

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Delegation for relations with Canada*

## **REPORT ON THE VISIT TO CANADA (OTTAWA, VANCOUVER, WHITEHORSE) OF THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH CANADA 28 OCTOBER - 2 NOVEMBER 2008**

The Delegation of the European Parliament was composed of five Members: Mr Miroslav Mikolášik, Mr Martí Grau i Segú, Ms Christel Schaldemose and Mr Gary Titley, and was led by Mr Seán Ó Neachtain, the Chair of the Delegation for relations with Canada.

The visit took place in Ottawa, Vancouver and Whitehorse.

Due to the fact that the Canadian parliamentary elections took place a few days before the visit, on 14 October 2008, and new committees were not yet in place, this visit did not take place within the framework of the regular interparliamentary meetings.

### **OTTAWA**

The Delegation met with officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). The topics discussed were: Canada - EU relations; Canada - EU Summit achievements and follow-up; Closer Economic Partnership, including air traffic negotiations; Energy and environment; Seals; Partnership in peace and Security (including cooperation with Afghanistan); Canada's Northern Strategy and Canada's Arctic Foreign policy.

#### **Canada - EU relations; Canada - EU Summit achievements and follow-up**

The discussions were introduced by Mr Dan Costello, Director General of the European Union bureau at DFAIT. He underlined the good relations between the European Union and Canada, ties confirmed also at the most recent high level meeting, the EU-Canada Summit in Quebec City on 17 October 2008. The Summit discussions were focused on the global financial crisis, the EU-Canada partnership, the Russia - Georgia issue, Afghanistan, seal hunting and visa reciprocity. He indicated that the future EU-Canada relations will be guided by the Statement agreed at the 2008 Summit.

### Closer Economic Partnership, including air traffic negotiations

The discussion on economics was led by Mr Bruce Christie, Director of the Regional trade Policy Department of DFAIT. He underlined the importance of the Canada - EU economic partnership, the EU being the second business partner for Canada, after the US, while Canada is the EU's 11th most important partner. While the EU is Canada's second most important partner, Canada ranks third in the EU. Bilateral foreign direct investments flows are rising in both directions. In recent years, Canada expressed its will for a deeper EU-Canada partnership, "NAFTA type", without tariffs. After which in 2005/2006, the negotiations of a new type of agreement became difficult, the EU and Canada agreed, at the 2007 Summit, to elaborate a Joint Study to evaluate the costs and the benefits of a closer economic partnership. The outcome of this Study was welcomed by the Leaders at the 2008 Summit and a consensus to strengthen the economic partnership was reached.

A visit to Brussels took place on 24 November 2008, in order to set up the basis of a preliminary agreement on trade with the EU, which Mr. Christie announced will hopefully be reached in 2009. He also expressed the Canadian support concerning Doha negotiations. In the aviation field, Canada is a significant aviation market and a liberalising agreement would bring substantial economic benefits to both parties. A comprehensive air services agreement is taking shape, the Open Air Skies Transportation Agreement, which was launched after the 2007 Summit.

### Energy and environment

Mr Douglas Forsythe and Mr Marc Tessier briefed the delegation on climate change, environment and energy issues. The last high level meeting of the environmental dialogue between Canada and the EU took place on 13 February 2008 in Ottawa. The issues considered were: arctic issues, scientific co-operation in the area of environment, climate change. Canada shares the EU point of view on climate change, the reduction of emissions by 30% by 2020. However, the Canadian approach concerning the Kyoto issue will not meet its commitments until after 2020. In the energy field, a High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Energy was agreed to be established at the 2007 EU-Canada Summit to deal with energy questions of common concern. At the first meeting of this Dialogue it was decided to continue the cooperation on nuclear energy, energy science and technology and energy efficiency and renewable energy, such as wind energy, the fastest growing market in Canada. In general, energy policy is a concern to the provinces.

### Seals

Mr Barry Rashotte stressed the Canadian concerns about the EU Commission's legislative proposal banning trade in seal products. He said that a ban would have a negative social-economic impact on Canada. There are new regulations to conduct sealing more humanely, e.g. if necessary, seals are shot a second time to avoid more suffering.

