

**THIRTY FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT  
of the  
PARLIAMENTARY CENTRE**

**For the Year Ending September 30, 2003**

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# PART I: MESSAGES

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



On behalf of the Board of the Parliamentary Centre, I am pleased to report that the Centre has enjoyed another successful year during which it expanded its programs internationally, undertook useful and influential work in proposing a package of reforms for the Canadian House of Commons and ended the year on a strong note financially. I want to express the appreciation of the Board to the House of Commons for its ongoing strong support of the work of the Parliamentary Centre.

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As noted by the Chairman, 2002-2003 has been a highly successful year for the Parliamentary Centre. Major new CIDA funded programs were begun in China and Africa, the culmination of work done over the years by the Parliamentary Centre. The China program allows the Centre to deepen its working relations with the Chinese partners at the National People's Congress and to build new relations with partners in a number of the Provincial Peoples Congresses. After months of preparing project documents, the Asia team led by Christine Ivory is hoping that programming can begin early in 2004. The Africa program represents a new and exciting opportunity for the Centre to program at the regional and continental levels in Africa, as well as in individual parliaments. The Africa program team led by Steven Langdon, a former member of the Canadian House of Commons, has designed an innovative program around three African parliamentary policy networks on poverty reduction, gender equality and anti-corruption.



Geoff Dubrow and the other members of the Eastern and Central European program team were able to move forward with program planning in Serbia after months of delay and frustration arising from CIDA's concerns about political instability in that country. Although the political situation did not improve significantly during the year, the Centre was able to demonstrate its capacity to manage the situation effectively. In the Middle East too, a program that had run into delays and obstacles was once more able to move forward with a workshop on WTO accession for Arab parliamentarians. Mazen Chouaib, who has been contracted to serve as Middle East program manager, showed a high level of skill and dedication in strengthening relations with partners in the region. I would say generally that the ability of Centre staff to overcome the obstacles often associated with parliamentary development programs is one of our great strengths as an organization.

On the Canadian side, Peter Dobell and Martin Ulrich pressed ahead in developing a package of proposals for strengthening the House of Commons. This work was carried out through a process of careful consultation with Members of all five political parties in the House of Commons and it influenced the democratic development plans being made by the incoming Prime Minister. It also helped position the Centre to come forward with ambitious proposals in the fall of 2003 to help facilitate the implementation of parliamentary reform.

This successful year of programming was matched by a very positive bottom line, the result of hard work by the staff of the Centre and strong leadership in financial management by H el ene Haddad, the Director of Finance and Administration. To all of my colleagues, thank you for your good work.

## PART II: COUNTRY PROGRAMS

### CANADA

The Parliamentary Centre supports Parliament directly, through:

- undertaking research, publication and advocacy;
- facilitating learning opportunities for parliamentarians; and
- supporting certain inter-parliamentary networking initiatives.

The individual activities have evolved as interests of parliamentarians and circumstances have changed. We see these activities as inter-related and as a complement to our work overseas and, accordingly, are now managed in a more integrated fashion. Included in this section is our involvement in the Trilateral Commission.

The objectives of serving the Parliament of Canada and strengthening the effectiveness of Canadian parliamentarians have not changed. However, as the world is becoming more connected the perspectives of parliamentarians have evolved. An important effect on the Canada program is the growing need to provide support to parliamentarians as they seek to address policy issues internationally.

### Research, Publication and Advocacy

As noted in last year's report, our research on Parliament's role in the budget process and relations between committees and officials has been to strengthen the effectiveness of Parliament. As anticipated, our 2002-03 program focused on other specific issues and was synthesized into a major proposal on parliamentary reform.

We completed a study for the Government House Leaders Office on how to strengthen parliamentary review of Estimates, a matter that is central to effective democratic accountability. The study reviewed actual practices in three committees and included interviews with committee members, Ministers' offices and departmental officials. The report outlined a

number of practical steps that could be taken to improve the effectiveness of committee review and strengthen accountability.

Work undertaken during the winter and spring led to the preparation of a report, *Forum on Parliamentary Reform*, that was sent to the offices of all members. On May 7, 2003, a panel of former members including Monique Bégin, Herb Gray and Ed Broadbent opened a meeting on the Hill at which the proposals in the paper were reviewed by them and by MPs who participated in the meeting. Subsequently we interviewed a dozen experienced members to gain more reactions to the proposals in the paper.

All this material was drawn together in a letter with attachments that was sent early in September to the leaders of the five political parties and to the two candidates for the Liberal leadership. The letter outlined proposals for loosening party discipline, providing opportunities for members to shape legislation and increasing the independence and authority of committees.

This letter and several attachments were reproduced in *Parliamentary Reform: a Window of Opportunity*, the third issue of *Occasional Papers on Parliamentary Government*, published in September 2003. It provided a synthesis of practical proposals for improving parliamentary performance and focused on the culture and dynamics of the relationships between the executive and Parliament, between private members, party leadership and citizens, and among parties. It draws together much of the research over the last two years, extensive interviews and discussions with panels of experts. It represents one step in a process designed to develop a realistic and practical program of parliamentary reform. The aim was to come forward with a number of practices which, if adopted, could moderate the adversarial culture of Parliament and enhance the role of private members.

With the election of Paul Martin to succeed Jean Chrétien the Centre is now focused on developing ways to secure all-party support for a number of these proposals and to elaborate additional steps for putting these proposals into practice.

*Parliamentary Diplomacy*, another issue of *Occasional Papers on Parliamentary Government* published in May, reviewed the development of international engagement by legislators. It compared the practice of other legislatures of appointing members to inter-parliamentary associations for the life of their assembly with the usual Canadian practice of limiting appointments to a single international activity. The lack of continuity in the Canadian approach reduces learning and the formation of strong personal ties with parliamentarians of other countries. As the paper points out, such connections can be particularly important in addressing policy issues that cross borders. Moreover, it also weakens the international voice of Canadian MPs –and therefore Canadians.

