



House of Assembly  
Newfoundland and Labrador

*OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER*

**Report on Speaker's Visit to Turkey as Emissary of the  
People of Newfoundland and Labrador**

**April 25, 2018**

## **Background & Objective:**

In the early days of the First World War, with Great Britain and other Dominions of the British Empire answering the call, the Newfoundland House of Assembly passed an Act authorizing the formation of a corps for war service on September 4, 1914. Less than one month later (October 4, 1914), the first recruits of the Newfoundland Regiment (now known as the Royal Newfoundland Regiment) set sail for training in Great Britain.

The Gallipoli Peninsula was the first active front on which the Regiment served in the First World War, where 1,076 soldiers joined the 29th Division of the British Army on September 19-20, 1915. During their time in Turkey (departing in January 1916), 29 soldiers were killed in action or died of wounds and 10 more of disease. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment continued in the First World War with distinguished service in France at Beaumont Hamel, Gueudecourt, Monchy-le-Preux, and Masnières; and in Belgium at Courtrai.

The Newfoundland Regiment was the only regiment to receive the prefix "Royal" during the First World War and only the third, and last, in the history of the British Empire to receive such an honour during hostilities. The Regiment is the only unit from North America to carry the Battle Honour "Gallipoli" on its Regimental Colour.

Following the conclusion of the War, as part of an overall commemorative initiative led by Catholic Chaplain, the Honourable Lt. Col. (Reverend) Thomas Nangle, the Government of Newfoundland proceeded to establish Caribou monuments at sites of significance for the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in northern France and Belgium. What has become known as the Trail of the Caribou commemorates the accomplishments, contributions, and sacrifices of the Regiment during the First World War. Despite previous efforts to complete the Trail of the Caribou, a monument has not yet been placed at Gallipoli.

Consistent with the Resolution passed by the House of Assembly on December 7, 2017, the Speaker travelled to Turkey as an emissary of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, during January 21-26, 2018. The primary objective was to advance discussion towards the shared goal of establishing a bronze Caribou monument commemorating the experience of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at Gallipoli. Accompanied by the Director of Accelerated Growth, Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation, the intention was to extend an invitation for a Turkish delegation to visit Newfoundland and Labrador, and to support the conclusion of a possible agreement.

## **The Program:**

Following the resolution in the House of Assembly, the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa, through His Excellency (H.E.) Ambassador Selçuk Ünal, contacted the Office of the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly (GNAT) of the Republic of Turkey, who indicated a willingness to serve as host for the Newfoundland and Labrador delegation led by Speaker Perry Trimper.

An itinerary was prepared with diplomatic support from the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa (including Counsellors M. Hakan Cengiz and Taylan Özgür Aydın), the Canadian Embassy in Ankara, and H.E. Ambassador Chris Cooter, and the Department of Global Affairs, Government of Canada. The Speaker of the GNAT, H.E. Mr. İsmail Kahraman, and the Honourable Mr. Yaşar Tüzün, Deputy Speaker, served as the hosts for the six-day visit.

The program consisted of meetings and events designed to foster new relationships and to advance discussions with key decision makers to establish the Caribou monument. Secondary objectives, such as the exploration of enhanced economic and education partnerships, were also included in the program.

Meetings were arranged through the legislative branches and embassies of both jurisdiction with the following individuals and groups:

### **Speaker's Office - Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT):**

- Hon. Mr. Yaşar Tüzün, Deputy Speaker of GNAT
- Ms. Derya Baykal, Ms. Nural Aydın, Ms. Buket Nur Özay, and other staff from the GNAT accompanied the delegation.

