CPA Scotland Branch report of the 43rd British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) Annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
The Falkland Islands: 12-14 February 2013

1. The 43rd British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) Annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), took place in the Falkland Islands from 12-14 February 2013. The BIMR Conference is held annually and attended by delegates from the member Branches: Alderney, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Falkland Islands, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Malta, Northern Ireland, St Helena, Scotland, Wales and the UK.

2. Margaret Mitchell MSP, member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Scotland Branch Executive Committee led the delegation comprising 2 Members including herself. The other delegate was Stewart McMillan MSP. The Secretary of CPA Scotland Branch also accompanied the delegation. There were around 40 delegates and special guests from 11 legislatures within the BIMR. Representatives from Canada and Anguilla observed.

3. The theme of the Conference was “Self-Determination and its role in Self Governance and Devolution”. This theme was relevant given that the Falkland Islands were holding a referendum in March 2013. The referendum question had been agreed - Do you wish the Falkland Islands to retain their current political status as an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom?

4. Guest speakers were invited to address 3 plenary sessions.

Plenary sessions

5. The Rt Hon Baroness Scotland QC addressed the first plenary session, entitled “Self-determination and its role in self-governance and devolution”. In her speech she placed the right to self-determination within the international legal framework and gave examples of how fluid and varied a nation’s journey can be through different degrees of self-governance. Margaret Mitchell MSP chaired this plenary session.

6. Professor Michael Keating addressed the second plenary session entitled “Arguments about self-determination”. He explained the different elements required for a nation to determine its own future, and the different ways in
which this can occur. He concluded with a statement describing how, over time, a group can constitute itself as a people to determine their own future, so long as it can be demonstrated that there is a genuine desire to do so.

7. These plenary sessions were followed by two workshops, focusing on “The challenges of governance in smaller territories and regions” and “Theories of self-determination: How have these theories been applied in recent years across the world and what are the international trends?”

8. On the second day of the Conference, The Hon Samantha Sacramento MP delivered a speech on behalf of Fabian Picardo, Chief Minister of Gibraltar, prior to the third Plenary Session entitled “The right to self-determination is not curtailed by sovereignty claims”. The presentation described Gibraltar’s own journey of self-determination, and the challenges faced by small states in exercising their right to decide their own political future. The Secretary of CPA Scotland Branch undertook clerking duties during this session.

9. The final open plenary discussed “Experiences in the development of greater regional and national autonomy”. This session enabled delegates to set out the position in relation to their own legislatures. It was an interesting experience for delegates to the Conference to be able to compare the varying levels of devolved government that exists within the UK. It was also informative to learn how small jurisdictions such as the Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey, have a far higher level of autonomy in comparison with other legislatures within the region.

10. Plenary sessions were broadcast by the Falkland Islands Radio Service and Falkland Islands Television.

Opening Ceremony

11. The formal opening ceremony took place in the Town Hall and included performances by children from both the infant and junior school and Falkland Islands Community School, under the direction of a Scot, Shirley Adams-Leach. Hon Keith Biles JP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Falkland islands, welcomed guests. There was limited seating for the public to observe the proceedings of the Opening Ceremony.

Wreath laying ceremony

12. The Scotland Branch delegation attended a wreath laying ceremony at the Liberation monument to pay respects to all who had lost their lives during the 1982 conflict. Stewart McMillan MSP played a lament during a short ceremony which added poignancy to the occasion.
Annual General Meeting

13. The Agenda for the BIMR Annual General Meeting 2013 is attached at Annex B.

14. The two main issues discussed during the AGM were:
   
   a) Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Group and
   b) Funding of future BIMR Conferences

15. The paper outlining a proposed e-voting process was agreed. The procedure would be adopted to select the regional CWP representative for the 3 year term from 2013-16. It was also agreed that the BIMR constitution should be amended to include an election process for the CWP Steering Group, which was also agreed during the AGM, to take effect in 2016.

16. In addition, delegates were asked to seek approval from their Branch Executive Committees to support a CPA BIMR CWP Steering Committee.

