



CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene

48th Regional Conference, Regina

The annual Conference of the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Regina from July 12-17, 2010. Speaker **Don Toth** of Saskatchewan was host for the Conference.

Speaker Toth noted the presence of several special guests including **David Broom** from the CPA Secretariat in London and several legislators from Commonwealth countries including **Waruna Bandara Dasanayake** from Sri Lanka, **Marie Andrews** from New South Wales, **Brian Ellis** from West Australia and **Reredo Tetaake Eria** from Kiribat.

Following the official welcome in the Legislative Building the first business was held. The topic was "Women, Islam and International Law: Within the context of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women." The presenter was **Nicole Demers**, MP and the Chair was **Nadine Wilson** (Saskatchewan).

The second topic on the agenda was "Legislative Public Outreach Programmes". The presenter was Speaker **Paul Delorey** of the Northwest Territories. The session was chaired by **Greg Brklich** (Saskatchewan).

The third session was "The Right to Die" and the presenter was **Fatima Houda-Pépin** of

the Québec National Assembly. The Chair was **Warren McCall** (Saskatchewan).

The fourth session dealt with "Challenges of Order and Decorum in the Ontario House." The presenters were Speaker **Steve Peters** and **Deborah Deller**, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. The session was chaired by **Trent Wotherspoon** (Saskatchewan).

The fifth session was "British Columbia's Unique Initiative Process: The HST Case Study". The presenter was **Harry Bloy** of British Columbia and the Chair was **Kim Trew** (Saskatchewan).

The final session was "Re-examination of the Canadian Constitution" with a guest speaker, **David Smith**, Professor Emeritus of the University of Saskatchewan and Senior Policy Fellow with the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy. The session was chaired by Speaker Toth.

In addition to the business sessions the delegates were invited to the RCMP Sunset Ceremonies and dinner at the RCMP Heritage Centre. They were also offered a chance to participate in one of three organized excursions: a tour of Claybank/Moose Jaw, golf or fishing although the fishing excursion was cancelled due to inclement weather.

At the wind-up banquet which featured entertainment by the group *Saskatchewan Express*

the delegates expressed their gratitude to Speaker Toth and to the organizing committee headed by **Greg Putz**, Clerk of the House and **Monique Lovatt**, Conference Co-ordinator.

Regional Council Meeting

On Thursday July 15 the meeting of the Canadian Regional Council was held. The following Speakers were in attendance: **Don Toth** (Saskatchewan), **Steve Peters** (Ontario), **Paul Delorey** (Northwest Territories), **Ken Kowalski** (Alberta), **Bill Barisoff** (British Columbia), **Roy Boudreau** (New Brunswick), **Roger Fitzgerald** (Newfoundland and Labrador), **Charlie Parker** (Nova Scotia), **Kathleen Casey** (Prince Edward Island), **James Arreak** (Nunavut) and **Ted Stauffen** (Yukon).

Much of the meeting focused on the issue of governance of CPA international. **Fatima Houda Pépin**, Deputy Speaker of Quebec, presented a position paper on the topic and Speaker Casey reported on Canada's proposal to the international Executive Committee of CPA for the creation of a Study Group on Governance. The proposal was accepted and the Group would be meeting in the coming months.

The Regional Council also received a report from **Myrna Dreidger** (Vice Chair of the CWP) on the activity of the CWP during the last year and its projects for 2010-2011. The Council supported the



Delegates and Observers at the meeting of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians – Canadian Section

candidacy of **Charlotte L'Écuyer** of Québec for Chair of the CWP International when the position comes up for election in Kenya in September 2010.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Meeting

Following the usual pattern the CWP held their conference immediately prior the CPA Regional Conference. The Canadian Network Steering Committee, chaired by **Myrna Dreidger** (Manitoba) met

on July 12. It was followed by four business sessions:

- Cracking the Glass Ceiling
Louise Simard, (former MLA and Minister in Saskatchewan)
- Breaking Down the Barriers for Women in Politics
Yvonne Jones, MLA (Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Representation of Women in our Legislatures: New Developments to Increase Diversity
Linda Reid, MLA (British Columbia)
Charlotte L'Écuyer, MNA (Québec)

- Career Path and Role of the First Woman Deputy Speaker of the Québec National Assembly
Fatima Houda-Pépin, MNA (Québec)

Delegates to the CWP meeting also approved a motion to send an urgent letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Lawrence Cannon**, asking him to request that the Iranian government not proceed with the execution of Mrs. **Sakineh Mohamadi Ashtiani** on charges of adultery.