

The Secretary-General's File

The world's eyes and ears are now fixed on South Africa due to one of the most attractive games in human history, the World Cup soccer competition. The fact that the competition is being held for the first time in Africa, and in one of the democratically youngest countries, is of great interest to Africans and non-Africans alike, from all walks of life.

It is gratifying to note that South Africa's ink-pad of the 1990s has not even dried out, regarding the release from prison and solitary confinement of Nelson Mandela and the establishment of full enfranchisement for all South Africans, that the country is hosting the world's prestigious game, The World Cup 2010. For such a global competition of a world sport to be staged in South Africa appears, indeed, as redemptive to the local people as freedom itself.

As has been the case with other countries which have hosted the World Cup, South Africa has invested heavily in the improvement of its infrastructure – roads, stadiums, hotels – as well as the social environment, particularly the security systems. The media have kept the wider public guessing about the safety of the venues, but the government and organizers have maintained that the security preparations that have been put in place are solidly sufficient to ensure the safety of every player and game-watcher.

A huge event like the World Cup comes with a lot of excitement. Soccer is probably the only game with extraordinary fanfare. Some fans have been accused of outright violence, particularly when their teams appeared to lose. Some are simply highly decorative and entertaining, such as those from West African countries. In general, however, the competition displays a rare ambience of intensive human social, cultural and economic interaction the world community seldom sees.

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Raising all Commonwealth nations to “First World” status



The mountains of Swaziland are reflected in the windows of Lozitha State House where CPA Executive Committee Members met H.M. King Mswati III at the conclusion of their meeting.

Enhanced solutions to such major world challenges as global economic realignment, migration, disaster recovery and food and water shortages will be sought when the Commonwealth's foremost gather of Parliamentarians takes place later this year.

These issues will also be discussed by more than 350 Commonwealth MPs when they attend debates at the 56th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference to be hosted from 10 to 19 September in Nairobi by the Parliament of Kenya. These discussions will follow two days of debate on similar issues at the 30th Small Branches Conference for Members and officials from Parliaments and Legislatures in approximately 30 Commonwealth nations, states, provinces and territories with popu-

lations of up to 500,000 people.

The Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) identified the challenges and established the new programmes to strengthen parliamentary government when it met from 8 to 13 May in Ezulwini as the guest of Swaziland's Parliament and government.

CPA conferences are key annual events to help improve Commonwealth good governance, the King of Swaziland told Committee Members during their meeting. H.M. King Mswati III praised the CPA and the wider Commonwealth as constructive fora in which Parliamentarians and member countries share knowledge effectively. The pooling of knowledge will help all Commonwealth countries to become “First

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Published by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariat
Suite 700, Westminster House, 7 Millbank
London SW1P 3JA, United Kingdom
Phone +44 207 799 1460
Fax +44 207 222 6073
Email hq.sec@cpahq.org

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It is also gratifying to note that the World Cup has attracted the participation of every country in the world's continents and regions. Gone are the days the United States was not interested and the days are numbered for huge countries such as India and China investing little time and resources for the growth of the game. The 1970s and 1980s saw the United States quickly catching up with the game.

Most apparent growth and improvement in the game has been recorded by African countries. Fifty years ago, most of the countries participating in the World Cup today were colonial appendages, with no social and economic infrastructure to produce world-class players. In the country where the World Cup competition itself is being held, the national team, Bafana Bafana, was crafted out of Mandela's reconciliatory policy to form a Rainbow Nation. No doubt the team has emerged to be one of the major competitors from Africa. Also, teams from such countries as Cameroon, Nigeria, Ghana, Angola and Ivory Coast have done much to dust off the underdevelopment of the past social events during colonial rule to produce the type of players they have today, thanks to freedom.

Major events like global competitions in sports such as soccer, cricket, rugby, athletics (the Olympics) and tennis are pullers and pushers of economic gains and improvements. Countries compete to host such competitions to drive economic investments from within and without.