17. It was recommended that each Branch should nominate a woman parliamentarian to join a Regional CWP Steering Committee (RCSC) in order to support the soon-to-be-elected Regional CWP Representative.

18. If agreed, by a majority of the 13 Regional Branch Executive Committees, the first meeting of the RCSC would take place in late April / early May 2013 at Westminster with a teleconference facility for those not able to travel to London. The purpose of this meeting would be to map out future plans and in particular to discuss candidacies for the election of the CPA CWP Chairperson which would be held at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Johannesburg during the first week of September 2013.

19. The other main issue discussed was in relation to funding of future BIMR Conferences which was first raised in Edinburgh during the AGM which took place in the Scottish Parliament on 12 June 2012.

20. Delegates agreed that each Branch should decide on one of two options for the funding of future BIMR conferences to take effect for the BIMR conference to be hosted by Wales in late May 2014, over a two day period, with an optional self-funding culture day.

21. The options were as follows:

   Option A) the status quo - the host Branch pays for the conference.

   Option B) Delegates fund their return travel to the conference and their bed and breakfast accommodation at the conference hotel (one hotel to be
22. All Branches were asked to re-consider these options by Monday 24 March. The Regional Secretary would announce the consolidated results on 28 March 2013.

23. The Regional Secretary will provide draft minutes of the AGM in due course.

Other relevant meetings

Oil and gas

24. Murdo Fraser MSP visited the Falkland Islands in June 2012. On his return he submitted a report to the CPA Scotland Branch, a copy of which is available on the CPA Scotland Branch pages of the Scottish Parliament’s website or alternatively from the Branch Secretary. A link to the relevant section of the website is attached. http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/abouttheparliament/53448.aspx

25. According to Murdo Fraser’s visit report in June 2012, the Falkland Islanders hope to develop a new oil and gas industry in coming years. Given Scotland’s, and in particular the North-east of Scotland’s, experience of an oil and gas boom, it was felt that it would be useful to see whether there could be a sharing of information from Scotland with the Falkland Islanders in terms of how best to develop an oil and gas industry. It was further suggested it would also be worth exploring whether there are opportunities for Scottish companies in the oil and gas sector to be involved in the Falkland Islands’ developments.

26. In his conclusions Murdo Fraser stated that “Given the similarity between the topography and economy of the Falkland Islands and many remote parts of Scotland, including our own northern and western isles, I believe that there are opportunities for further links to be developed between the islands and the CPA Scotland Branch, particularly focussed on mutually beneficial economic opportunities. I would hope that this could be taken forward by the outward visit from the CPA Scotland delegation in February 2013”.

27. Scottish Development International (SDI) provided a briefing note about the organisation’s engagement with the Falkland Islands. There has been contact although it seems that there has been no significant engagement to-date.

28. Scottish Enterprise met with a representative from the Falklands Island’s Development Corporation in August 2012. The representative was visiting Scotland as part of readying the Islands’ suppliers for the arrival of an oil production sector to their economy. At that time, Premier Oil and EDP (British oil companies) were already on the islands. The representative
was accompanied by representatives from DBS Projects and Nine-Dimensions (both Scottish based consultancies with an interest in the Falklands). Discussion centred round the oil and gas sector in Aberdeen, oil and gas skills and the international supply chain.

29. There was a proposal to run an event in Aberdeen late 2012, on opportunities in the Falklands Oil and Gas sector, this was cancelled. However, it appears there is still an intention to hold this event sometime in 2013. Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International remain committed to supporting an event by bringing companies together.

30. During the Conference the delegation spoke to Members of the Falkland Islands Council and other islanders involved in the oil and gas industry. It appears that engagement, involving key individuals, between the Falkland Islands and Scotland, particularly in Shetland, has taken place. There is enthusiasm for further Scottish involvement in the development of the oil and gas industry. It is recommended that contact details should be provided to SDI.

Diaspora

31. The delegation had the opportunity to meet with some members from the Scottish diaspora during the visit. Individuals included Keith Biles, the Speaker of the Falklands Islands Council, teachers, musicians and former members of the military who had settled in the Falkland Islands.

