

Report on ICCCASU Mission to China October 20 - 26, 2018

The primary purpose of the trip was to meet with the China Center of Urban Development (CCUD) to assess opportunities for collaboration on a conference in Chengdu in July 2019. In the course of the trip, however, the team from ICCCASU met with a number of other individuals, organizations and potential partners.

The ICCCASU delegation was comprised of Prof. Huhua Cao, Co-President ICCCASU; Prof. Benjamin Gianni, Vice-President of ICCCASU and Dr. Tonton Mundele, Academic Chair of ICCCASU.

Day 1: Monday, October 22, Shanghai

The ICCCASU delegation traveled to Shanghai University's new research campus to meet with representatives, including: Prof. Zhang Henglong, Vice-Dean of Institute for Advanced Study; Prof. Liu Zheng, School of Political Science; Prof. Zhao Jun, School of Environmental and Chemical Engineering; Prof. Wang Hong, School of Economics; and other faculty members and graduate students.



Photo 1. Vice-Dean Prof. Zhang hosting the meeting with ICCCASU Delegation



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Following introductions by all parties, Prof Cao described the objectives of ICCCASU, stressing its role in strengthening relationships and fostering opportunities for collaboration between Canadian and Chinese universities. Prof Cao noted that the Vice-President of the University of Ottawa, Dr. David Graham, would soon be visiting Shanghai University.

Prof. Gianni described ICCCASU's efforts at strengthening dialogue between Canada, China and Africa on the topics of urbanization and sustainable development. He explained Canada's position as a developed country (82% urbanized) whose cities rate highly in world rankings, and whose population grows exclusively through immigration -- much of which comes from Asia and Africa. He stressed that while Canada urbanized earlier, it has much to learn from China and Africa, especially with respect to managing large conurbations.

Dr. Mundele described ICCCASU's previous conference in Cameroon, noting that it had involved more than 500 participants from 19 institutions and 20 different countries. Comprising more than 35 panels and 148 presentations, ICCCASU 2 attracted high-profile participants including 9 ministers from Cameroon and the Central Africa region, the former premier of British Columbia, and a range of international experts.



Photo 2. Meeting Participants Photo



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Prof Huhua Cao also invited Shanghai University students and scholars to participate to the ICCCASU 3 conference, being planned in Chengdu in the summer of 2019.

The Vice-Dean Prof. Zhang expressed his gratitude to the delegation for its visit and his wish that ties be established between ICCCASU, its partner universities and Shanghai University.

He then introduced his colleagues from Shanghai University, describing their areas of expertise and reinforcing their willingness to collaborate with Canadian institutions. The research areas of those present aligned with ICCCASU's primary research themes, including environmental protection, urbanization, corporate social responsibility, and construction management.

The Vice-Dean noted that Shanghai University would be happy to participate in ICCCASU 3 and that he looked forward to visiting Ottawa to strengthen collaboration. He promised to recommend the University of Ottawa and Carleton University to students at Shanghai University who are considering pursuing postgraduate studies abroad.

Day 2: Tuesday, October 23, Beijing

Meeting between ICCCASU and China Land Surveying and Planning Institute of the Ministry of Land and Resources, People Republic of China, or CLSPI.

The delegation from CLSPI was represented by Mr. Guo Xu Dong, Director of the Institute, Ms Liao Rosy, Head of the International Cooperation Office and Ms. Lv Chunyan, Senior Researcher.

Prof Cao introduced the ICCCASU delegation and explained the reason for its mission to China, namely to promote ICCCASU 3 and to discuss opportunities for collaboration. Prof. Cao cited shared goals as basis for cooperation between ICCCASU and CLSPI, emphasizing the degree to which the two organizations might learn from each other. Prof. Gianni identified complementarities between China and Canada with respect to urbanization, noting key differences in the control of land, which plays an important role. Dr. Mundele reported on ICCCASU 2, stressing the capacity of ICCCASU to leverage a broad international network to attract world-class scholars and practitioners. This was identified as the core contribution ICCCASU would make to a joint ICCCASU-CCUD conference in the summer of 2019. He also described the successful series of training workshops in Yaoundé that attracted more than 300 participants from Cameroon.

Mr Guo Xu Dong, expressed his gratitude to the ICCCASU team and described the organizational expertise of CLSPI, including the land surveying and planning -- both crucial aspects of urbanization. Ms Liao recalled her experiences in Canada, where she was on assignment a few

years ago. She reinforced that there are areas in which China can learn from Canada given the level of development of Canadian cities.