As I mentioned earlier, investments cause improvements in social and physical infrastructure. The host country stands to gain not only from the improvements in facilities, but also in jobs through the expansion of works and services. Such economic inputs should benefit the general

population. In South Africa, similar to other countries, the expectation is that the World Cup will cause an economic trickle-down effect for the people. It is expected that the gains that the government will make from the event will be utilized to benefit the majority of the people, by empowering their business and social service needs in areas such as education, health and housing.

For some of us in the Commonwealth, and especially in Africa, who participated in one way or the other through Parliament and other governance organs to oppose the conduct of the apartheid regime, it is highly gratifying to see today a country where every citizen is accorded not only freedom of movement and freedom to pursue his or her interests, but also freedom of association and freedom to participate in the political process. Besides, judging from the records about the road to democracy in a country formerly known for its notorious apartheid policy, the members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association have contributed immensely to the new world of democracy we enjoy today.

Based on the World Soccer event in South Africa, it is expected that the host country will reap two important fruits: first, financial and economic income hopefully to be utilized for the needs of the majority of South Africans; secondly, South African Parliamentarians and others all over the Commonwealth may continue to take note that policy changes and reforms will always be needed to uplift and support the majority of the people.

In democracy and public service, change and accommodation are pillars of social stability and economic growth.



Pakistani province renamed

North-West Frontier Province has been renamed by a constitutional amendment passed by the Parliament of Pakistan.

The province was renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by the passage of the amendment through the National Assembly and Senate in April. The new name reflects the ethnic majority in the area, the Pakhtuns.

Its population is estimated at 21 million plus about 1.5 million refugees who came through the Khyber pass from Afghanistan.

The 124-seat provincial Assembly and its CPA Branch have also been renamed.

There is a campaign to create a separate province for the Hazara area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Rwanda to join the CPA

The Parliament of Rwanda will be proposed for admission to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association later this year, the CPA Executive Committee agreed in mid-May.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the CPA General Assembly that the Rwandan Parliament be accepted into the CPA. The General Assembly, composed of representatives of 175 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures, meets in September in Nairobi, Kenya.

The 35-Member Committee, at a meeting from 8 to 13 May hosted by the Parliament and government of Swaziland, approved the membership application passed on 24 March at a joint sitting of Rwanda's Senate and Chamber of Deputies.

Rwanda was accepted into Commonwealth membership by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their November 2009 meeting in Trinidad and Tobago.

"The experience and expertise of Commonwealth Parliamentarians and parliamentary officials will help Rwandan Members to bring all the benefits of democratic governance to their people through enhanced governance and more rapid sustainable development," said CPA Secretary-General Dr William F. Shija, who visited Rwanda's President and Parliament earlier in March.



Rwandan Prime Minister Rt Hon. Bernard Makuza (left) greets Dr William F. Shija in Kigali.

The Rwandan Parliament will join 56 other national, state and provincial Assemblies in the African Region of the CPA, the largest of the CPA's nine regions. The CPA is currently composed of the Parliaments and Legislatures in 52 of the 54 Commonwealth nations and their overseas territories. The other country not currently in the CPA is Brunei.

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World" nations and their governments to bring peace and improved health to all their people, he said during the Committee's visit to Lozitha State House.

The discussions on environmental issues continue the work of the CPA Climate Change Task Force formed at the 55th Conference last September in Arusha, Tanzania, to provide reliable information to Members on environmental issues.



King Mswati III addresses Members of the CPA Executive Committee.

"Commonwealth Parliamentarians can achieve a great deal for their governments and their people by sharing experiences and identifying new ideas to improve policy and government performance," said Hon. Kathleen Casey, MLA, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island. Ms Casey chaired the meeting in the absence of Hon. Dato' Mohd Shafie Apdal, MP, Malaysia's Minister of Rural and Regional Development, who was unable to attend the meeting due to a by-election in his country.