Conclusion

32. Consensus of delegates indicated that the Conference was interesting and thought provoking. The quality of the presentations and workshops was excellent as were many contributions made by delegates, not least those made by Margaret Mitchell MSP and Stewart McMillan MSP. There was ample opportunity to talk in the margins of the conference to most of the participants. Delegates had the opportunity to learn from one another and valuable contacts were made, for example contact details for Scottish Development International.

33. The Conference focussed on self-determination. It was accepted that the right of the people to choose their relationship with others remains a key determinant in their interrelationships, and remains one of the most fundamental of human rights.

34. One of the key points to emerge from the Conference was that there appeared to be no single definition of self-determination. Paths that countries and overseas territories had taken in the exercise of self-determination had been different.

35. The adoption of an election process for the forthcoming and future BIMR representatives to Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Group was a particularly welcome development. The BIMR has not
demonstrated any real organised commitment in this area to date. Delegates agreed in principal that a regional CWP Committee should be established, chaired by the incoming BIMR CWP Steering Group representative.

36. The delegation hoped that the status quo would be retained in relation to funding of future BIMR Conferences. Early indications as expressed prior to the AGM, suggested that opinion at that time was 50/50.

37. As well as the formal conference sessions, the Falkland Islands Branch included cultural aspects into the conference programme using the conference as a means to showcase Falkland Island attractions and heritage sites.

38. The delegation took every opportunity to promote the 2014 Commonwealth Games which will take place in Glasgow in 2014 by encouraging politicians and other individuals to visit Scotland and join in the fun.

39. Both Members, in different ways, proved to be excellent ambassadors for CPA Scotland Branch. Margaret Mitchell’s experience of the CPA proved invaluable during the AGM and Stewart McMillan MSP skills in playing the bagpipes at various events created another unique and positive impression of CPA Scotland Branch.

Recommendations

40. The delegation recommends that the CPA Scotland Branch Executive Committee should write to Scottish Development International and provide a copy of the CPA Scotland Branch Conference report with relevant contact details for those involved in the development of the oil and gas industry on the Islands.

41. Further information about any aspects of this conference may be obtained from the Branch Secretary. Contact details as follows:

**Margaret Neal**
Secretary
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
Scotland Branch
Room Q2.03
Queensberry House
Telephone 0131 348 5323
Mobile 07713063684
Text Relay: 18001 0131 348 5323
Parliament Textphone: 0845 270 0152
43RD BRITISH ISLANDS AND MEDITERRANEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE
FALKLAND ISLANDS
11-15 FEBRUARY 2013

PROGRAMME

“SELF–DETERMINATION AND ITS ROLE IN SELF GOVERNANCE AND DEVOLUTION”

Monday 11 February

1530 Arrive Mount Pleasant Airport Falkland Islands
   Met by: The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon Keith Biles JP
   Hon. Dick Sawle MLA
   Hon. Sharon Halford MLA
   Claudette Prior MBE

1600 Transport to Stanley by coach

1700 Check-in: The Malvina House Hotel

Tuesday 12 February

0845 Depart hotel and walk to the Town Hall (Conference venue)

0900 Opening Ceremony:

0950 Official photograph Sharon Jaffray

1015 Plenary Session 1: Self-Determination and its role in self-governance and devolution:
   Q&A Session
   Chair: Margaret Mitchell MSP
   Secretary: Margaret Neal (Scotland)
   Lead Speaker: The Rt Hon The Baroness Scotland of Asthal PC QC

1345 Plenary Session 2: Arguments about self-determination:
Nationalist
Permissive
Remedial
Decolonization
Democratic

Q&A Session
Chair: Hon. Mike Summers OBE MLA (FI)
Secretary: Claudette Prior (FI)
Lead Speaker: Professor Michael Keating

1530 Workshop A: “The challenges of governance in smaller territories and regions”
Chair: Hon Joseph Bossano MP (Gibraltar)
Rapporteur: Hon Juan Watterson MHK (IoM)

1530 Workshop B: “Theories of self-determination: How have these theories been applied in recent years across the world and what are the international trends?”
Chair: Hon Roger Edwards MLA (FI)
Rapporteur: Hon Tony Wild MLC (IoM)