We published *E-governance: Some Implications for Parliamentarians* in *Occasional Papers* in September, 2003. The Paper outlined the growing role of electronic communications in engaging citizens and outlined lessons-learned. It is evident that there is substantial scope for members and their staff to upgrade their expertise in this area.

### **Parliament, Business and Labour Trust (PBLT)**

The PBLT was designed as a tool to facilitate learning opportunities for individual MPs. However, with the growing experience of MPs over the life of this Parliament, the demand for such activity has fallen off. As a result, it has been decided to explore new approaches to PBLT by consulting with the business sector representatives on the Board.

### **Centre for Legislative Exchange (CLE)**

The changes described in last year's report to make CLE a program providing a more in-depth learning and policy deliberation experience that is more than "one-off" visits, continued to be pursued this year.

### **Trilateral Commission**

The Centre has provided the secretariat of the Canadian Group of the Trilateral Commission since it was first set up in 1973 and the founding director, Peter Dobell, has been a member of the Commission since that time. The Commission is a non-governmental policy-oriented discussion group composed of leaders from Europe, North America and Asia drawn from various backgrounds. Its purpose is to encourage mutual understanding and closer cooperation among the three regions. The annual meeting of the Commission was held in Washington, D.C. in April 2002.

With Mexico having been invited to join the Commission it was decided to hold a regional meeting of the North American members, a practice which the European and Asian members have found useful. The first North American meeting was held in Toronto on November 2-3. The focus of discussion was on relations between the three North American countries, themes that had not been appropriate at plenary meetings, adding a useful dimension for Canadians to Commission meetings.

### **AFRICA**

The Africa program has taken on dramatic new dimensions in the 2002-2003 year. The greatest challenge was presented by the decision of the G-8 meeting in Kananaskis in June 2002 to respond positively to the NEPAD initiative of African leaders. Following this, the Canadian government choose the Parliamentary Centre to lead a \$9 million program to help strengthen African Parliaments. Much of the year has been devoted to consultations with Africans to define that program, activity development to give it substance, and careful planning with CIDA to shape its implementation. In September 2003, final program documents were submitted, and have since been approved.

This new program gives the Centre the opportunity to work with some 20 democratic Parliaments across Africa over the next 3-4 years, in order to contribute to policy strengthening on poverty reduction, gender equality and anti-corruption goals – areas of work on which the Centre has been concentrating in recent years.

The parallel challenge has been to build the Africa Team staff to be able to tackle these increased tasks. From two members in October 2002, the full-time staff has grown to eight in October 2003, with increasing diversity of skills and experience coming to be available as a result. Steven Langdon began work as Director in January, joining Praimie Yip (now Program Coordinator for Finance and Organization.) Debra Violette and Anna Miller joined as Program Officers in February 2003. Charity Wakaba joined first as Program Assistant, later becoming a Program Officer. Rasheed Draman was brought on board as Program Coordinator for the Poverty Reduction Network in June, and Lillie Chitauro joined the team in October 2003 to become the Coordinator of the Gender Equality Network. Most recently, Annie Gingras has joined the team as Administrative Officer to help support the strategic and organizational elements of the growing Africa program.

This team has been developing new program activities, with movement toward a parliamentary staff training project to take place in Kenya, and toward initiatives in Francophone West Africa. But the main focus has been on the implementation of the large new Pan-African program, and on carrying forward the Centre's existing program of African projects. The following sections review this work in more detail.

### **Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program (ACPSP)**

In February 2003, major consultations began to design and plan the ACPSP—the 4-year, \$9 million initiative to be managed by the Parliamentary Centre under the auspices of the Canada Fund for Africa at CIDA. An Experts Group of activist MPs from 16 different African countries and African civil society groups was established in Accra, Ghana in March 2003 to shape the direction that the program should take. This was followed by a second Experts Group meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in May to plan the detailed results to be achieved, the structure, and activities for Year 1 of the Program. Ongoing Canadian consultations and dialogue with partner countries was accomplished through workshops and missions during this time

Drawing from these inputs, the summer was spent drafting and revising the Program's Implementation Plan (PIP) in Ottawa, which we are pleased was approved in late October 2003 by CIDA. With three major inter-parliamentary Networks in the Program, 2004 is expected to be a very busy year!

Program highlights for the various Networks for 2002-3 have included:

### **The African Parliamentarians' Network Against Corruption (APNAC)**

With support from the ACPSP, APNAC spent April to October planning, and then held its first regional (East-Africa) conference in Nairobi, Kenya, November 3-5<sup>th</sup>. The theme of the conference was: "New Challenges in the Fight Against Corruption," with a focus on establishing greater fairness in electoral systems, and achieving greater freedom of information and expression in African societies. The Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program (ACPSP) has begun working with APNAC in order to widen the work of the network, and spur formation of more National Chapters within African parliaments. One of the many highlights of the Conference was the presence of President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya, who used the meeting to review his government's emphasis on fighting corruption as "our top priority." He was also the first recipient of what will be an annual award that APNAC has developed to be presented for leadership against corruption in Africa, using the selection process for this as a review mechanism for assessing country efforts to counter corrupt practices. The revitalization of APNAC was emphasized in the closing sessions, and there was widespread satisfaction among APNAC leaders and organizers with how a much broader and more enthusiastic base had been built for ongoing and expanded work. A regional workshop is being planned for January 2004 in Nigeria, which will focus on corruption issues in West Africa.