To ensure that the CPA remains a relevant force in the Commonwealth and the wider international community, the Executive Committee agreed to establish a Working Party to re-examine the Association's role in promoting the evolution of Parliament and the professional development of Members and parliamentary staff. Members representing all nine of the CPA's Commonwealth regions will chart a new course for the Association when it enter its second century in 2011.

The Committee considered and approved the Association's coming year of activities, including celebrations to mark the centennial of the founding of the Association and the addition of five new programmes each budgeted at £25,000 for 2011. They join the CPA's existing collection of seminars, workshops, publications and assistance measures in the parliamentary and political fields.

The centennial will feature the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in July 2011 in London hosted by the United Kingdom Parliament, which hosted the first meeting in 1911 when Members from the U.K. and then five Dominion Parliaments formed the Empire Parliamentary Association. The centennial year programme will include the publication of a book on Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures, a video documentary on the Association and a possible Commonwealth Youth Parliament. Branches are also encouraged to mark the milestone in various ways, including holding a debate on the role of the Commonwealth.

New programmes for the coming year include: Technical Assistance Programmes for Swaziland and Gambia possibly with some involvement by the Scottish Parliament, a Constituency Development Fund study and conference in Kenya with the State University of New York's Centre for International Development, a seminar for the Pacific Region on Finance for the Non-Finance Parliamentarian and aid to Ghana to establish an Institute of



CPA Vice-Chairperson Hon. Kathleen Casey chairs the Executive Committee in Swaziland.

Parliamentary Affairs. The Scottish Parliament has expressed an interest in some involvement in the technical assistance programmes.

Following reviews of the CPA journal *The Parliamentarian* and the work of the Secretariat's Parliamentary Information and Reference Centre, the Committee endorsed them as valuable CPA services which should be continued. It also applauded the advancement of the CPA's Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures and agreed that further regional versions of this parliamentary standard should be developed to complement those already completed for the Pacific's small island states and for the three CPA Regions in southern Asia. These and other programmes enabled the Committee to note progress in achieving the objectives of the 2008-12 Strategic Plan.

Membership fees review

CPA Branches have additional time to comment on possible new methods of calculating the amount of membership fees they pay to belong to the CPA.

The Executive Committee has extended the deadline to 15 July so more Branches can ensure their views are taken into account in the CPA's membership fees review. Branches which have already forwarded their response to the review may also provide additional comments if they wish. All responses should be mailed to: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Suite 700, Westminster House, 7 Millbank, London, SW1P 3JA, United Kingdom marked for the attention of Mr David C Broom, Director, Finance and Administration or, alternatively, emailed to dbroom@cpahq.org.

The CPA Working Party which will consider Branch views and recommend the best option for the fees structure, among other future strategies for the Association.

The CPA plans to spend approximately £2.5 million in each of its 2010 and 2011 financial years as it maintains a balanced budget in 2010 and projects a modest surplus in 2011. The Committee considered a 2011 membership fee increase of 2.4 per cent reflecting the 2009 rise in the United Kingdom retail price index, but deferred the matter until its meeting during the Nairobi conference.

CPA to raise the status of women

One of the top positions of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association should always be occupied by a woman to strengthen the campaign to bring more women into Parliament, the CPA Executive Committee has decided.

The Committee agreed that the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Committee should become an Officer of the Association so the CPA's top six posts will always have at least one woman. CPA Officers engage with Heads of Government, Presiding Officers and senior Ministers and Opposition Leaders at Association conferences and seminars. Ensuring at least one woman MP always attends such high-profile events will reinforce the Commonwealth message that women must play a greater role in parliamentary politics, said the Committee.

The Executive Committee, meeting from 8 to 13 May as the guest of the Parliament and government of Swaziland, agreed the CPA Constitution should be amended to make the CWP Chairperson an Officer when the CPA General Assembly holds its annual meeting



CWP Chairperson Ms Kashmala Tariq.

this year in September in Nairobi, Kenya. The General Assembly is composed of representatives of more than 175 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures.