1630 Report back from workshops:
Workshop A: Hon Juan Watterson MLK (IoM)
Workshop B: Hon Tony Wild MLC (IoM)

Wednesday 13 February

0900 Plenary Session 3: “The right to self-determination is not curtailed by sovereignty claims”

Q&A Session
Chair: Hon Sharon Halford MLA (Fl)
Secretary: Simon Ross (Guernsey)
Speech of Hon Fabian Picardo Chief Minister of Gibraltar delivered by Ms Sacramento MP

1100 Annual General Meeting of the Region.
Chair: Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods MP
Secretary: Andrew Tuggey
Meeting for Clerks and FIG Members’ Remuneration panel at conference venue

1345 Open Plenary: “Experiences in the development of greater regional and national autonomy”

Chair: Hon Dick Sawle MLA (Fl)
Secretary: Al Davies (Wales)
Rapporteur: Hon Isobel Ellul-Hammond (Gibraltar)

1500 Round up of key points from Conference.

Chair: Hon Jan Cheek MLA (Fl)
Rapporteurs:
Hon Juan Watterson MHK (IoM)
Hon Tony Wild MLC (IoM)
Hon Isobel Ellul-Hammond (Gibraltar)

1530 Closing Session:

Hon Keith Biles JP – Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Fl)
Hon Dick Sawle MLA (Fl)
The Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP

1600 Press Conference with delegations at conference venue

1645 Return to hotel

1800 Reception at Government House Lounge suits

Thursday 14 February

0900 Depart hotel for Falkland Life Tour at Bluff Cove

Friday 15 February

0615 Depart Stanley by coach for departure to UK from Mount Pleasant
### Annex B

**DELEGATES FOR THE BIMR CONFERENCE – FEBRUARY 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Branch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hon Hubert Hughes MP</td>
<td>Anguilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Barbara Webster Bourne (Speaker)</td>
<td>Observer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russ Hiebert MP</td>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Members of the Falkland islands took part. Official delegates: Jan Cheek Mike Summers</td>
<td>Falkland Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Francis Quin Deputy Michelle le Clerc Mr Simon Ross</td>
<td>Guernsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Samantha Sacramento MP</td>
<td>Gibraltar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Isobel Ellul-Hammond MP Melvyn Farrell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connétable Juliette Gallichan and Connétable Steve Pallett Mrs Anne Harris</td>
<td>Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Juan Watterson MHK</td>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Tony Wild MLC Mr Roger Phillips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Angelo Farrugia MP</td>
<td>Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Jesmond Mugliett MP Mr John Vella</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hay MLA Robin Ramsay</td>
<td>Northern Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon Raymond Williams MLC</td>
<td>St Helena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Mitchell MSP Stuart McMillan MSP Margaret Neal</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rt Hon Baroness Patricia Scotland of Asthal PC QC The Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods MP Thomas Docherty MP Andrew Rosindell MP Andrew Tuggey Victoria Bower</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Watson AM William Powell AM Al Davies</td>
<td>Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Michael Keating</td>
<td>Guest Speaker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.

2. Chair’s Welcome (Regional Rep CPA UK) and Opening Remarks.


4. Matters Arising.

5. Commonwealth and CPA Matters, including report from CPA Chairperson, Rt Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, to include General Assembly issues.

6. CWP Matters, including agreement for election for BIMR CWP representative – Paper 02.

7. Funding of BIMR Conferences – Paper 03.

8. Regional Secretary’s Report – with Regional Events.

9. Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences (CPC) and Regional Conferences:
   • 59th in 2013 (South Africa)
   • 60th in 2014 (CameroonTBC)
   • 44th in May? 2014 (Wales)
   • 45th in 2015 (CyprusTBC)
   • 46th in 2016 (JerseyTBC)
   • 47th in 2017 (TBC)

10. EU – Commonwealth Activities and Issues.

11. Reports from Regional Branches.

12. Dates of Next Meetings:
   • September 2013 Meeting at 59th CPC in Colombo
   • BIMR AGM at 44th Regional Conference in Cardiff