



JOINT REPORT ON THE
INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE
*SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY
&
DEVELOPMENT*

WESTMINSTER, LONDON

MARCH 14 TO 17, 2016



Joint Report on the Participation of the Honourable Nicole Olivierre, M.P, Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie, M.P at the International Parliamentary Conference on Sustainability, Energy and Development held in Westminster, London, United Kingdom during the period March 14th - 17th, 2016

As part of its **International Parliamentary Project on Sustainability, Energy & Development**, the **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK)** convened an international network of parliamentarians to deliberate on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The project commenced with three workshops in the following regions to examine issues of sustainable development, energy security and resource management:

- the African Regional Workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2015
- the Caribbean Regional Workshop held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad in December 2015; and
- the Asia- Pacific Regional Workshop held in New Delhi, India in January 2016

From these workshops the International Parliamentarians' e-Handbook on *Sustainability, Energy and Development, Implementing the SDGs – 2015-2030* was produced. The project culminated in the **International Parliamentary Conference on Sustainability Energy and Development** held on March 14th – 17th, 2016 in Westminster, London which involved a number of panel sessions examining the various elements of the SDGs.

Day One

The first day, which was also Commonwealth Day, began with an introduction from Ian Liddell-Grainger M.P, Chair of CPA UK Executive Committee. The floor was then given to the Lord Speaker, Rt Hon. Baroness D'Souza who formally opened the Conference and addressed the role of parliamentarians in scrutinizing and implementing policies on sustainable development.

2. The subsequent session focused on the issue of energy policies, particularly policies related to the development of renewables. The first session set the scene for ensuing discussions by placing sustainability in its wider, global context. Two high profile members of the House of Lords – Lord Bourne, Minister of Energy and Climate Change and Lord McConnell, former First Minister of Scotland– gave an overview of recent events. Delegates were then invited to view a video presentation by Mr. David Nabarro, UN Special Envoy on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In it, he emphasized the key role of parliamentarians in enacting legislation, formulating policies, providing oversight and approving budgets.

3. The day concluded with a review of the outcomes of the three (3) regional workshops held during the period November 2015 to January 2016:

- The review of the Africa Regional Workshop was presented by Hanna Songowa, M.P (Sierra Leone) and Bashir Babale, M.P (Nigeria)

- The review of the Caribbean Regional Workshop was presented by Baroness Scott of Needham Market (United Kingdom) and Dr. the Hon Bhoendradatt Tewarie, M.P (Trinidad and Tobago); and
- The review of the Asia – Pacific Regional Workshop was presented by Dawn Butler, M.P (United Kingdom) and Vidura Wickramanayeka, M.P (Sri Lanka).

A reception was held to launch the CPA UK e-Handbook: *Sustainability, Energy and Development, Implementing the SDGs – 2015-2030*. The launch was conducted by Desmond Swayne, M.P, Minister of International Development.

Day Two

4. The second day commenced with a session on financing sustainable development. This was chaired by Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale, former First Minister of Scotland and co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on SDGs. Mr. Josue Tanaka from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) provided an overview of climate finance in practice, including the importance of having a mix of financing both public sector and private sector projects.

5. Lord Deben, Chair of the UK Independent Climate Change Committee lead a discussion on the role of parliamentarians in legislating for sustainability. The speakers and topics of discussion for the remainder of the session are outlined below:

- Mr. Michal Nachmany from the London School of Economics (LSE) elaborated on the importance of equipping parliamentarians with sufficient technical and policy knowledge;
- Ms. Julia Keutgen from UNDP spoke on legislation in the field of renewable energy and sustainable development using examples from countries such as India, Bangladesh and Jordan;
- Mr. Robert Ondhowe from the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) presented on the danger of pursuing a “business as usual” strategy, which could lead to a 60% rise in global energy demand by 2030; and
- Mr. Graham Stuart, M.P, Chair of the Global Legislators Organisation (GLOBE) presented the parliamentarian point of view. He reasoned that parliamentarians had a major responsibility for the attainment of the Paris COP21 Agreement.

