



BUILDING REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNANCE IN BURMA

REGION

Asia

DURATION

January to May 2013

FUNDER

Department of Foreign
Affairs and International
Trade

the PARLIAMENTARY CENTRE

Is a Canadian, not-for-profit, non-partisan organization, celebrating 45 years in 2013 as one of the leading and longest serving organizations dedicated to strengthening parliamentary democracy in Canada and around the world. Our assessments, strategic planning and training programs, combined with research products and networking channels, help legislatures and related stakeholders measure their performance, build capacity, tackle key issues and promote mutual learning.

In short—our goal is to help legislatures better serve the people they represent.

the PROJECT

When Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird visited Burma in March 2012, he proposed an exchange so Canada could share with Burmese reform leaders their experiences and perspectives on strong parliamentary practices. To achieve these goals, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) chose the Parliamentary Centre out of several proposals to implement a project that would be known as “*Building Representative Governance in Burma*”.

The project’s first phase saw a Canadian parliamentary mission to Burma in February 2013 by a multi-party Canadian delegation. The project’s second phase saw a visit to Canada by a multi-party Burmese parliamentary delegation, which aimed to explore expressions of interest by Burmese parliamentarians on various aspects of the Canadian Parliamentary system. In April 2013, eleven members from the Burmese delegation arrived in Ottawa to explore a distinct appetite for knowledge about the Canadian system. These areas of knowledge included Canadian federalism and federal-provincial relations, parliamentary oversight over the spending of public funds, the intersection of pluralism and federalism, constituency offices of Members of Parliament, Parliamentary procedures and support services for Parliamentarians, democratic oversight of the military, women’s participation in politics and Parliament, freedom of the press and religious freedoms for Canadians.

the ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This was the first ever visit to Canada by a Parliamentary delegation from Burma, and as such, is seen as a historic landmark in the relationship between Burma and Canada. A key success was uniting representatives of the Burmese government, opposition political parties, parliamentary staff and civil society organizations to discuss the fundamentals of Parliamentary governance. More than 40 Burmese Parliamentarians from various political parties were introduced to the Canadian model of Parliamentary Governance.

Leaving with a newfound knowledge and faith in Canadian cooperation, Burmese Parliamentarians said their visit to Canada was one of the most useful international exchanges they had participated in.



Parliamentary
Centre

802-255 Albert Street
Ottawa, ON K1P 6A9
T + (613) 237-0143
F + (613) 235-8237
Email: parlcent@parl.gc.ca
Parlcent.org