promoting Parliamentary Diplomacy for Peace, Security and Prosperity in the Region and the World. More precisely, Senator Woo successfully negotiated an amendment to the paragraph proposed by the Russian delegation about the “inadmissibility” and “anti-democratic” nature of sanctions against parliamentarians to instead use language from a resolution on the same topic that was adopted at the 25th Annual Meeting, specifically that “parliaments of APPF Member States should refrain from using personal sanctions against parliamentarians.”

Working Group on Economic Cooperation:

Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Jowhari represented the Canadian delegation in steering Canada’s draft resolution on regional economic and trade cooperation. The Canadian draft resolution served as the basis for negotiating a consensus text among the drafts submitted by the Chilean, Mexican, New Zealand and Vietnamese delegations on the same theme. The Canadian delegation successfully argued to exclude from the consolidated text New Zealand’s proposed paragraph that called for APPF member countries to end supply management. It was also successful in excluding proposed language by the Russian delegation that “recogniz[es] the destabilizing factor of unilateral economic compulsion measures – illegitimate in its legal nature, destructive in their essence and inefficient in terms of pursued goals.” The Working Group ultimately adopted the consensus text of the draft resolution, which was subsequently adopted by the Drafting Committee.

Working Group on Regional Development Cooperation:

Mr. Julian represented the Canadian delegation in navigating the APPF’s examination of Canada’s draft resolution on social diversity. The Working Group decided that the draft resolution was sufficiently different from draft resolutions submitted by other delegations on cultural cooperation and interfaith dialogue to merit consideration by the Drafting Committee on its own. During discussions in the Drafting Committee, several delegations, notably the Vietnamese, Chinese and Cambodian, raised concerns about the scope of the issues covered by the draft resolution. They asserted that it did not adequately address the different approaches and values between Asian and Western societies in terms of diversity. In the spirit of reaching a consensus, Mr. Julian agreed to several amendments to the text and the resolution was subsequently adopted.

Mr. Tan took responsibility to steer the Canadian draft resolution on fostering regional cultural and tourism cooperation. Given that Chile, Vietnam and Australia submitted drafts on the same topic, the Working Group agreed to use the Canadian draft as the basis for negotiating a consensus text. Following several amendments that incorporated elements from the other drafts, the Working Group reached consensus on the text and the draft resolution was subsequently adopted by the Drafting Committee.

The Canadian delegation also actively participated in this Working Group's deliberations of draft resolutions submitted by Australia, Fiji, Chile and Vietnam on climate change. Accordingly, Canada was included as a co-sponsor of the final consolidated text.

Working Group on Gender Issues:

Ms. Ratansi actively participated in the Working Group that was established to reach a consensus text from five draft resolutions submitted by the delegations from Australia, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand and Russia on gender issues. As a result of her efforts, Canada was included as a co-sponsor of the final consolidated text. The final resolution focused on the importance of APPF member states to develop and enhance government measures and legislation to end discrimination against women and promote gender equality in political, legal, economic and social spheres.

D. Drafting Committee

Members of various delegations were heavily involved in the work of the Drafting Committee, including Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Russia, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In addition to deliberating draft resolutions and the final Joint Communiqué, the Drafting Committee was responsible for considering an amendment to the Rules of Procedure proposed by the Japanese delegation. The proposed amendment stipulated that henceforth a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will be held on the occasion of the APPF Annual Meeting and also set out as its purpose "to achieve gender equality in Asia-Pacific region by fostering discussion on topics of common interest [to] women parliamentarians from member parliaments." The Drafting Committee adopted the proposed amendment with modifications to its procedural aspects, in particular affirming the aim of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians to "seek to create a forum for all parliamentarians to discuss issues on women, children and to achieve gender equality."