### **Government of Turkey:**

- H.E. Prof. Numan Kurtulmuş, Minister of Culture and Tourism
- H.E. Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Hon. Mr. Yusuf Başer, Chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group between Turkey and Canada, and the Members

### **Regional Government:**

- Hon. Mr. Orhan Tavli, Governor of Çanakkale
- Hon. Mr. Vasip Şahin, Governor of İstanbul

### **Gallipoli National Park:**

- Mr. İsmail Kaşdemir, Chairman of Historic Sites at Gallipoli
- Mr. Kenan Çelik, expert on the Gallipoli Battlefield

**Economic Interests:**

- Mr. Rifat Hisarcıkloğlu, President of TOBB, and senior officials
- Mr. Osman Okyay, Chairman of DEİK Turkey-Canada Business Council, and the Members
- Board Members of the Çanakkale Chamber of Commerce

**Canadian Government:**

- Hon. Mr. Chris Cooter, Ambassador of Canada in Ankara
- Mr. Ulric Shannon, Consulate General of Canada

The delegation visited Gallipoli National Park, viewing important points of interest related to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment (Caribou Hill, Suvla Bay, AZMAC Cemetery, Hill 10 Cemetery, Conkbayiri, Çanakkale Martyr's Memorial). During the visit to Gallipoli, Hill 10 Cemetery was discussed as a potential site for the monument.

**Conclusion**

To conclude the mission to Turkey, the delegation met with the Honourable Professor Numan Kurtulmuş, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey; Mr. İsmail Kaşdemir, Chairman of Historic Sites at Gallipoli; Honourable Chris Cooter, Ambassador of Canada in Ankara; and Mr. Ulrich Shannon, Consulate General of Canada. Discussions during the meeting included the shared history, as well as the objectives of a Turkish delegation visiting Newfoundland and Labrador. The original intent of the Trail of the Caribou, the location and appearance of the five other locations in Belgium and France, and the long sought desire to have the sixth monument located at Gallipoli were reviewed.

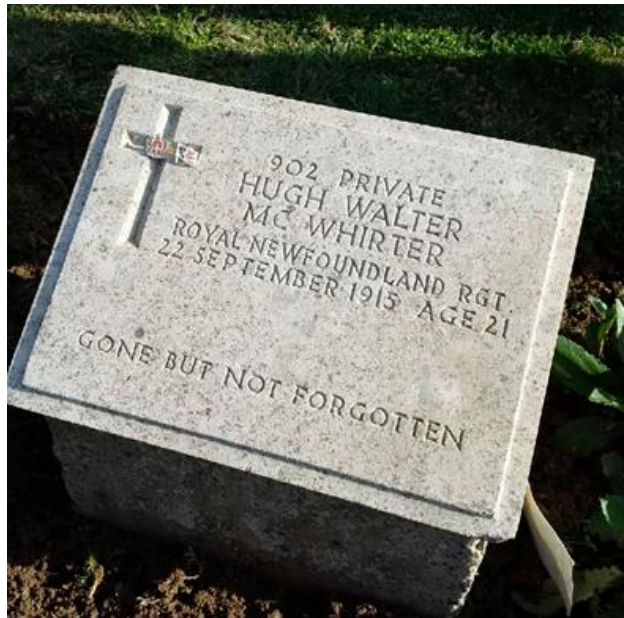
The discussions concluded with a proposal from Turkey, the Honourable Professor Numan Kurtulmuş, to place the monument adjacent to Hill 10 Cemetery in Gallipoli National Park (see Appendix C for additional information). This site is of particular emotional significance as it is the resting place of Private Hugh McWhirter, the first fatal casualty of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at Gallipoli on September 22, 1915.

A Turkish delegation is visiting Newfoundland & Labrador from April 24-26, 2018, hosted by the Department of Tourism, Industry and Innovation who will assume responsibility for progressing discussions between the Province and Turkey on this matter.

**Appendix A – Photographs from Gallipoli Site Visit at Hill 10 Cemetery, January 23, 2018**



*Mr. Ismail Kasdemir, Chairman of Historic Sites at Gallipoli,  
and Hon. Perry Trimper, Speaker of the HOA, standing on  
proposed site for monument facing northwest*



*Grave Site of Private McWhirter  
Hill 10 Cemetery*



*Hill 10 Cemetery facing south*

**Appendix B – Photographs from Meeting with the  
Honourable Professor Numan Kurtulmuş, January 25, 2018**



*From left to right: Turkish Official; Dr. Mehmet Babacan, Advisor to Prime Minister; H.E. Prof. Numan Kurtulmuş, Minister of Culture and Tourism; Mr. İsmail Kaşdemir, Chairman of Historic Sites at Gallipoli; Ms. Derya Baykal Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT); Turkish Official; Ms. Nural Aydın, GNAT, Ms. Buket Nur Özay, GNAT; Mr. Ulric Shannon, Consul General of Canada in Istanbul; Hon. Perry Trimper, Speaker of the HoA; Mr. Larry Weatherbie, Director Tourism Culture Industry and Innovation; H.E. Chris Cooter, Canadian Ambassador to Turkey*