### **Gender Equality Network**

The Gender Equality Network was effectively launched in Addis-Ababa in May 2003 at the founding meeting of the Women's Working Group on Gender (WWGG), formed by the women parliamentarians of the Experts Group. The

Network's mission was defined and adopted unanimously by the group as follows:

The Women's Working Group on Gender is an advocacy group of African women parliamentarians working to empower women with an aim to bridge the gap between men and women within the NEPAD initiative by 2015, with the end goal of reducing poverty among African women.

The WWGG identified priority issues to tackle of which the first is the integration of women into the NEPAD process, and the second the expansion of regional roots. A workplan was developed and put into action. The African Union (AU) Heads of State summit in Maputo was seen as an excellent entry point for lobbying on the first issue, and the ACPS Program assisted the group in obtaining an invitation. Furthermore, the Chair's participation in a women's pre-summit meeting was a great opportunity not only for the WWGG to gain visibility among other women's organizations, but also for the WWGG to contribute to the "Maputo Declaration on Gender Mainstreaming and the Effective Participation of Women in the African Union," presented at the AU summit. The adoption by the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the "Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa" is another outcome of the summit that WWGG supported – and will now face the challenge of lobbying for its ratification.

On the second priority concern, a workshop will be held in each of the regions (Southern, Eastern and Western). Though a general focus on poverty-reduction will be sought, the particular themes for each region will be determined in collaboration with local members and resource persons. The proposed venues are: Mali (early 2004), Rwanda (early 2004) and Mozambique (before March 2004). Based on preliminary discussions, the Mali workshop will focus on the economic empowerment of women; the themes of the other workshops are to be determined.

Other existing African parliamentary women's networks will form an integral part of the ACPSP Gender Network, including the Gender Unit of the

SADC-PF as well as the women's parliamentary network of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF), both of which have been engaged thus far in the program. Bases have been laid for ongoing collaboration and specific partnership initiatives. This is true also of women's civil society organizations with which the Gender Network will continue to connect (UNIFEM, WiLDAF, etc.)

A Gender Equality Network Coordinator has been hired and has joined the team in Ottawa from where she will coordinate network activities until her potential relocation to Southern Africa in 2005.

### **Poverty Reduction Network**

The Poverty Reduction Network was also initiated in Addis Ababa, but undertook a more formal launch at a workshop in Tamale, Ghana in November 2003. Bringing together 23 MPs and 4 staff from 12 countries, the workshop provided a venue for a first sharing of experiences in parliamentary monitoring of poverty reduction, with a particular focus on community-level monitoring of PRSP implementation. The agenda included presentations, plenary discussions and also a field visit to local communities in order to put words into action. The workshop also helped define the organizational structure of the Network and its future directions. Members came up with outlines of innovative approaches for the Network to take. These will be examined further for integration into next year's workplan.

The workshop led into the first major ongoing activity of the Network: field-based courses in Community Monitoring of Poverty Reduction for MPs and staff of key poverty reduction committees, provided through the Institute of Policy Alternatives, Northern Ghana. This constitutes a major and continuing training and upgrading of poverty-related parliamentary committee skills and knowledge related to local poverty monitoring, and will involve local civil society partners throughout. The first intake of three parliamentary committees (from Malawi, Tanzania and Ghana) went through the week-long training which included modules on concepts and tools as well as a field visit to put the tools to use. The committees have also paved the way towards the second phase of training involving two parliamentary staff for a period

of three months, as well as the development of an outline for a local poverty monitoring 'pilot project' to be undertaken in the home country.

The Poverty Reduction Network Coordinator joined the team in July 2003 and is has now relocated to Accra, Ghana in January 2004 to establish the field office for the ACPSP.

In addition, the Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program (ACPSP) has, within its commitment to assisting and responding to individual member Parliaments needs, at the level of Parliamentary Committees. This responsive mechanism was able to provide capacity-support to two different Parliaments in 2003:

### **The Foreign Affairs Committee of Tanzania**

Under the leadership of its Chair, Hon. William Shija, MP visited Ottawa during the week of November 10-14<sup>th</sup> with the aim of: improving the Committee's capacity to undertake issues-based examination of foreign affairs policy; learning about Committee procedure in the Canadian context and; examining the various interfaces for foreign policy dialogue, consultation and formulation. Very productive and informative sessions were provided for the delegation by various Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Clerks and Research staff of House and Senate Committees (the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, the Standing Committee on Official Languages and members of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade). Detailed meetings were also held with foreign and defence policy advisors at the Privy Council Office, the Auditor General's Office and a working-lunch session was held at DFAIT. Seeking to explore the relationship between civil society organizations and parliament in dealings with foreign policy issues, the Committee also met with the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee, Partnership Africa Canada and Amnesty International.

Three Parliamentary Commissioners and the Director of Parliamentary Professional Development from the Parliament of Uganda were hosted by the Africa Team from October 20-24<sup>th</sup> in Ottawa. The Commission,

entrusted with following up activities related to the Ugandan Parliament's Parliamentary Strategic Investment and Development Plan (PSIDP), was primarily looking for support in executing its constitutional mandate to improve effective and representational legislative output related to oversight and accountability of Parliament as an institution. With similar functions as the Board of Internal Economy in the Canadian Parliament, meetings held with BOIE staff, the Speaker, Committees, research, political staff and NGOs served in enhancing the Commission's capacity to efficiently plan committee and plenary activities, and build relationships in a more concrete way with civil society groups in Uganda. The visit also helped develop thinking within the Parliament on moving towards a multi-party system of government, and how to manage such a transition at the level of the Parliamentary institutions.

### **MP Policy Dialogue**

Another initiative under this program involves parliamentary dialogue between African and Canadian Members of Parliament. Over September 23-26<sup>th</sup> in Ottawa, the Centre hosted an MP Policy Dialogue under the leadership of Senator Raynell Andreychuk and Hon. Mauril Bélanger, MP, then co-chairs of the newly reconvened Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association. The Dialogue examined 3 crucial cross-cutting policy questions for Parliamentarians: How can election reform help achieve gender equality? How can Canadian Parliamentarians best support Africans and African Parliaments in their process of building NEPAD successfully? What role can Parliamentarians and Parliaments play in improving peace and security?