## Partnership in peace and Security (including cooperation with Afghanistan)

Mr Richard Arbeiter, Director of the Afghanistan Task Force of DFAIT, briefed the EP Members on the Canadian commitment in Afghanistan. He pointed out that their commitment has materialized not only in military actions but also in development assistance, such as training of 10.000 local teachers. Canada participates in the EU Police Mission (EUPOL) and also the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar province. Canada initiated a police and justice sector In-Service Training Facility (ISTF) in Kandahar in order to support the law enforcement in southern Afghanistan. Only 45% of public opinion supports Canada's engagement in Afghanistan. Negotiations with the Taliban could be envisaged but not with Al Qaida.

## Canada's Northern Strategy and Canada's Arctic Foreign policy

The presentation of this topic was made by Mr Paul Gibbard, Director of the Aboriginal and Circumpolar Affairs Division of DFAIT.

The North is an essential part of Canada's identity and an area of growing importance internationally. The North, including Indigenous peoples comprising up to 80% of the population in some regions, have brought a number of emerging issues to the world's attention: the dangers and challenges posed by climate change; the need for sustainable economic development; and the importance of sharing experiences and knowledge with our circumpolar neighbors and the world. The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy (NDFP) responds to these challenges in a manner that is both innovative and comprehensive.

The key priority areas for the NDFP are playing a leadership role in the Arctic Council to further Canadian interests, engaging circumpolar countries on Canada's Northern policy priorities, strengthening the capacity of Northern organizations to participate in Circumpolar policy dialogue and cooperative activities, and increasing public support for Canada's role in building a vibrant circumpolar community.

At the end of the visit to Ottawa, the European parliamentarians met with Canadian Members of Parliament Ms Lorna Milne, Mr Terry Mercer, Mr Jim Munson, and Mr Brian Storseth during a lunch hosted by Mr David Tilson, the Chair of Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association. The strengthening of the EU-Canada relations was reiterated and a next visit of a Canadian delegation to Brussels was mentioned.

## **VANCOUVER**

The first meeting of the EP Delegation in Vancouver was with senior staff of the Fraser Institute. The Fraser Institute is an independent international research and educational organization. Their mandate is to raise the level of understanding of the effects of economics and public policy. The Institute's ideas are focused on improving the quality of life for people of all ages and income levels. The Fraser Institute is a registered non-profit organization. It was stressed by the welcoming board that the institute depends entirely on donations from people who understand the importance of impartial research and who support greater choice, less government intervention, and more personal responsibility.

The following items were discussed:

- Migration policy: despite the fact that Canada is a very open country towards foreigners, problems have been coming up recently. For instance, if people want to move to the province of Quebec, they are asked to accept the values of Quebec, whatever this could mean. The Chinese population are living in "enclaves", but these are practically ghettos, where only Chinese is spoken. Another problem arises when jobs become vacant. Immigrant groups are pressuring firms to fill positions with immigrants, and this may lead to the effect that jobs are being filled to a lesser extent by Canadians.
- Energy and climate: so far no carbon tax has been introduced in British Columbia. With regard to climate change problems, the representatives of the Institute do not see any relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming: history has always seen great fluctuations in temperature.
- Health: as there is no private insurance system, everybody is treated equally, though as a consequence, there is a shortage of doctors and long waiting lists in hospitals. Those who can afford it go abroad to be treated.

Another visit took place at the University of British Columbia, where the EP Delegation was welcomed by Professor Craig Klafter, Associate Vice President. The University is considered one of the best in Canada. The Professor presented the goals, the strategy and the activities of the University. He said that UBC has innovative academic programs, combined with an international reputation for teaching and research. He pointed out that teaching and research at UBC are conducted in 12 faculties and 11 schools, with each offering a broad range of programs of study.

With regard to research he explained that, contrary to the situation in Germany for instance, intellectual property remains with the university, which represents one of the financial resources of the University.

Other academic opportunities include co-op learning, in which studies are combined with real-world work experience, and exchange programs, which allow students to spend one or two terms at a foreign university.

With regard to the harmonisation of education such as the Bologna process he was quite sceptical as the diversity of different cultures in Europe may become blurred. Another critical point he mentioned on EU-related issues was the cooperation agreement between the EU and Canada within the 7th framework programme for research and development. In the agreement, the research that is founded remains the property of the EU in copyright. As a result, the Canadian side therefore does not benefit very much from this agreement.