*H.E. Prof. Numan Kurtulmuş, Minister of Culture and Tourism and Hon. Perry Trimper, Speaker of the HOA*

**Appendix C – Applicable Correspondence**

1. Letter from the Honourable Perry Trimper, Speaker of the House of Assembly, to Honorable Professor Numan Kurtulmuş, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey.
2. Letter from the Honourable Perry Trimper, Speaker of the House of Assembly to Mr. İsmail Kaşdemir, Chairman of Historic Sites at Gallipoli.



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
Newfoundland and Labrador

*OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER*

February 8, 2018

Honourable Professor Numan Kurtulmuş  
Minister of Culture and Tourism  
Republic of Turkey  
Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı  
Özel Kalem Müdürlüğü  
İsmet İnönü Bulvarı No:32 Kat: 1  
Emek Ankara  
Email: [ozel.kalem@kulturturizm.gov.tr](mailto:ozel.kalem@kulturturizm.gov.tr)

Dear Minister Kurtulmuş:

On behalf of myself and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, I would like to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation for hosting me at a banquet in Istanbul on January 25, 2018, and to express my sincere gratitude for the amity and welcome I received throughout my recent visit to the Republic of Turkey.

As noted, I received a mandate by our provincial House of Assembly to journey to Turkey as a representative of the people to advance discussions towards a shared goal of establishing a memorial commemorating the experience of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at Gallipoli. Throughout my visit to your country, I am pleased to state that I had the opportunity to meet with senior leaders of the Turkish national government, regional Governors, the Grand National Assembly, and organizations dedicated to, or interested in, developing opportunities for our jurisdictions to collaborate. Throughout my mission, I was received with great warmth, respect and friendship by all and was impressed by the breadth of possibilities for partnership in the areas of culture, economy, and education.

Of special importance is the opportunity for Turkey and Newfoundland and Labrador to collaborate on our shared history of lives lost on the Gallipoli Peninsula. In this capacity, I was honoured to receive your approval for our province to engage with the Government of Turkey on the installation of a bronze caribou memorial at Gallipoli. As noted in the January 16, 2018 letter you received from the Honourable Dwight Ball, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, such a monument to our veterans will serve as a strong symbol of bilateral cooperation and reflect the unbreakable bond between our people.

Since my return to Canada, I have had the opportunity to brief the provincial government on the outcomes of my visit to Turkey and the Province welcomes the options presented by



Mr. İsmail Kaşdemir and your Ministry with respect to the location for our memorial at Gallipoli. Furthermore, the proposal to place the monument adjacent to the Hill 10 Cemetery is of particular emotional significance and greatly appreciated. Reciprocally, government officials advise the Province is pleased to discuss options for the placement of a Turkish memorial in Newfoundland and Labrador and would welcome a visiting delegation from Turkey to conclude arrangements regarding both memorials.

Given that 2018 is designated by Turkey as 'the Year of Troy' (located nearby) and that Canada and Turkey are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations, we understand the importance of finalizing details related to these memorials as soon as possible. Newfoundland and Labrador officials have commenced internal consultations and engagement with domestic stakeholders on the details of this partnership and are eager to engage further with Turkish officials.

In my role as Speaker of the House of Assembly, I remain available to assist in future discussions between the Governments of Turkey, Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador. Provincial government representatives will be contacting His Excellency Selçuk Ünal, Turkish Ambassador to Canada, and His Excellency Chris Cooter, Canadian Ambassador to Turkey, to establish processes for implementation of this important collaboration.

In conclusion, I would like to communicate my gratitude to you for progressing relations between our jurisdictions. I hope to welcome you to Newfoundland and Labrador on the occasion of a future visit to our province and to reciprocate the gift of friendship you have generously extended to me.