Presentations were made by Lillie Chitauro, Gender Equality Network Coordinator, Rasheed Draman – Poverty Reduction Network Coordinator, the Honourable Susan Whelan, MP (Minister of International Cooperation), David Pratt–MP, Roy Cullen–MP, Abdulrahim Balarabe–MP (Niger), Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga–MP (Zimbabwe) and Viviane Campaore–MP (Burkina Faso.)

Themes for each year will be selected in consultation with both groups of participating MPs, and based on the aims and planned results of the Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program. Next year's MP Policy Dialogue will be held in Africa.

## **Bilateral Projects**

### **Ghana Parliamentary Support Project**

Phase 1 of the Ghana Project was due to end in December 2002, however, an extension was granted until April 30, 2003 and a further extension to July 2003. This extension allowed work by the Information Resource Coordinator (IRC) to continue to ensure there was no gap in project delivery until the start up of Phase 2, the proposal for which had been submitted to CIDA mid-2002. Liaison work with the parliamentary committees continued during this time, and an end-of-project report was compiled, highlighting the results obtained during the life of the program.

These included:

Implementation of all planned project activities (workshop retreats, Information Resource Coordinators, international linkages, Northern social interaction, plus several training events – on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs), for instance);

- Increased knowledge and effectiveness of committee members, resulting in widely positive perceptions of the work of the Finance and PAC committees;
- Significant contributions to cross-partisan co-operation at the committee level that have strengthened Ghana's governance system;
- Increased Parliamentary involvement in Ghana's PRSP process;
- Gains achieved in transparency of economic reporting;
- Significant increases in understanding and communication between civil society groups in the North and Parliamentary committee leaders;

- Gains in strengthening democratic choice in Ghana by improving credibility of opposition MPs via their leadership of the PAC; and
- Increased engagement and participation of women in economic decision-making.

Discussions with CIDA led to a revised proposal, submitted in April 2003. Final approval has since been pending, though the content and budget have been accepted. The PAD is on the Minister's desk and approval is expected before Christmas, with the program to effectively begin in January. In the interim, activity has been ongoing with the Ghana parliamentary committees through other programs, namely the ACPSP (with the Poverty Reduction Network workshop in November 2003 in Ghana to allow for a large presence of Ghanaian MPs) and a WBI videoconference pre-budget series in October 2003.

#### **➤ WBI Videoconferences**

Following on the continued support to Ghana parliamentary committees through the Ghana Program, the Committees expressed specific interest in exploring certain subjects directly related to the upcoming budget discussions to be held in parliament. Based on the clear expression of demand and interest from Parliament as well as its timeliness, the World Bank Institute (WBI) and the Centre agreed on a series of 5 videoconferences, held between September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2003. The Parliamentary Centre provided assistance for the local organization and implementation of the sessions, and chaired and provided content for three of the sessions on the following subjects: What to look for in responding to the budget; The connection between civil strife and poverty; and International factors as they influence the budget.

#### **Ethiopia Bilateral Project**

The CIDA-funded Ethiopian-Canada Parliamentary Project started in 1999 and is due to come to an end in September 2004. However, there exists a strong possibility for this date to be extended.

The project initially had three Components: strengthening Parliamentary Committees; building a professional and independent Research support

service; and the establishment of a Human Rights Commission and an Office of the Ombudsman that meet internationally accepted standards. In addition, programming in the Project was designed to improve relations between Parliament and civil society and to enhance awareness of gender policy issues. After the Mid-Term Review report on the project, the focus for the remaining two years has been narrowed and focused to that of the Research and Library component only. This is because it is felt that the other components have largely achieved the results expected, whereas the Research component has not.

The Committees have made progress in achieving the target knowledge-based and practices results. Their recent performance shows that they are well on the way to fulfilling the committee outcome of the Ethiopia-Canada Parliament Project, that Parliamentary committees demonstrate an enhanced understanding of, and capacity necessary for, effective democratic practices in issuing and reviewing legislation and overseeing government.

The planned outcome for the HRC/OO component has been partially fulfilled in that the enacting of the two institutions has been achieved, following a broad-based, consultative legislative process. However, the two institutions are not yet functioning, pending the appointment of Commissioners and an Ombudsman.

Some results have been achieved in the committee component of the project related to gender equity. The mandates of all of the Committees now require them to consider gender equity issues in all their deliberations. The Women Affairs Committee is set to organize two workshops by the end of this year, one for Elite women and the other for Women Speakers of all the regional parliaments.

➤ **The Parliamentary Centre**, with the financial support of UNDP and CIDA, organized a successful study visit to Canada of the Budget and Finance Affairs Standing Committee (BFASC) of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) of Ethiopia for a period of two weeks this past July. This visit was one activity among many that

have been undertaken by the Parliamentary Centre to strengthen the Ethiopian Parliament. The visit was designed specifically to expose the BFASC to the role of committees in the Canadian parliamentary system, particularly as it pertains to matters of financial oversight, as well as to expose them to the role of other governmental departments in ensuring financial oversight in Canada and their relationship to Parliament.

## **Southern Africa**

A field mission was undertaken from April 19-29<sup>th</sup>, 2003 by Praimie Yip and Debra Violette to meet with various Project partners in order to assess progress made during Year 1 of LAP, collect reports, discuss proposed activities for Year 2 and complete workplans. Meetings were held with each of the partner legislatures (Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Gauteng and Limpopo), as well as with the Association of Public Accounts Committees (APAC), the University of Western Cape School of Government and the Committees Forum. SADC-PF (Southern African Development Community – Parliamentary Forum) at this time was conducting its annual Plenary Assembly in Zambia and therefore was not able to meet.