The last meeting in Vancouver took place with the Attorney General of British Columbia, Mr Wally Oppal. The discussions concerned the Canadian immigration experience.

Mr Oppal introduced the discussions emphasising the Canadian need of immigrants. He stressed their concern with regard to the declining of the birth rate since 1960. He mentioned that the Canadian immigration laws are not as progressive as they should be but they work on improving them.

He estimated the number of illegal immigrants in the US at 10 to 15 million, in British

Columbia at 300.000 to 400.000. Even illegal immigrants profit from judiciary help on the government's costs. After Hong Kong was handed over to China in 1997, a large part of the population emigrated to British Columbia and especially to Vancouver where now 40% of the population is not caucasian. However, despite the prominence of the immigrant population, most of the crimes are committed by "real" Canadians, not by immigrants. Even if there are signs of racism, the authorities very much promote integration. In fact, Canadian citizenship can be obtained already after 3 years.

### **Visit to WHITEHORSE, capital of the Yukon Territory**

The Yukon Territory seems to operate in the same way as a province, but there are some differences. The government of Yukon has many responsibilities and works together with other governments, including the First Nation government and municipalities. A territory the size of Spain, the Yukon's population is about 33.000, of which around three quarters live in the capital Whitehorse.

The delegation travelled to Whitehorse to meet with government representatives of First Nations in order to discuss policy towards the indigenous people and arctic problems.

The EP Delegation met the Executive Director of the Council of Yukon First Nations. The Council of Yukon First Nations is the central political organization for the First Nation people of the Yukon. It has existed since 1973 and continues to serve the needs of First Nations within the Yukon and MacKenzie delta. The Council has its own legislative body and courts and has the right to collect taxes. The Director insisted that if there will be an institutional treaty for the Arctic, the indigenous people have to be involved.

In October 2008, the European Parliament overwhelmingly passed a resolution demanding the European Commission to push for international negotiations that would lead to the adoption of an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic.

The Arctic Athabaskan Council represents the Athabaskans in Alaska and Northern Canada internationally. The Chair of the Arctic Athabaskan Council sent a letter to European Commission President Barroso, which was handed over to the Delegation. In his letter, he welcomed greater EU involvement in the Arctic and suggested that the eight Arctic states provide more effective ways and means for European observer states to bring their significant scientific research, policy and legal expertise on the Arctic to be heard in the Council.

In a press conference, the Chair of the EP delegation stressed the importance of the Arctic Policy and the commitment of the European Parliament for greater involvement on this issue. He spoke on EU-Canada relations and emphasized the importance of the excellent relationship between Canada and the EU, and the strong historical and cultural links existing between them. He stressed that both of them share many fundamental values and a similar commitment to multilateral institutions and the international rule of law. With regard to the Arctic policy, he mentioned that due to the climate change, the European Union intends to review and strengthen its policy in this respect. He believes that the developments of the EU Arctic policy could have potential consequences for international stability and European security interests.

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## **Delegation visit to Canada**

**Ottawa, Vancouver and Whitehorse**  
**28 October - 2 November 2008**

## ***LIST OF PARTICIPANTS***

### Delegation of the European Parliament (5)

Mr Seán Ó NEACHTAIN, Chairman of the Delegation	(UEN - Ireland)
Mr Miroslav MIKOLÁŠIK	(EPP - Slovakia)
Mr Martí GRAU i SEGÚ	(PSE - Spain)
Ms Christel SCHALDEMOSE	(PSE - Denmark)
Mr Gary TITLEY	(PSE - UK)

### Secretariat of the Delegation of the European Parliament (3)

Mr Hans-Hermann KRAUS  
Ms Alida NADEJDE  
Ms Kathleen HUYGEN

### EP Political Staff (2)

Mr Adam ISAACS (EPP)  
Ms Regina O'CONNOR (UEN)

EPP-ED	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats
PSE	Socialist Group in the European Parliament
UEN	Union for Europe of the Nations Group

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28 October - 2 November 2008**

Accompanied by Commission Delegation staff of the  
Political and Public Affairs Section:

Mr. Giovanni Di Girolamo, Head of Section and Ms Terri-Ann Priel  
(mission phone number for Kathleen Huygen of the EP - 0032 476 762 712)