Sincerely,



**PERRY TRIMPER**  
Speaker  
MHA Lake Melville District

cc. The Honourable Dwight Ball,  
Premier, Newfoundland and Labrador

The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, P.C, M.P.  
Minister of Veterans Affairs (Canada)

The Honourable Christopher Mitchelmore  
Minister, Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation

His Excellency Selçuk Ünal  
Turkish Ambassador to Canada

His Excellency Chris Cooter  
Canadian Ambassador to Turkey



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
Newfoundland and Labrador

*OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER*

April 5, 2018

Mr. İsmail KAŞDEMİR  
Chairman, Historic Sites  
Email: [ismail.kasdemir@tbmm.gov.tr](mailto:ismail.kasdemir@tbmm.gov.tr)

Dear Mr. KAŞDEMİR:

On behalf of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, I would like to convey my appreciation for the warm welcome you extended to our delegation during the January visit to Çanakkale and the National Historic Park at Gallipoli. In particular, I found the extensive time you spent with us in Çanakkale, and later in Istanbul, to be most helpful. The opportunity to become acquainted with the Turkish Directorate of the Gallipoli Historical Site and its mandate to preserve the culture and history of the National Park was informative. I want to assure you that the conservation of this honourable resting place for those who bravely fought in this historic battle is of shared importance.

As per our discussions in Turkey and recent conversations with His Excellency Selçuk Ünal, Turkish Ambassador to Canada, I am pleased to confirm that the site we examined adjacent to Hill 10 Cemetery would be an excellent location for a Caribou Memorial commemorating the experience of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at Gallipoli

I want to thank you for your support of this acceptable proposal, and I hope to welcome you soon to Newfoundland and Labrador as we continue working toward this significant collaboration.

Sincerely,

**PERRY TRIMPER**  
Speaker of the House of Assembly  
MHA Lake Melville District

cc. The Honourable Dwight Ball,  
Premier, Newfoundland and Labrador

The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, P.C, M.P.  
Minister of Veterans Affairs (Canada)

The Honourable Christopher Mitchelmore  
Minister, Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation

Honourable Professor Numan Kurtulmuş  
Minister of Culture and Tourism

His Excellency Selçuk Ünal  
Turkish Ambassador to Canada

His Excellency Chris Cooter  
Canadian Ambassador to Turkey

## **Appendix D – Additional Outcomes**

### **Education Partnerships**

Speaker Trimper and the delegation met with officials from the Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University (18 March University) on January 24, 2018. The meeting was to facilitate academic cooperation with Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) for the purpose of developing collaborative activities and exchanges for students and academic staff. As a result, Dr. Rüstem Aslan, Director of Excavations at Troy and Professor at 18 March University, visited St. John's as a guest of MUN from April 5-6, 2018.



*Speaker Trimper and delegation with officials from the Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, January 24, 2018*



*Dr. Rüstem Aslan, Director of Excavations at Troy, on site, January 24, 2018*



*Ms. Derya Serbetci, Director of Tourism at Turkish Consulate in Toronto and Dr Rüstem Aslan with Faculty and Research Students at MUN, April 6, 2018*



*Ms. Derya Serbetci, Speaker Trimper; and Dr. Rüstem Aslan, at the Caribou Monument in Bowring Park, St. John's, NL, April 5, 2018*

To further educational partnerships, Speaker Trimper and the delegation visited Kabataş Erkek High School in Istanbul, meeting with students and staff. The school launched the East Asia and World Project in 2016, which aims to make a contribution in strengthening the relations between Turkey and other jurisdictions including Canada. Turkish Ambassador H.E. Selçuk ÜNAL invited the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to identify a high school in Newfoundland and Labrador that would be interested in partnering with Kabatas High School. Gonzaga High School in St. John's was presented for this twinning project, to develop cultural comprehension, sensitivity, and an appreciation of a different way of life. Letters of introduction and gifts were delivered from each school.



*Speaker Trimper and delegation with Staff and  
Students of Kabataş Erkek High School in  
Istanbul, January 26, 2018*



*Mr. Fatih Güldal, Principal of Kabataş Erkek High  
School Listening to Mr. Berat Talay, President of East  
Asia and World Project, Translate Letter from  
Gonzaga High School, in Istanbul on January 26, 2018*



*Visit of Speaker Trimper with Ms. Krista Vokey, Principal of Gonzaga High School,  
and Students, in St. John's on February 12, 2018*