In general, the meetings went very well and were productive. In all cases, sufficient progress had been made towards the workplan for partners to agree to complete and submit them within one week. Of significance to project planning in the next two years are the general legislative elections to be held in all provincial legislatures in late-2004. In preparation for the elections, legislatures will be concentrating on core activities only as of the next term. Three out of four of our partner legislatures will concentrate LAP funds on induction training for newly elected members in 2004 (Year 3 of the Program), requiring Year 2 to be a transition year, sparingly using funds to follow-up Year 1 activities in anticipation of major activity in 2004.

Among the most recent activities has been the completion of several training modules at the University of Western Cape School of Government for Committee Staff in the following areas: Information Technology and Research Application;

Budgeting and Financial Management for Non-Financial Managers; and Public Policy Management. Overall, 63 people were trained using the above modules with excellent results and responses being recorded during Program Evaluations.

### **Kenya Project Development**

The Parliamentary Centre has had close relations with the National Assembly of Kenya since 1999. With their Strategic Plan now in operation, the Parliament has been seeking partners to move forward with the implementation of this plan.

After consultations with parliament and within the donor community, CIDA has been engaging the Parliamentary Centre in discussions, in what is hoped will lead to the creation of a comprehensive training program for parliamentary staff in Kenya.

Activities to launch this training program will include a symposium, to bring together three or four regional parliaments to share lessons and experiences in training strategies for parliament with the Kenyans. In addition, training experts from three institutions that the Parliamentary Centre has closely worked with in the past, namely the University of Western Cape in South Africa, the National Centre for Economic management and Administration (NCEMA) of Nigeria and the Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) will be brought in to share their expertise in designing training modules to meet the needs of the various parliamentary departments and the delivery modes they employ such as distant learning courses, attachments, etc.

For easier program delivery for what, in all likelihood, will be a three-year project, the Centre is looking to open an office base in Nairobi as early as in January next year.

- A very successful study visit was undertaken by the thirteen members of the Liaison Committee of the Kenyan National Assembly (comprised of Chairs of major Parliamentary Committee) to Ottawa and the New York Legislature in July of 2003. The primary focus of the visit was on the oversight functions and mechanisms that exist in both countries, as covered at three levels:

parliamentary, governmental and civil society. The two programs, in Ottawa (run by the Parliamentary Centre) and Albany (run by SUNY), addressed several important elements identified as areas of priority and interest by the Committee members. These included sessions on effective committee chairmanship, research support to committees, the budget process, oversight functions and mechanisms (offices of the Auditor General, Information Commissioner, etc), gender inequality in the legislative process and civil society. In addition to raising awareness of new practices in accountability and oversight that could be adopted for their own fairly recent parliamentary committee system, the mission served to establish valuable linkages between Canadian resource-people and the Kenyan Committee Chairs. It is on the basis of this and an ongoing rapport and history of productive partnership that the Parliamentary Centre is now building its latest work within the Kenyan Parliament.

### **ASIA**

Over the past year, the Centre has faced both opportunity and challenges in its programming in South East Asia and China. With work to develop a new project with the National People's Congress of China and navigating through an election year in Cambodia, the Asia team has kept very busy.

### **CAMBODIA**

Since April 2001, the Centre has managed the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded **Cambodia-Canada Legislative Support Project (CCLSP)**, a \$4.5 million capacity development project with the National Assembly and Senate of Cambodia. The project is working to strengthen three aspects of the Cambodian Parliament: parliamentary review of legislation, the responsiveness of parliamentary committees to the people and improving secretariat management.

2003 was a challenging year for the CCLSP project, being an election year in Cambodia. The pre-election campaign was carried out in an active and energetic manner but it was also marred by violence and intimidation. Although the number of political killings

and assaults were less than in previous elections, the use of intimidation was pervasive and the political climate was tense. In February 2003, the Parliamentary Centre lost a friend and colleague when Om Radsady, a prominent Cambodian politician and an adviser to Prince Norodom Ranariddh, President of Cambodia's National Assembly, was assassinated. Radsady was a Member of Parliament from 1993 to 1998 and as Chairman of the National Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee he helped to shape Cambodia's aid policies. He also helped to negotiate Cambodia's accession to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). A strong believer in good governance and democratic values, Om Radsady epitomized the values and mission of the Parliamentary Centre.

On July 27, 2003 Cambodia held its third national election in a relatively peaceful and fair manner. Official results were reported on August 8<sup>th</sup>, with the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) winning 73 out of the 123 seats in the National Assembly. The royalist FUNCINPEC and the opposition Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) took 26 and 24 seats, respectively. Despite a large majority, the CPP fell short of the two-third majority it requires to form the government. After the election results were delivered, the FUNCINPEC and SRP parties refused to join a coalition and both parties subsequently formed an alliance to oppose the CPP. In the period following the elections, the government ground to a standstill as the CPP unsuccessfully tried to negotiate a coalition government with the two main opposition parties.

Since the election in July, Cambodia has been locked in a bitter political deadlock and the impasse has made it impossible for the National Assembly to convene forcing the CPP to act as a caretaker government for over 6 months.

The impact of the political deadlock has been significant for the Parliamentary Centre; the last six months of project implementation have been, by far, the most tumultuous and unpredictable. The CCLSP Project has postponed the majority of activities involving Members of Parliament and has instead devoted a maximum of its efforts to parliamentary staff and the senior management of both the National Assembly and Senate.

