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Canadian Association of Parliamentarians
on Population and Development

Association canadienne des parlementaires
pour la population et le développement

CAPPD 2025 AGM: Meeting Minutes

Participants

Attendees:

- ***Senator Marilou McPhedran (Non-Affiliated)***
- ***Senator Salma Ataullahjan (CPC)***
- ***Senator Margo Greenwood (ISG)***
- ***Senator Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler (CSG)***
- ***Senator Kim Pate (ISG)***
- ***MP Anita Vandenbeld (LPC)***
- ***MP Leah Gazan (NDP)***
- ***MP Larouche (BQ)***

Special Presenter:

- ***Sarah Craven (UNFPA)***
- ***Frédérique Chabot (Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights)***

Representatives from the Secretariat (Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights):

- ***Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah (Co-Director, Policy and Advocacy)***
- ***Insiya Mankani (Policy and Advocacy Officer)***
- ***Shejuti Farook (Web and IT Coordinator)***

Welcome and Approval of the Agenda

Action Canada's Policy and Advocacy Officer, Insiya Mankani, welcomed attendees and provided introductory remarks about the work of Action Canada and its long history as the secretariat of CAPPD. Action Canada has been the CAPPD secretariat since 1997, with a goal of engaging politicians in SRHR in Canada and globally. Reproductive health and women's empowerment are intertwined, and sexual and reproductive rights are human rights. This work builds on the commitment made in Cairo in 1994.

After quorum was reached, the meeting commenced. Insiya introduced Senator Marilou McPhedran, co-chair of CAPPD, as well as Sarah Craven from UNFPA and Frédérique Chabot from Action Canada, who

would also be presenting during the meeting. Insiya then invited Senator McPhedran to say a few words.

Opening Remarks

Senator McPhedran welcomed all members to the AGM. She highlighted Canada's recent historic commitments on SRHR, both financially and politically, noting we are now in a new political climate where restrictions on access to sexual and reproductive health and rights in neighbouring countries continue to grow. Globally, sexual and reproductive health and rights are at the centre of a concerning rise in anti-rights and anti-democratic organizing. In examining the current threats to democracy, human rights, and the international order, parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in countering these threats to SRHR and democracy by remaining strong champions both domestically and in international forums. There has been a marked de-prioritization of sexual and reproductive health funding in a time when it is needed most, as we heard from the speakers. Senator McPhedran emphasized that as parliamentarians, championing SRHR continues to play a central role in our duties, as it is essential to keeping the flame alive among our colleagues.

Senator McPhedran then read through the agenda and asked for any additions. Seeing none, Senator Osler moved to approve the agenda. Motion approved.

Senator McPhedran noted that minutes for the 2024 AGM were circulated for review and asked if there were any edits. Seeing none, Senator Osler moved to approve the 2024 minutes. Motion approved.

Report from the Co-Chairs

Over the course of the year, members of the CAPPD attended multiple international conferences and UN sessions, including the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), to represent the association and to meet with parliamentarians from across the world to share insights on SRHR needs issues globally. During CSW, Senator McPhedran also joined a visit with international parliamentarians to meet with their US Senate counterparts in DC to discuss ongoing challenges with SRHR and how we can better cooperate globally on these issues.

In September 2024, Bill C-64 was studied in the Senate and in the House of Commons committee on health. Several CAPPD members were involved in studying this bill, including Senator McPhedran, Senator Moodie, Senator Osler, and Senator Pate.

The CAPPD also co-sponsored an event with Action Canada and UNFPA in November 2024 to celebrate the 2024 State of the World Population (SWOP), marking 30 years of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). CAPPD was represented by Senator McPhedran, MP Anita Vandenbeld, who made remarks, and Senator Osler, who was on the panel.

Members of the CAPPD shared several statements in the House, including on women's reproductive rights, International Safe Abortion Day, contraceptive access, comprehensive sexuality education, pharmacare, and more. Together, the CAPPD raised important issues in the House, brought attention to

these issues with their colleagues, and created more space to continue furthering the overall agenda on women's rights and ensuring health and well-being for all.

Senator McPhedran highlighted that these events are further detailed in the 2024 annual report, which was circulated for review and asked if there were any edits. Seeing none, MP Gazan moved to approve the 2024 annual report. Motion approved.

Opportunities for 2025

There are several upcoming opportunities for engagement over the next year. The Canadian UNFPA State of Population Report launch was held on October 7. The CAPPD is co-hosted this event, which highlighted the gaps in access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Further opportunities for engagement include joint statements on topical issues of shared interest, briefings from global and domestic experts on topics of interest, cross-regional parliamentary delegations to global conferences, and working with different domestic and international parliamentary groups that are aligned with CAPPD interests.

Election of CAPPD Executive Committee (2025-2026)

The secretariat shared the nominees for all ten (10) executive committee positions, noting that following the recent election, there were two positions on the executive committee vacated by former MPs Lindsay Mathyssen and Leah Taylor Roy. One position was also vacant from last year that had previously been held by Senator Jaffer, who has since retired.

There is a continuation of the practice established by Dr. Fry that the CAPPD is co-chaired by an MP and senator, with Dr. Fry and Senator McPhedran continuing to serve as co-chairs.

Chair

MP Dr. Hedy Fry (LPC) - in absentia
Senator Marilou McPhedran (Non-affiliated)

Vice-Chairs

MP Elizabeth May (GPC) - in absentia
MP Leah Gazan (NDP)
Senator Gigi Osler (Canadian Senators Group)

Directors

MP Sonia Sidhu (LPC)
MP Andreanne Larouche (BQ)
MP Heather McPherson (NDP) – in absentia

Senator Rosemary Moodie (Independent Senators Group) – in absentia
Senator Salma Atallahjan (CPC)

Insiya shared the list of nominees for the executive committee and asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Seeing none, MP Anita Vandenberg moved a motion to accept all candidates to the CAPPD Executive Committee. Motion was seconded by MP Leah Gazan. Motion approved.

Keynote Speakers: Sarah Craven and Frédérique Chabot

The CAPPD heard from Sarah Craven, Washington Director of UNFPA, where she works with American leaders on supporting essential sexual and reproductive health. They also heard from Frédérique Chabot, Executive Director of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights. Sarah and Frédérique both shared on emerging challenges to SRHR and funding in this new political climate, and Canada's role as a champion both internationally and at home.

Closing Remarks Adjournment

Senator McPhedran congratulated the new executive committee on their election and reiterated the many opportunities to drive forward the agenda of the CAPPD, particularly in a new government with new colleagues.

Senator McPhedran moved a motion to adjourn. Motion passed.

AGM documents

Background documents, including the AGM minutes, CAPPD 2024 Annual Report, and the CAPPD constitution, can be found on the [CAPPD website](#) or by emailing secretariat@cappd.ca