Your Excellency, Distinguished Guests, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentleman

It is with great pleasure and honour that I accept the invitation to chair this Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Post Election Seminar which is being brought to us by the Resource Team of The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariat. May I here introduce Ms Meenakshi (Mee-neck-she) Dhar, from the CPA Secretariat, the Hon, Barry House, Former President of the Legislative council of Western Australia, and Mr Roger Phillips, Clerk of Tynwald, Secretary of the House of Keys and Counsel to the Speaker in the Isle of Mann. On your behalf Hon Members I warmly welcome them.

Hon Members will be fully aware that over the past years the benefits we have received as members of this great Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, have been many, not only in training which it continues to offer us but also in many other material benefits too, some evident in this room. On behalf of the members of the St Helena Branch I wish to invite Ms Meenakshi to convey our thanks and appreciation in person to the Secretary General for the interest he has taken in St Helena. I understand it might be his wish to visit someday and I know our members would welcome him.

The programme of training which the Resource Team has put together is both timely and appropriate particularly in view of the recent elections that gave us a number of first time councillors, But equally the more established councillors, and indeed the Speaker, can also benefit and learn from the topics that have been so well chosen.

Thirteen sessions are planned Hon Members to take place during this week and will include topics such as

- The development of the Commonwealth and the role of the CPA
- The evolution of Parliamentary Democracy and the Constitution of St Helena
- Exploring alternative Constitutional models of Parliamentary Democracy
- Parliamentary Committees
- Public Speaking
- Parliament, Democracy and Civil Society
• Ethics and Accountability
• The relationship between the legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary
• Parliament, Human Rights, and the Media
• Practice and Procedure in the House
• The role of Members of Parliament including the role of the Backbencher
• Administration and Financing of Parliament

I shall look forward to these discussions with great interest when the sessions start after we have taken a Group photo and I believe that Members will embrace the benefit of this training. Thank You.

I now call on Her Excellency Lisa Phillips to speak. Your Excellency.