The Drafting Committee also was responsible for reviewing the draft Ha Noi Declaration submitted by the Vietnamese delegation. The Ha Noi Declaration commemorates the 25th anniversary of the APPF which was formerly established in 1993 at the inaugural meeting in Tokyo. After making several amendments to the text, the Drafting Committee adopted the Ha Noi Declaration.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

Canadian delegates were among the most active and prominent contributors and participants in the discussions of the Drafting Committee. Notably, the Canadian delegation proposed an amendment to the Ha Noi Declaration that highlighted the inauguration of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians at the 24th Annual Meeting of the APPF in Vancouver. It also proposed the inclusion of a paragraph referring to the increased participation of women, youth, and Indigenous communities as well as greater inclusiveness as objectives of the APPF. These amendments were adopted by the Drafting Committee.

Canada's interventions during deliberations of the amendment to the Rules of Procedure and the draft Ha Noi Declaration were carried out by Senator Day, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Iacono, and Mr. Sheehan. Discussions at the Drafting Committee of the Canadian draft resolutions that emerged from the Working Groups were led by Senator Munson, Mr.

Julian, Mr. Tan and Mr. Jowhari. Also attending the meetings of the Drafting Committee were Senator Downe, Senator Woo, Senator Oh, Ms. Ratansi and Mr. Ehsassi.

E. Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

This was the third Meeting of Women Parliamentarians convened at an Annual Meeting of the APPF. The inaugural meeting took place in Vancouver at the 24th Annual Meeting. Parliamentarians from fourteen countries participated in the discussions: Canada, Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The key note address was delivered by Her Excellency Madame Truong Thi Main, Head of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam's Commission for Mass Mobilization and a member of the Vietnamese National Assembly. Delegates discussed a range of topics of importance to women parliamentarians, including developments regarding the promotion of gender equality more broadly in their own country. Particular attention was paid to the meeting's theme, "Promoting Gender Equality for Sustainable Development and Joint Prosperity." Notably, the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians unanimously endorsed the amendment to the APPF Rules of Procedure proposed by the Japanese delegation that henceforth a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians be held on the occasion of the APPF Annual Meeting.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The Canadian delegation was represented at the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians by Senator Day, Senator Munson, Senator Oh and Ms. Ratansi.

Senator Day made a statement in favour of the proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure by the Japanese delegation. In her intervention on behalf of the Canadian delegation, Ms. Ratansi discussed the benefits of gender equality for women and the prosperity of society as whole. She also highlighted recent initiatives undertaken in Canada related to sustainable development and gender equality, notably the launch of a Feminist International Assistance Policy and the second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Ms. Ratansi also underscored the shortcomings that remain in Canada regarding gender equality, particularly in terms of economic empowerment and political representation.

F. Final Plenary

The 26th Annual Meeting concluded with the Plenary's adoption of 13 resolutions that resulted from the efforts of the Drafting Committee and the four Working Groups. Accordingly, the APPF countries resolved to take action on a number of issues, including the promotion of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region, economic growth, sustainable development, disaster risk management, gender equality and women's empowerment, food security, environmental sustainability, regional trade cooperation, parliamentary cooperation, social diversity and tolerance, and cultural and tourism cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. The Plenary also notably adopted the Ha Noi Declaration, A New Vision for Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Partnership, and approved the amended Rules of Procedure.

All of the delegations participating at the 26th Annual Meeting of the APPF signed the Joint Communiqué. Among other points, the Joint Communiqué summarized the

discussions that took place in the Plenary sessions on issues relating to political and security matters; economic and trade developments; and opportunities for strengthening regional cooperation. It also included a report of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. The Joint Communiqué also confirmed that Cambodia would host the 27th Annual Meeting of the APPF in 2019.

Activities of the Canadian Delegation:

The efforts of the Canadian delegation are reflected in the Plenary's adoption of three of the four resolutions which it submitted for consideration: Promoting Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration Through Free Trade Agreements, Fostering Cultural and Tourism Cooperation, and Promoting Respect for Social Diversity in the Asia-Pacific Region. Canada was also included as a co-sponsor of two other resolutions that were adopted by the Plenary: Promoting Gender Equality for Sustainable Development and Shared Prosperity in the Asia-Pacific Region, and Strengthening Joint Action to Respond to Climate Change.

On behalf of the Canadian delegation, Senator Day signed the Joint Communiqué.