Despite these hurdles and minor setbacks, the project realized achievements in all three-concentration areas. Highlights from 2003 include:

- Improvement in the quality of legislative analysis and research by legal officers of the National Assembly and Senate through ongoing training and mentoring with Canadian and Cambodian legislative experts
- A workshop with a Canadian constituency expert that helped increase awareness among provincial staff of their role and mandate as liaison officers between Cambodian citizens and parliamentarians
- A human resources management training program for senior parliamentary managers to help them develop operational plans, develop non-partisan job descriptions and develop human resource policies for the Parliament
- Several field investigations and public consultations with the Senate Banking and Finance Commission to strengthen and promote the oversight role of parliamentary committees in monitoring legislative and political issues affecting the lives of Cambodian citizens

### **Legislative Component**

Although the current political situation has made it difficult for the project to engage parliamentarians in activities, parliamentarians remain enthusiastic and supportive of the project and continue to report how training, tools and guidelines acquired through project activities are contributing to their work. An increasing number of parliamentarians have used the "rule of law guidelines" in plenary sessions and commissions to assist them in their legislative review of bills, and they have commented on its utility to the project staff. Women MPs have used material on gender analysis in other aspects of their work, such as within their party women's associations, and have distributed gender analysis guidelines to other MPs and Senators to raise awareness of gender issues. The CCLSP team has also achieved considerable results with the research and legal staff of both the National Assembly and Senate during 2003, providing training programs and mentoring to increase their capacity to undertake legislative research, prepare briefing notes and analysis

for commission members and to undertake consultations with NGOs and other organizations. Several Commission Chairs and other parliamentarians have commented positively on the improved performance of parliamentary staff in this area.

### **Representation Component**

In March and June 2003, field consultations and roundtables on the Cambodian-Thai Border Crisis and the impact of SARS on the Cambodian economy were conducted with the Senate Banking and Finance Commission. A workshop on the roles and responsibilities of provincial staff of the National Assembly was also conducted in May 2003. The project was hoping to launch some consultation activities soon after the election but delays in forming a government and opening the National Assembly session has pushed back the project's agenda in this area.

### **Secretariat Management Component**

Despite the sensitive nature of implementing changes to staff hiring and moving towards a politically neutral Secretariat, the Secretaries-General of the Senate and National Assembly, along with their senior managers, have shown a great deal of commitment to moving in this direction and restructuring hiring policies and job descriptions to reflect a politically neutral staff. Staff have also demonstrated a strong commitment to employing the knowledge and skills gained in their daily work for commissions. The project continues to assist in this area and train managers to implement the policies and procedures underlined in the new official documents of Parliament, particularly the recently passed Legislative Civil Servants Statute.

### **CHINA**

The Parliamentary Centre was recently chosen by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to undertake a legislative capacity-building project with the Chinese National People's Congress. In February 2003, a design team from the Parliamentary Centre spent three weeks in China to work on the project design with Chinese counterparts from the National People's Congress (NPC), the Yunnan

Provincial People's Congress and Zhejiang Provincial People's Congress.

The primary purpose of the Mission was to allow the Parliamentary Centre and its Chinese partners - representatives from the NPC - to meet for the first time in the context of the new initiative and conduct intensive discussions concerning the project. The mission also provided opportunities to meet with new local partners from the Yunnan and Zhejiang Provincial Congresses. As a result of these discussions, the Parliamentary Centre and its Chinese partners were able to agree to an initial document entitled "Memorandum of General Agreement", which, as agreed, would serve as the basis for drafting the Project Implementation Plan.

In addition to discussions between the Parliamentary Centre and representatives from the congress system in China, the Inception Mission provided the opportunity to meet with a wide range of non-governmental representatives, consultants, donor agencies and research/academic institutions. The primary purpose of discussions with such individuals or organizations was to become familiar with and aware of similar governance initiatives taking place either with the NPC, local congresses or other sectors of governance in China and to hear varying opinions and interpretations on legislative reform in China. Experts from the various institutions and donor agencies were able to provide their assessment of the project objectives and their interest in and capacity to serve as project resources or collaborators. Following the Inception Mission, the Parliamentary Centre prepared the detailed project planning documents for CIDA's approval.

The China-Canada Legislative Cooperation Project is scheduled to begin implementation in the spring of 2004 and will build on the mutual understanding and cooperative relationship from the previous project, the Parliamentary Centre-National People's Congress Cooperation Project, and further the level of technical assistance to both NPC staff and deputies.

The Project will aim to:

- a. Increase methods of public participation in the congress system; and
- b. Assist legislative development processes and democratic lawmaking in the NPC and selected people's congresses of China.
- c. Cooperate in legislative reform in key areas related to equality, poverty reduction and participation

The Project will address key issues relevant to China's current priority reform agenda and enable Chinese officials to be directly exposed to a broad range of relevant Canadian legislative expertise. In particular, following consultations with the Chinese partner, the Parliamentary Centre has agreed to focus thematically on **rural development and poverty reduction**, two issues at the forefront of China's current reform initiative. Using this thematic approach will allow the Project to be focused and concentrated on specific legislative initiatives taking place at the NPC and provincial people's congress level, thus responding to the current needs and priorities of the congress system. The Chinese partners have identified several legislative areas related to rural development and poverty reduction where they anticipate major projects to draft, review or amend legislation. By choosing a theme such as rural development and/or poverty reduction, the project will ensure that training programs are relevant, timely and useful to both staff and deputies and closely relate to the current demands in their jobs. The project will use legislative themes such as "rural development" as a vehicle to develop and strengthen the congresses' capacity to improve democratic and scientific lawmaking, focussing on elements such as legislative analysis, public consultation and oversight.

The Project will also strengthen the institutional capacity of the Chinese legislatures by providing technical assistance and training to selected legislative officials in:

- Legislative review and analysis
- Comparative policy development
- Methods and practices of public consultation
- Poverty reduction strategies

- Gender equality analysis
- Oversight mechanisms and practices
- Review of the Budget Process

## **THAILAND**

The Parliamentary Centre organized a study tour to Canada for Members of the Thai Parliament in October of 2002. This initiative was a collaborative effort with the King Prajadhipok's Institute in Thailand as well as Royal Roads University based in Victoria, B.C. The study tour took place with the generous support of CIDA and was led by the Speaker of the Thai House of Representatives, Mr. Uthai Pimjaichon.

