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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting  
its participation to the 66th Westminster Seminar on  
Parliamentary Practice and Procedure**

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

**London, United Kingdom  
November 13 to 17, 2017**

## **Report**

Ms. Filomena Tassi, M.P. and Mr. Pat Kelly, M.P. attended the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's 66th Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure on behalf of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association that was held in London, United Kingdom from 13-17 November, 2017.

Participants at this seminar included 58 registered delegates who were either elected representatives or Clerks from Commonwealth Countries.

### **Purpose:**

To strengthen the knowledge, skills and confidence of first-term Members of Parliament and newly-appointed Clerks in the core aspects of their work in the area of parliamentary practice and procedure with a Westminster framework.

The panels, sessions and discussions focused on a variety of topics relevant to Westminster-style democracies throughout the Commonwealth.

### **Objectives:**

1. To provide an overview of the leadership and administrative functions of Parliaments with the purpose of ensuring good governance;
2. To promote an understanding of parliamentary practice and procedure with reference to legislating and scrutinising the executive, as well as ethics, standards and accountability;
3. To clarify the role and responsibilities of parliamentarians in balancing their commitments as either a Minister of backbencher, their work in the constituency/ community, party discipline, transparency and cross-party relations;
4. To develop skills and abilities to carry out the work of a Parliamentarian/Clerk with specific reference to committee work, parliamentary questions, engagement with the public, media and other stakeholders;
5. To access and explore sources of information and advice available to Members/Clerks;
6. To provide an opportunity for the first-term parliamentarians and newly appointed Clerks to network with their counterparts from across the Commonwealth;
7. To examine different approaches to good governance and help parliamentarians and clerks better understand their roles within these parliamentary frameworks;
8. To help MPs/Clerks understand how best to adapt to changing political/social environments; and

9. To highlight differences and similarities between the Westminster System other Commonwealth models.

**Specific topics discussed:**

- The Westminster System: A comparative Discussion;
- Effective Parliamentarians and Our Roles and Responsibilities;
- 21st Century Parliamentarians;
- Pressures on a Parliamentarian; Standards and Ethics;
- The Role of a Speaker and How to Engage with a Speaker;
- Backbench Influence; Overview of the Legislative Process;
- Holding the Prime Minister to Account: Briefing on Prime Minister's Questions;
- Behaviour and Etiquette in Parliament; Committees;
- Committee Hearing Exercise on SDG 8.7 Responsive Parliaments: Dealing with Political Change;
- Representative Parliaments: Promoting Inclusion and Encouraging Diversity;
- Evidence Based Policy Making and Informed Decision Making for Parliamentarians;
- Religious Tolerance, Freedom of Religion, and Security;
- Training on How to Deal with the Media and Social Media;
- Engaging with Civil Society: Charities and NGOs.

**Summary**

Both MPs had the opportunity to learn about the procedures and practices currently in place in Westminster's Parliament. They were also able to discuss different challenges faced by Commonwealth parliamentarians. Both MPs played an active role in the discussions and in exchanging best practices. As head of the Canadian delegation, Ms. Tassi chaired the Committee Hearing Exercise on Sustainable Development Goals 7 and 8, dealing with sustainable development. The two delegates found the key differences between Canadian and Westminster rules of debate and the structural differences in committee especially valuable.

Finally, a tour of a state of the art education facility was included. This is a great model that we could consider for youth education and engagement.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.  
Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association  
(CPA)

## **Travel Costs**

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	66th Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure
<b>DESTINATION</b>	London, United Kingdom
<b>DATES</b>	November 13 to 17, 2017
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Filomena Tassi, M.P. Mr. Pat Kelly, M.P.
STAFF	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$2,528.44
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$3,632.50
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	\$ 0.00
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$1,331.75
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	\$0.00
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	\$1,015.80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,508.49</b>