The CPA now has five Officers, including one woman, Hon.

Kathleen Casey, MLA, Speaker of the Prince Edward Island Legislative Assembly, who is Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The addition of the CWP Chairperson to the list of CPA Officers was sought by the current CWP Chairperson, Ms Kashmala Tariq, MNA, of the National Assembly of Pakistan, whose three-year term ends in Nairobi.

"We must send a message to all Parliaments that they need more women Members and we can do this by having women in prominent positions," said Ms Tariq.

The CWP Chairperson was added to the CPA Executive Committee by the 2004 General Assembly in Canada. The 11-Member CWP Steering Committee, representing women Parliamentarians around the Commonwealth, has since called for the post to be given greater prominence to promote the Commonwealth target of having at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats occupied by women by 2015. CPA figures as of September 2009 indicated that 21 Parliaments and Legislatures had met the target. The initial Commonwealth target had set a 2005 deadline.

56th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference Nairobi, Kenya, 10-19 September 2010

Parliament and Development in the 21st Century: Thus Far and Beyond

Opening Plenary

- Addresses by the CPA Secretary-General and the Commonwealth Secretary-General

Workshops

- The Role of Parliament in Peace Building: The Case of Kenya in Addressing Post-Election Violence in 2008.
- The Role of Parliamentarians in Natural Disaster Management
- Energy and Environment: Achieving Sustainable Development
- Parliament, Accountability and the Role of Internet Governance in Strengthening Oversight
- The Role of Parliamentarians in Facilitating Grassroots Projects
- The Role of Parliamentarians in the Protection of Migrant Workers
- The Global Water and Food Crisis
- How prepared is the Commonwealth for the Emerging New World Economic Order?

Final Plenary

- Commonwealth Initiatives in Handling Migration Issues

30th Small Branches Conference Nairobi, Kenya, 11-12 September 2010

- Energy and Environment: Achieving Sustainable Development
- The Effect of "Political" Corruption in Small States
- The Challenges of Sovereignty in Small States
- Parliament and Accountability – Strengthening Oversight in Small Parliaments

Progress in Tongan democratic reforms

Tonga's Nobles and People's Representatives broke ranks with the cabinet in setting new constituency boundaries for the Pacific nation's landmark parliamentary elections in November.

Parliament voted in April for the Boundaries Commission's second option for the electoral boundaries to take effect in November.

The main island of Tongatapu will have 10 electorates, up from the current three. There will be three representatives from Vava'u instead of two, while representation from other islands will remain unchanged.

Parliament was to resume in June and run until October or November, ending its last session before the November vote introduces elected government responsible to Parliament rather than government responsible to the King.



Tonga's Parliament

Executive Committee 2010

PATRON

H.M. Queen Elizabeth II
Head of the Commonwealth

VICE-PATRON

H.E. Hon. Mwai Kibaki
President of Kenya

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION



PRESIDENT

Hon. Kenneth Marende,
MP

Branch: Kenya
Office: Speaker of the
National Assembly
Party: None
First elected: 2002
Background: Lawyer



VICE-PRESIDENT

Rt Hon. John Bercow, MP

Branch: United Kingdom
Office: Speaker of the
House of Commons
Party: None
First elected: 1997
Background: Public affairs
consultant



CHAIRPERSON

Hon. Dato' Seri Mohd
Shafie Apdal, MP

Branch: Malaysia
Office: Minister of Rural
and Regional Develop-
ment
Party: United Malay
National Organization
First elected: 1995
Background: Economist



VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Hon. Kathleen Casey, MLA

Branch: Prince Edward
Island
Office: Speaker of the
Legislative Assembly
Party: Liberal
First elected: 2007
Background: Civic
government



TREASURER

Hon. Hashim Abdul
Halim, MLA

Branch: West Bengal
Office: Speaker of the
Legislative Assembly
Party: Communist Party
of India (Marxist)
First elected: 1977
Background: Lawyer