The main objective of the study tour was to familiarize Thai parliamentarians with Canadian approaches to public participation and increase their knowledge of Canadian practices in conflict management.

Meetings were arranged with government departments, members and senior officials of the Canadian Parliament, non-governmental organizations, independent commissions, industry representatives, and with academics knowledgeable in the field of public consultation and conflict management. In the end, the study tour was successful in exposing delegates to Canada's parliamentary system and provided a comprehensive overview of the features of effective public consultation and conflict management methodologies. The delegates reported that they had gained valuable tools and practices that they could implement in Thailand. Furthermore, through discussion and dialogue, the delegates communicated that Thailand faces many similar challenges to Canada and emphasized key opportunities for future collaboration and cooperation.

## **SRI LANKA**

In September 2003 our Executive Director, Robert Miller, was asked by CIDA to participate in an end-of project review of the Sri Lanka Governance and Institutional Strengthening Project (GISP), a CIDA-funded bilateral project implemented by the Human Rights Research and Education Centre of the University of Ottawa. This \$4.8 million five-year project (1999 to

2003) was aimed at supporting Sri Lankan institutions that could potentially address the root causes of the decades-old conflict in Sri Lanka. It included supporting outreach mechanisms on human rights, promoting and strengthening public accountability, supporting innovative approaches to conflict resolution and strengthening judicial responsiveness.

The end-of-project review was carried out between September and December 2003, and included an evaluation of the results and operations of the project, the identification of lessons learned, and the formulation of advice and recommendations for future programming.

## **Eastern and Central Europe**

### **Russia**

Since April 1994, the Centre has managed the Canada-Russia Parliamentary Program (CRPP), undertaking parliamentary development and staff training with both houses of the Russian Federal Assembly—the State Duma and Federation Council—as well as legislatures in seven Subjects of the Federation (i.e., regions) in Russia's north.

In July 2000, CRPP added an accountability component to its program, designed to improve parliamentary oversight by strengthening the linkages between the Accounting Chamber of the Russian Federation (Russia's State Audit Institution) and the two houses of the Russian Federal Assembly. The success of the accountability component and the need for continued Canadian assistance brought a 30-month extension of the project through the launching in January 2002, of a pilot project aiming to assist the Accounting Chamber to develop and employ value-for-money (VFM) auditing methodology, and to help the Federal Assembly build the capacity to hold hearings on VFM audit reports.

Inspired, in part, by experience gained during visits to Canada held under the project, the Federation Council (the upper chamber of the Russian Federal Assembly) established in January 2002 a Commission on Interaction with the Accounting Chamber. Since then, CRPP has assisted in developing the Statute of the Commission, in building its oversight capacity, and in

strengthening its working relationship with the Accounting Chamber of the Russian Federation (AC). Canadian experience has also been used in preparing the legislative base for introducing VFM auditing in the Russian Federation that is among the responsibilities of the Commission.

With the assistance of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG), the Accounting Chamber worked to develop its own value-for-money audit methodology that has been used in conducting audits of two Russian federally-funded programs—the “Children of the North” and “Social Support to the Handicapped.” The OAG has also been assisting the AC in preparing the reports on these audits in a format suitable for use by parliamentarians. It is expected that in spring 2004, the FC Commission on Interaction with the AC, the FC Committee on the North, and the FC Committee on Social Policy will hold joint hearings on the VFM audit reports.

Under its Federal Assembly component, CRPP has been assisting the Federation Council Commission of Internal Economy in reforming the internal administrative and financial management of the upper chamber of the Federal Assembly that was transformed into a full-time body in the beginning of 2002. In December 2002, a delegation from the Commission visited Ottawa to study the experience of the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada in managing their internal affairs. Inspired by Canadian experience, the Commission prepared a draft law to introduce in the Russian Federal Assembly a system of support for parliamentarians, similar to the model used in the Senate of Canada, where Senators will be allocated personal budgets that they can use to meet their particular needs and priorities.

### **Southeast Europe**

In June 2003, the Parliamentary Centre launched the Southeast Europe Parliamentary Program (SEPP). The program is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and is designed to strengthen the institutional capacity of parliaments in the region.

Following a series of assessment missions to Southeast Europe, the National Assembly of the

Republic of Serbia was selected as SEPP's first partner institution. SEPP's objectives in Serbia are to: (1) enhance the parliamentary secretariat's overall capacity to provide effective non-partisan, professional, and administrative services to the National Assembly; (2) to help the National Assembly build the capacity to establish and manage an internal parliamentary budget; (3) to raise awareness among MPs about their role in the budgetary process, performing the oversight function, and the role of the Supreme Audit Institution in supporting their work; and (4) to strengthen the Finance and Public Accounts Committees in performing their budget and oversight functions.

Serbia is undergoing a rapid transition to a market economy and democratic society already seen in many countries in East Central Europe. Motivated by EU accession and a desire to "catch up" after the ten lost years under former leader Slobodan Milosevic, the republic is presently undergoing vast reforms, passing many complex economic and other legislation, often with a sense of urgency. The Serbian National Assembly currently plays a relatively minor role in the transition process. Institutionally-weak, the National Assembly is unable to perform its legislative or oversight function based on careful deliberation and expertise. The fact that the governing coalition is a wobbly collection of many political parties reinforces the old tendency to make decisions behind closed doors, rather than in transparent parliamentary settings.