### **Tuesday 28 October**

#### **OTTAWA**

Afternoon/evening

Individual arrival of Members

17h30

Pick up at Ottawa airport of all MEPs arriving on 28 Oct (3)

Transfer to Hotel by Commission Delegation vehicles

*Fairmont Château Laurier*

*1 Rideau Street*

*Ottawa, Ontario*

*Telephone: (613) 241-1414*

*Fax: (613) 562-7030*

19.45

Rendezvous in hotel lobby for transfer with EC Delegation vehicles to dinner venue

Official residence of the European Commission Head of Delegation, Ambassador Dorian Prince

20.00

**Dinner (and briefing) for MEPs and EP staff, hosted by  
Ambassador Dorian Prince**

*Ambassador's Official Residence*

*767 Acacia Lane, Ottawa (Rockliffe)*

### **Wednesday 29 October**

#### **OTTAWA**

*Check out but leave luggage at hotel*

08.30	Rendezvous in hotel lobby
8.45	Transfer by delegation vehicles to Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) for morning programme
Morning 9:00 -12:00	<p><b>Meeting with officials from DFAIT</b>  <b>Lester B Pearson Building</b>  125 Sussex Drive  Ottawa, ON, Canada  K1A 0G2</p> <p><b>(Met in the lobby by Georges Flangan Whalen – Senior Policy Advisor)</b></p> <p><b>Agenda:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada-EU Relations</li> <li>• Canada-EU Summit achievements and follow-up</li> <li>• Closer-Economic Partnership (including air traffic negotiations)</li> <li>• Energy and environment</li> <li>• Seals</li> <li>• Partnership in Peace and Security (including cooperation in Afghanistan)</li> <li>• Canada's Northern Strategy and Canada's Arctic Foreign policy</li> </ul>
12.15	<p>Transfer to lunch venue by EC Commission vehicles  Le Salon Rideau I/ Rideau I Room,  Wilfrid's Restaurant at the <i>Fairmont Château Laurier</i>  1 Rideau Street, Ottawa, Ontario</p> <p>Contact: Philippe Méla of the Canada Europe Parliamentary Association, Tel.: 613 992 5155</p>
12.30 – 14.45	<p><b>Luncheon hosted by David Tilson, MP -</b>  Chair of Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association  Present:  <b>Mr. David Tilson, MP (Conservative), Chair of Canada-Europe</b>  <b>Hon. Lorna Milne, Senator (Liberal), VP of Canada-Europe</b>  <b>Hon. Terry Mercer, Senator (Liberal)</b>  <b>Hon. Jim Munson, Senator (Liberal)</b>  <b>Mr. Brian Storseth, MP (Conservative)</b></p> <p>Marcus Pistor, Advisor</p>

Philippe Mela Secretariat

15.00

*Pick up luggage following luncheon*

Rendez vous in the lobby of *Château Laurier* for transfer to Ottawa International Airport in EC Commission vehicles (accompanied by Terri-Ann Priel)

17.00

Departure for Vancouver  
Flight AC189

**\* NB, Vancouver is 3 hours behind Ottawa time**

19.20

Arrival in Vancouver

19.45

Transfer to Hotel by shuttle

**Ground transportation in Vancouver provided by Vancouver Shuttle**

Contact person: Mr Curtis Goldsberry - 604-841-2121 OR 1-888-941-2121)

*The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver  
900 West Georgia St  
Vancouver, BC V6C 2W6  
+1 604-684-3131*

Evening

free

**Thursday 30 October**

**VANCOUVER**

Breakfast

8.45

Rendezvous in hotel lobby to depart for Fraser Institute transported by Vancouver Shuttle

9.00

**Meeting with senior staff of the Fraser Institute**

*Vancouver Office  
4th Floor, 1770 Burrard Street,  
Vancouver BC*

Participants:

Amela **Karabegovic** Associate Dir. Globalization Studies  
Niels **Veldhuis** Director of Fiscal Studies  
Csaba **Hajdu** Senior Fellow  
Raaj **Tiagi** Senior Economist  
Herb **Grubel** Senior Fellow  
Diane **Katz** Dir. of Risk, Env. and Energy Policy Studies

10:15 – 11:30

FREE (Perhaps a visit of the Vancouver Art Museum (Gallery)?)