Photo 3. The director Mr Guo hosting the meeting with ICCCASU Delegation

From different perspectives, both sides concluded there are opportunities for collaboration, including joint research. Prof Cao inquired about the possibility of support from CLSPI for ICCCASU 3 in Chengdu. He invited CLSPI members to participate to the conference. The director Mr Guo expressed his full support, noting that his organization will participate in ICCCASU 3. Support will primarily come in the form of funding to send CLSPI employees to Chengdu.

Day 3: Wednesday, October 24, Beijing

Meeting between the ICCCASU delegation and the Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC) and the Beijing NGO for International Exchanges (BNGOIE). The BPAFFC was represented by Mr. Gao Shuangjin, Vice-president; Ms Chen Yi, executive assistant and other colleagues.

Prof. Cao introduced the ICCCASU delegation to the vice-president and thanked him for taking the time to meet. He also briefed the group on ICCCASU's accomplishments and on its potential for future contributions in the area of smart urbanization.

Mr. Gao and Ms Chen were pleased to learn that both Profs. Cao and Gianni had attended conferences organized by Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries – Prof. Cao in 2018 and Prof. Gianni in 2015.



Photo 4. BPAFFC Vice-President Mr. Gao hosting the meeting with ICCCASU Delegation

Prof. Gianni described the mission and structure of ICCCASU, which provides a vehicle for collaboration between several Canadian and Chinese universities. Prof Cao expressed interest in establishing a relationship between ICCCASU and the Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and Beijing NGO Association for International Exchanges.

Prof. Gianni described areas of complementarity. He noted that

1. Canada is one of the most urbanized countries in the world and its cities rank highly on the world stage. As such, Canada has expertise to share with China;
2. Canadian cities are ranked considerably higher than American cities in livability indexes. This reflects positively on the wellbeing of its citizens.

3. China and Africa have strong cooperation in various fields including infrastructures construction which requires urban planning. In this field, Canada can play a role in adding value by sharing its expertise while collaborating with China in Africa;
4. While highly ranked, Canadian cities are small in comparison to those in China. As such, Canada has much to learn from China in terms of the planning and management of large cities;
5. Canada grows by immigration. The largest number of new immigrants come from Asia, followed by Africa. The largest proportion of non-European immigrants in Canada are Chinese. As such, Canada has a strong interest in the future of China and Africa.

Mr. Gao Shuangjin acknowledged the basis for cooperation between China and Canada in Africa. He noted that, in addition to these points, the current political climate in the US and its failure to play a leading role in international stage offers Canada an opportunity to play a more significant role -- not just in the area of urbanization but in all other areas. He added that urbanization is essential for the long-term wellbeing of countries. He noted that the BPAFFC/BNGOIE will be hosting a conference on urbanization in Beijing in October of 2019 (coinciding with the 70th anniversary of the Peoples' Republic of China). He committed to involving ICCCASU in this conference and lending support to ICCCASU 3 in Chengdu.

Both parties agreed to keep each other apprised of upcoming initiatives.



Photo 5. Photo with Mr. Shuangjin Gao's team

Day 4: Thursday, October 25, Beijing

The ICCCASU delegation met with the China Center for Urban Development (CCUD) on October 24th, 2019. The goal of the meeting was to discuss collaboration between CCUD, UN-Habitat and ICCCASU for the delivery of the ICCCASU III conference in the summer of 2019.

