

**Report of the OBA Foreign Conference to China**  
**April 15, 2015 - May 7, 2015**

Fifty seven (57) joined in the Conference this year including nineteen (19) lawyers, six (6) judges from all levels of courts, four (4) investment/bank/economists and the balance connected to the law in Canada and wishing to learn more about the law and conditions in China.

On our arrival in Shanghai on April 16, 2015, we were addressed by Claude Demers, head of Foreign Policy and Diplomacy Service Section of our Consulate. He explained the current situation of lawyers and foreign contacts in China and the development of Shanghai and China.

The next day, Rebecca Copelovici, Executive Director of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai and Russell Aydin, a Canadian Lawyer and Director of CCCS spoke to our group and answered all enquiries regarding the practise of law and business opportunities for Canadian investment in China through partnerships with local enterprises.

That night, Eric Pelletier, Consul General for Canada in Shanghai hosted a reception at the Peace Hotel (where we stayed in 2000 overlooking the Bund). Several lawyers attended including members of the Grandall Law Firm which numbers 1700. The Consul explained the current situation and the dynamic growth of Shanghai and China. We were all amazed with the super development in Shanghai and its cleanliness. In speaking with the lawyers, we learned of the expansion of investment in all countries of the world by Chinese corporations and investors. Osen Velinor, originally from Bulgaria, and now a graduate of California, together with Mikaela Lamrin from Stockholm Sweden and Charles Zhu locally explained the plan of their firm and other firms developing such expansion.

Remembrance Gifts were presented to all speakers in Shanghai of Osgoode Hall and in the case of the Consul, an original painting by Russell Noganosh.

On Sunday evening we flew (5 hours) to Shangri-La (via Kunming) and experienced the various minority culture groups (23 out of 55 in China) in Yunnan Province. These groups form a majority of the persons residing in Yunnan Province and the Han peoples (actual Chinese) are in the minority. The building in Shangri-La and other centres throughout the province is extensive and ongoing. We learned of the strong influence of the Tibetan language and culture throughout The Tibetan

Region which includes Tibet Autonomous and large mountainous portions of six other provinces of China where the Tibetan culture and language is predominant. The area encompassed amounts to over 30 % of the total land mass of China. Similar to the monastery in Lhasa, a new monastery has been established in Shangri-La where the monks together with friends and family are establishing an even larger monastery with homes, temples and shrines.

We travelled onto to UNESCO heritage sites with walled cities in Lijiang and Dali established in the first millennium. Kunming is the capital of Yunnan Province where Ms. En Feng Xia (email [sf8884320@163.com](mailto:sf8884320@163.com)) addressed our group explaining her law firm consisting of 5 partners. She has been a lawyer for 20 years and like the majority of lawyers is a “corporate” lawyer specializing in joint ventures throughout China but basically in Yunnan Province.

We next arrived in Xian which is the home of the Terracota Warriors, now referred to the Terra Cota soldiers who guard and protect the Emperor in his entry into the hereafter.

In Xian our group was addressed by Hao Zhao (email [zhaohao5918@163.com](mailto:zhaohao5918@163.com)) who described her practise of law in a large company of nearly 200 lawyers throughout that province. She answered all questions (many) comfortably. She indicated the predicament of judges both as to decisions, reversals and remunerations (poorly paid) with some looking to get out of the judicial position. We also heard rumours as to new and reform of the by the President.

On Tuesday we took the bullet train through the countryside in a smooth comfortable ride in our own car arriving in Beijing in less than 5 hours and went to a reception at the Embassy of Canada where we were greeted by his Excellency, Guy Saint-Jacques, and his staff and over 45 lawyers from Beijing including representatives of the Beijing Bar Association, all China Lawyers Association, and Canadian law firms with offices in China. His Excellency spoke well in both Chinese and English and we were all impressed. We were able to meet and discuss human rights, criminal law, family law and the rule of law as oppose to the rule by law. One lawyer had been yanked from the court room in the vigorous defence of his client and his certificate of practise was cancelled by the government. Presentations were made to the Beijing Bar Association, Zhang Yin, of an original painting and his Excellency for the Embassy by Russell Noganosh, a Ojibway artist and Osgoode Hall presentations were made to his Excellency, the all China Lawyers Association, and

Robert Kwak of Blake Cassells who has assisted the OBA Foreign Conference in both 2000 and 2015.

List of Lawyers (Beijing attached).

Conclusion:

China has developed and is developing more than North America and Europe developing in transportation (high speed trains), buildings with over 4500 skyscrapers in Shanghai having more than 40 floors. Their people (1.43 Billion) live in condos mainly which are programmed with a life expectancy of 70 years.

Judges are not paid well nor are their decisions confirmable. There are rumours of change by President. There are many lawyers both Chinese and international engaged in a program of joint ventures in China and every country of the world.

All lawyers were gratified with our attendance and meetings as they felt somewhat abandoned after the finding for legal development stopped a few years ago. Our presence as lawyers and judges travelling together was “awesome” for our now Chinese lawyer friends. I believe we have left a lasting positive impression and anticipate future interest in the OBA and across Canada for our CBA lawyers.

Respectfully Submitted

James Douglas Grenkie,  
OBA Foreign Conference Director