750 Hornby St.  
at Hornby and Georgia  
604-662-4719

- 11:45 Shuttle to 2010 Commerce Centre  
**British Columbia's Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Secretariat**  
**-focus on trade promotion and the Olympics**
- 12.00 – 13:45 **Sandwich lunch and Presentation**  
**2010 Commerce Centre -**  
Host: Ken Veldman, Manager  
*Business Connections*  
*Suite 1600 - 800 Robson Street*  
*Vancouver, BC V6Z 3B7*  
*Tel: 604 660 3549*  
<http://www.2010commercecentre.gov.bc.ca/>
- 14:00 **Transfer to University of British Columbia (UBC)**
- 14.30 to 16.00 **UBC**  
**-tour of the Asian centre**  
**-Research and innovation at UBC**  
**-UBC relations with minority communities**
- Meeting with Professor Craig Klafter,  
Associate Vice President International  
University of British Columbia  
1871 WEST MALL V6T 1Z2  
*room 604 in the Asian Centre 1871 west mall (Room 604 is on the ground floor of the building round to the left as you enter).*
- 16.00 Return to hotel with shuttle
- 19.15 Transfer from hotel to Raincity Grill Restaurant  
1193 Denman Street, Vancouver, BC  
604.685.7337
- 19:30 **Dinner hosted by MEPs** (Delegation for Relations with Canada)  
**Guests: Ms Denise Savoie MP and Ms Hedy Fry, MP**
- Return to hotel by shuttle after dinner**

**Friday 31 October**

**VANCOUVER**

Breakfast at hotel



- Director
  - o Yukon Archives: Presenter – Lesley Buchan, Territorial Archivist
- 17.15 Meet shuttle @ Arts Centre Return to Hotel
- 18.30 **Reception @ Westmark Hotel with Yukon Minister, select government ministers and business officials (approx. 50 invitees)**

**NB – During reception, Mr Ó Neachtain will be invited to give brief remarks.**

  - o Welcoming Address
  - o Brief remarks: Mr Seán Ó Neachtain
- 19:45 **Depart reception for dinner at Yukon Legislature Building (short walk – Halloween evening so lots of "trick or treaters")**

**Accompanied by :**

  - Lesley McCullough, Director Intergovernmental Relations, cell :867.334.2876
  - Carl Burgess, Intergovernmental Relations, Yukon, cell:867.334.2864

**Dinner @ Yukon Legislature Foyer (~36 people)**
- 20:00 Presentations and open discussion
 

**Presentation by Mr Ó Neachtain on EU Arctic Policy and EU-Canada relations**

After dinner, return to hotel

**Saturday, 1 November**

**WHITEHORSE/VANCOUVER**

- 07.30 **Breakfast & Briefing with Council of Yukon First Nations**

Ed Schultz – Executive Director, Council of Yukon First Nations
- 09.30 Check-out and meet in hotel lounge
 

Met by: Carl Burgess, Intergovernmental Relations Officer, cell:867.334.2864

Ian Church, Senior Science Advisor, Yukon, cell:867.334.2847

- 9.45 Shuttle Departs – **Scenic visits**
- o Yukon Artists at Work (<http://yaaw.com/index.html>)  
studio & gallery tour  
presentation on Yukon-Siberia artists exchange
  - o Yukon Beringia Centre (<http://www.beringia.com/>)  
Catered Lunch hosted by Yukon Government
- 12.45 Transfer to Whitehorse airport by Yukon govt shuttle
- 13.45 Depart Whitehorse on Air Canada Flight AC8446 to Vancouver
- 16.10 Arrival at Vancouver airport
- 16.45/17.00 Transfer from airport to hotel with Vancouver shuttle
- The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver*  
900 West Georgia St  
Vancouver, BC V6C 2W6  
+1 604-684-3131
- 19:00 **Optional evening tour of Vancouver + Grouse Mountain**  
**Option to have dinner at Mountain restaurant**
- Return to hotel with shuttle

### **Sunday, 2 November**

- Breakfast at hotel
- 9:15 Check out and bring bags
- 9:30 **Tour of Vancouver and surrounding areas (shuttle)**
- 12.30 Departure from tour for Vancouver airport with shuttle (or by taxi for those leaving at other times)  
Direct Flight to Frankfurt AC9100 15.40