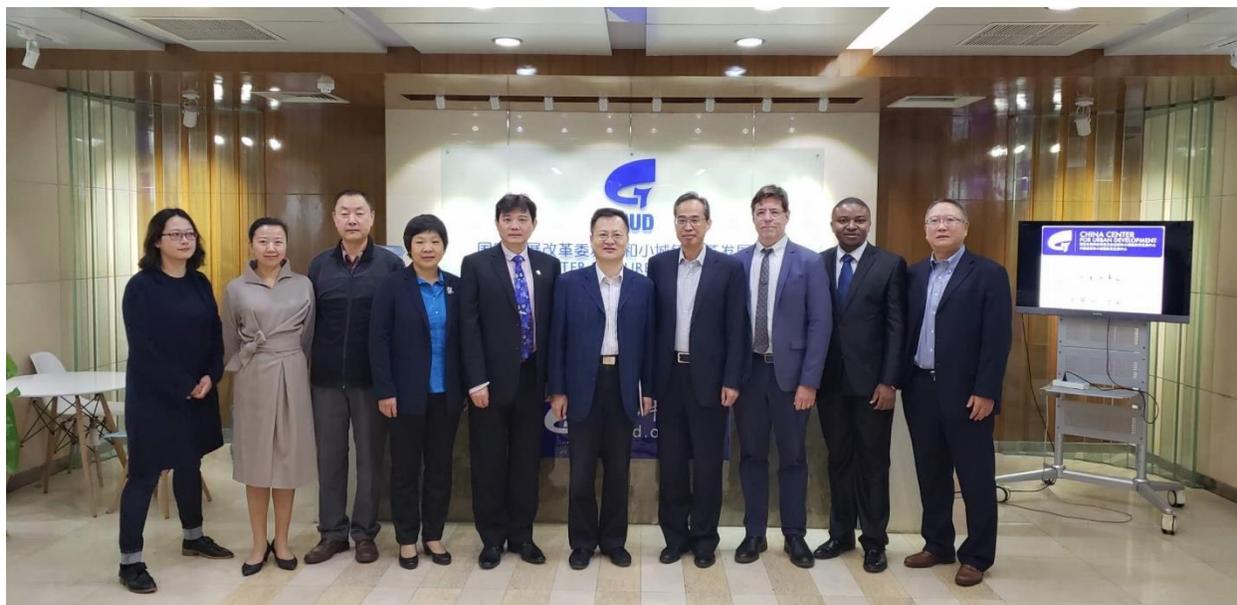


Photo 6. CCUD Director Mr. Yulong Shi greeting ICCCASU/UN-Habitat Delegations prior to the meeting

The meeting took place from 9:30 to 11:30 AM at the CCUD headquarters in Beijing.

The CCUD was represented by Ms QIU Aijun, Deputy Director General; Ms BAIGE Hou, Deputy Director, International Cooperation Division; Ms BAI Wei, Associate Researcher and Ms LIU Yue, Associate Research Fellow, Policy Research Institute.

The UN-Habitat was represented by Mr YANG Rong, UN-Habitat General Coordinator in China/Inter-regional Adviser; Mr ZHANG Zhenshan, UN-Habitat Programme Manager for China.

The first order of business was a discussion of the model of cooperation between ICCCASU and the CCUD with respect to ICCCASU III in Chengdu in July, 2019. The delegation suggested that we follow the model of cooperation established with APEC for CCUD's Sustainable Urban Development 2 conference in 2018.

The ICCCASU/UN-Habitat team suggested “partnership model” under which CCUD and the City of Chengdu would be the hosts and primary organizers while ICCCASU would be listed as a partner. CCUD requested a list of the Institutions affiliated with ICCCASU, along with details on

the nature of their support, in order to identify issues or incompatibilities. ICCASU agreed to present CCUD with a list of sponsors and affiliates.



Photo 7. CCUD Deputy Director Ms. Aijun Qiu hosting the meeting with ICCASU/UN-Habitat Delegations

Prof. Cao then explained the administrative structure of ICCASU III, which includes an honorary conference chair, represented by host country or organization, two co-presidents (representing the University of Ottawa and UN-Habitat, respectively) and five vice-presidents.

The discussion then shifted to responsibilities for costs associated with ICCASU 3. CCUD agreed to cover travel and accommodation costs for the keynote speakers that participated in both portions of the conference. CCUD also agreed to cover the printing, venue, and translation costs for the ICCASU portions of the conference as well as hospitality service (lunches and coffee service between sessions) for participants. They also agreed to cover the cost badges and other registration-related materials. ICCASU, in turn, agreed to organize the call for papers, select participants, establish the conference programme for its portion of the conference, and to coordinate speakers for shared keynote, roundtable and plenary sessions. ICCASU also agreed to oversee the writing of the conference report and cover costs associated with producing it.

There was discussion of CCUD covering travel and accommodation costs for ICCASU staff arriving in Chengdu in advance of the conference. CCUD requested that ICCASU consult with them with regard to the content and format of the acceptance letter for presents in order to complete administrative work and issue invitation letters.



Photo 8. CCUD International Office Director Ms. Yue Liu saying Goodbye to the delegations

After a fruitful discussion the CCUD, UN-Habitat and ICCASU agreed to move forward with the planning for ICCASU 3 in partnership with CCUD's Sustainable Urban Development 3 conference in Chengdu in July, 2019. Documents will be signed outlining the specific arrangements for cooperation between all parties in the coming days.