The assassination of the late Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic in March 2003 appears to have galvanized democratic forces in Serbia and inspired a renewed push towards reform. Guided by a new wave of domestic support, there is an urgent need for the international community to support democratic reform in Serbia. Indeed, the momentum created by the assassination should be used to implement as many reforms as possible; delays will only make reform more difficult.

The National Assembly is faced with the need of implementing thorough reforms within a short period of time. At present, most of the political process in Serbia's parliament is concentrated in party caucuses, with committees being very weak and links with

constituencies practically non-existent. Most members of the Serbian parliament share a strong interest in undertaking substantial reforms to strengthen the committees of the National Assembly and establish stronger links with constituents. They believe that strengthening committees will help to overcome the tradition of the political process as a series of personal attacks, rather than policy debate. It is hoped that constructive committee work will contribute to the emergence of a measure of respect and cooperation between government and opposition that has been non-existent so far. Also, strengthening links of MPs with constituencies is key to increasing the level of public interest and trust in the National Assembly.

The program was officially launched with a visit to Canada by several Members of the Serbian National Assembly, including the Deputy Speaker, Mrs. Gordana Comic, in June 2003. A follow-up mission to Serbia was held in September 2003 and included the participation of Ms. Gretchen Brewin, former Speaker of the British Columbia Legislature; Peter Bray, Comptroller, BC Legislature; and Jacques Sabourin, Senior Associate, Parliamentary Centre. The visit included an intensive half-day consultative roundtable with more than twenty Members representing a number of political parties of the National Assembly. The purpose of the roundtable was to hear their evaluation, criticisms, and expectations regarding Secretariat services. Some of the issues raised include expanding research services in the National Assembly; adopting the principle and practice of a neutral, apolitical Secretariat; and acquiring expert, analytical services for committees.

## **Middle East**

The Centre took on a number of successful activities in the Middle East region during 2003. Program Director, Mr. Mazen Chouaib visited the region in February in order to reinforce relationships with partners from which to undertake future activities. In the past, it was learned that a regular presence and contact with the Arab World was necessary in order to achieve project goals.

In June of 2003, the workshop "*Arab Parliaments, WTO Accession and Processes: A Regional Workshop*" was

held in Beirut Lebanon. Over 30 parliamentarians from the region (representing Tunisia, Algeria, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Jordan, UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia) participated in addition to two Canadian Members of Parliament and members of the Arab Network for NGO's and Development (AAND). Also attending was a representative from the Canadian delegation to the WTO, Arab NGO's and the North- South Institute of Canada. The workshop drew strong interest and participation by Members of Parliament, Arab governments, NGOs and extensive media coverage.

Key recommendations that emerged from the conference included a strong desire for the Centre to assist in forming an Arab inter-parliamentary forum to discuss WTO accession in the region and, other related concerns. This is in addition to building a database of Arab expertise and information made available to parliamentarians, ensuring the participation of NGO's and women's groups in the process, and the formation of an advisory group for the formation of the inter-parliamentary organisation.

Plans are underway for a handbook that will focus on *Arab Parliaments and Trade Policy*.

In addition to the successful WTO workshop, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Parliamentary Centre and UNDP on joint support for parliamentary development. It stipulates a number of areas for cooperation on a global basis that will be extremely beneficial for the successful implementation of any future program for parliamentary capacity building.

The Parliamentary Centre remains committed to working in the region. 2003 has seen the Middle East program at the Parliamentary Centre further strengthen and cement its relationships with partners in the region – most notably the Arab Parliamentary Union – from which further activities will be coordinated. The remaining project activities, extended until March 2004, will continue to improve on working relationships with our partners, improving our knowledge base, strengthening the Centre's presence in the region, building local capacity and laying the ground work for future activities.

## PART III: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS

### **GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST CORRUPTION (GOPAC)**

Over the last twelve months, GOPAC has gone from an idea to a formal organization, with an international Board of Directors, with chapters in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and South America. John Williams, MP St. Albert is the Chair of GOPAC and the Parliamentary Centre serves as its secretariat and head office. In addition to continuing work to develop the organization, it has established a global team to review the UN Convention Against Corruption and to develop a program to support ratification and to monitor and report on its implementation and impacts. In addition, it is undertaking a joint initiative with the IMF to provide orientation to parliamentarians on Anti-Money Laundering and combating international funding of terrorism.

### **INTER-PARLIAMENTARY FORUM OF THE AMERICAS (FIPA)**

The Parliamentary Centre, through funding from DFAIT, provides the administrative secretariat to the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas. It also is a partner with Bellanet in supporting the FIPA Virtual Parliament Project. This project seeks to support international collaboration of parliamentarians on hemispheric issues such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). It also seeks to make information – tailored for parliamentarians – available on its web site. The first phase of this three phase project was completed in September, 2003. Its key

products are: a) a substantial body of information on hemispheric issues in four languages; b) a facility for the FIPA Executive and Working Groups to communicate on issues; and c) an updated concept paper on international policy deliberation mechanisms and support services.

### **PARLIAMENTS THAT WORK**

The Parliamentary Centre in collaboration with the World Bank Institute is undertaking a project to develop and test indicators of parliamentary performance. The objective of the project is to provide parliamentarians with practical tools to plan and evaluate their work such as that with parliamentary committees. During the year, Phase I of the project developed a set of indicators focused on parliament's role in the budget process which many parliaments see as fundamental to building their capacity as institutions of democratic accountability. The first test of the indicators was carried out with a focus group of parliamentarians and civil society representatives in Cambodia. During the next year, the plan is to carry out further country tests in Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia. When completed, the project will provide both a conceptual framework for the Parliamentary Centre's work in parliamentary development and a set of field-tested indicators of parliamentary performance. The more fundamental objective is to strengthen parliamentary strategic and work planning and thereby contribute to improving parliamentary accountability and effectiveness.

## **PART IV: FINANCIAL REPORT**

**FINANCIAL REPORT  
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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