6. Several breakout sessions were held which allowed for discussions by small groups of delegates. During the lunch break on Day Two, Trinidad and Tobago delegate Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie, M.P launched his book entitled “*Sustainable Development: Thinking About it, Making it Happen.*”

Day Three

7. On the third day, Trinidad and Tobago delegate the Honourable Nicole Olivierre, M.P, Minister of Energy and Energy Industries chaired a session on *Ensuring Energy Security, Energy Access and Transparency*. She noted the unique nature of the Commonwealth in bringing together a diverse group of nations and also highlighted the important role of parliamentarians in influencing the national legislature and empowering their respective parliaments in achieving these goals.

8. The aim of the session was to explore the role of energy in poverty eradication and devise a pathway toward universal energy access, given the need to manage the exploitation of hydrocarbon resources in an environmentally sustainable manner. The speakers and topics of discussion for the remainder of the session are outlined below:

- Professor Nathan Hultam from the University of Maryland School of Public Policy showed the link between poor access to energy and poor health; and
- Dr Jim Cust from the National Resource Governance Institute presented suggestions on how resource-rich countries can achieve sustainable development.

9. Westminster-style committee hearings or oral hearings were held to facilitate the practical use of the information acquired by the delegates during the sessions. They allowed for “real time” questioning of experts and government officials and each hearing was followed by a de-briefing. Three groups were formed and were chaired by the following politicians: Lord Purvis of Tweed, Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst M.P and Hon Jonathan Young M.P from New Zealand.

10. Group One focused on financing for sustainable development and was represented by Dr. Justin Ram from Caribbean Development Bank and Mr. Ben Good from Global Village Energy Partnership. Group Two examined issues around financing for sustainable energy and was represented by Mr. Josue Tanaka from the EBRD and Mr. Damian Ryan from the Climate Group. Group Three focused on the use of data and indicators in monitoring the SDGs and was represented by Mr. Martin Horwood from Development Initiatives, Mr. Jo Howard from the Institute of Development Studies and Ms. Stephanie Weckend from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

Day Four

11. On the fourth and final day, delegates proceeded to the Houses of Parliament to participate in a Westminster-style chamber debate. The debate was chaired by Ms. Eleanor Laing, M.P, First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons and delegates debated the following motion “*that this House agrees that COP21 has secured the global carbon emissions cap*”. The motion was proposed by Crossbench Peer Lord Oxburgh KBE and he reminded delegates of the rapid growth of CO₂ emissions over the past one hundred and fifty (150) years. It was noted that the COP21 Agreement was merely the first step on a long and difficult road. Opposing the motion was Hon Sen Silvia Garza from Mexico, who asserted that the agreement was not ambitious enough given that the planet was already in a state of “red alert”.

12. This assertion was followed by a lively and wide-ranging debate featuring over twenty (20) speakers. There were contributions on both sides of the argument, with many delegates identifying

specific concerns in their own country. However when the vote was called, the motion was rejected by twenty-five (25) votes to twelve (12).

13. A “world café” session was also held with civil society, NGOs and private sector representatives. After further small group sessions Ms. Jennie King from the Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network addressed delegates on the role of youth in promoting sustainable development.

14. A comprehensive session was held on the importance of partnerships with the media, civil society, the private sector and other key players. The speakers and topics of discussion for the remainder of the session are outlined below:

- Mr. Peter Knowles, Controller of BBC Parliament gave insight into the role of the media, offering parliamentarians advice on how to effectively communicate their message;
- Ms. Joanna Setzer from Grantham Research Institute at LSE advised parliamentarians on the critical role of sub-national and regional partnerships;
- Mr. Neil Thorns from CAFOD presented on the importance of engaging with NGOs and wider civil society; and
- Ms. Sharon Brooks from UNEP-WCMC focused on private sector engagement and the challenges and limitations of data management.

15. The Conference was officially brought to a close with remarks from Lord Purvis of Tweed, a member of the CPA UK Executive Committee. The Conference was informative as a result of its focus on how countries can contribute to the achievement of the goals of COP21 and the important role of parliamentarians in the process. It also emphasized the need for cooperation across Party lines and inter-parliamentary collaboration to make progress possible.

Submitted by:

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