G. Additional Activities of the Canadian Delegation

Throughout the days of the APPF Annual Meeting, the Canadian delegation held bilateral meetings with several delegations, including from Mexico, Japan, South Korea and Vietnam. These meetings provided an invaluable forum for exercising parliamentary diplomacy and a focused exchange of views on matters of critical importance to Canada.

- Senator Downe served as the Canadian chair of the bilateral meeting with Mexican delegates. He was joined by Senator Munson, Senator Woo, Mr. Julian, Mr. Iacono, and Mr. Cooper. The discussions were wide-ranging and touched on a number of regional and trade issues of mutual interest, including the future of a trans-Pacific free trade agreement, on-going negotiations for a free trade agreement between Canada and the Pacific Alliance of which Mexico is a member, the rise of protectionism in the global economy, as well as political, economic and social developments in the hemisphere. In particular, they discussed the status of negotiations for a trilateral trade agreement to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Canada–Mexico bilateral relations, opportunities for deepening cooperation in oil and energy, and relations with the United States.
- Mr. Sheehan, Co-Chair of the Canada–Japan Interparliamentary Group, chaired a bilateral meeting with members of the Japanese delegation. He was joined by Senator Day, Senator Woo, Ms. Ratansi, Mr. Jowhari, Mr. Julian, Mr. Iacono, and Mr. Cooper. Given the number of bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest, the discussions centred on peace and security in the region, notably in northeast Asia and on the Korean peninsula, bilateral and regional economic and trade opportunities, and the prospects for a trans-Pacific free trade agreement.
- Mr. Ehsassi chaired the bilateral meeting with delegates from South Korea. He was accompanied at that meeting by Senator Oh, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Tan, Mr. Jowhari, Mr. Iacono, and Mr. Cooper. Among other global and regional topics raised at the meeting, the discussions focused on regional economic priorities,

including prospects for a trans-Pacific free trade agreement, various regional free trade negotiations and economic developments, the Canada–South Korea bilateral free trade agreement, and the state of affairs on the Korean Peninsula.

- In addition, Mr. Tan, Mr. Cooper and Senator Oh represented the Canadian delegation at a bilateral meeting with members of the Cambodian delegation in its capacity as host of the 27th Annual Meeting in 2019.
- Mr. Julian represented the Canadian delegation at a bilateral meeting with the delegate from the Philippines.

As Head of Delegation, Senator Day also carried out several interviews with local Vietnamese media covering the 26th Annual Meeting.

Conclusion

The Canada-China Legislative Association and the Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group attach great importance to the work of the APPF, of which the Canadian Parliament is a founding member. The APPF enables Canadian parliamentarians to build relationships with their counterparts from across the Asia-Pacific, in a forum where they can work together to address the issues facing the region. The Canadian delegation, in part due to it being one of the largest, had a particularly high profile at the 26th Annual Meeting. Specifically, Canadian delegates were heavily involved in the meetings of the Drafting Committee, played leadership roles in the Working Groups, actively contributed to the discussions on several topics in the plenary sessions, proposed amendments to draft resolutions and final documents, and ultimately co-sponsored five resolutions adopted by the Forum. The Canadian delegation received many positive comments about its large size and high level of engagement, with the Vietnamese hosts remarking in particular that this was a sign of respect. Canadian parliamentarians look forward to participating in the 27th Annual Meeting of the APPF in Cambodia in January 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Mr. Terry Sheehan, M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	26th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)
DESTINATION	Hanoi, Vietnam
DATES	18-21 January 2018
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Joseph A. Day Hon. Yuen Pau Woo Hon. Victor Oh Hon. Percy Downe Hon. Jim Munson
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Terry Sheehan Mr. Geng Tan Mr. Ali Ehsassi Mr. Angelo Iacono Mr. Majid Jowhari Ms. Yasmin Ratansi Mr. Michael Cooper Mr. Peter Julian
STAFF	Mr. David Chandonnet, Association Secretary Mme Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$96,062.01
ACCOMMODATION	\$27,202.41
HOSPITALITY	\$364.38
PER DIEMS	\$6,706.09
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$169.69
MISCELLANEOUS	\$910.41
TOTAL	\$131,414.99