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

AFRICA

Hon. Mninwa J. Mahlangu, MP
Branch: South Africa



Office: Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces
Party: African National Congress
First elected: 1994
Background: Business

Hon. VICENTE Z. ULULU, MP
Branch: Mozambique



Office: None
Party: Renamo
First elected: 1994
Background: Printing

Hon. Marwick Khumalo, MP
Branch: Swaziland



Office: Committee Chairperson
Party: None
First elected: 1998
Background: Broadcasting

Hon. Job Yustino Ndugai, MP
Branch: Tanzania



Office: None
Party: Chama Cha Mapinduzi
First elected: 2000
Background: Wildlife management

Hon. Muyali Boya Mary espe Meboka, MP
Branch: Cameroon



Office: Parliamentary Group Vice-President
Party: Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
First elected: 2007
Background: Agricultural development

Hon. Sada Soli Jibia, MP
Branch: Nigeria



Office: Chairman, Interparliamentary Relations
Party: People's Democratic Party
First elected: 2007
Background: Parliamentary officer

ASIA

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa, MP
Branch: Sri Lanka



Office: Speaker of Parliament
Party: United People's Freedom Alliance
First elected: 1989
Background: Land proprietor

Hon. Kiramatullah Khan, MPA
Branch: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



Office: Speaker of the Provincial Assembly
Party: Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians
First elected: 2008
Background: Business

Hon. Abdul Hamid, MP
Branch: Bangladesh



Office: Speaker of Parliament
Party: Awami League
First elected: 1970
Background: Lawyer

A U S T R A L I A

Hon. John Pandazopoulos, MP
Branch: Victoria



Office: Committee Chair
Party: Labor
First elected: 1992
Background: Union organizer and local government

Hon. Michael Polley, MP
Branch: Tasmania



Office: Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Party: Labor
First elected: 1972
Background: Politics

Sen. the Hon. John Hogg
Branch: Australia



Office: President of the Senate
Party: Labor
First elected: 1996
Background: Teacher

B R I T I S H I S L A N D S & M E D I T E R R A N E A N

Mr Alun Cairns, AM
Branch: Wales



Office: Shadow Minister for Education
Party: Conservative
First elected: 1999
Background: Banking

Lt Col. Hon. Ernest Britto, MP
Branch: Gibraltar



Office: Minister for Environment and Tourism
Party: Gibraltar Social Democrats
First elected: 1988
Background: Military

Mr Lindsay Hoyle, MP
Branch: United Kingdom



Office: Chairman of Ways and Means
Party: Labour
First elected: 1997
Background: Local government

C A N A D A

Hon. Kathleen Casey, MLA
Branch: Prince Edward Island



Office: Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Party: Liberal
First elected: 2007
Background: Civic government

Hon. George Hicke, MLA
Branch: Manitoba



Office: Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Party: New Democratic Party
First elected: 1990
Background: Adult education

Mr Joe Preston, MP
Branch: Canada



Office: Committee Chairperson
Party: Conservative
First elected: 2004
Background: Business

C A R I B B E A N , A M E R I C A S & A T L A N T I C

Hon. Keith Flax, MHA
Branch: British Virgin Islands



Office: Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly
Party: Virgin Islands Party
First elected: 1983
Background: Project management

Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, MP
Branch: Guyana



Office: Speaker of the National Assembly
Party: People's Progressive Party-Civic
First elected: 1997
Background: Attorney

Hon. Alix Boyd Knights, MHA
Branch: Dominica



Office: Speaker of the House of Assembly
Party: None
First elected: 2000
Background: Attorney

INDIA

Hon. Uday N. Choudhary, MLA

Branch: Bihar



Office: Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Party: Janata Dal (U)
First elected: 1990
Background: Social worker

Hon. Tanka Bahadur Rai, MLA

Branch: Assam



Office: Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Party: Indian National Congress
First elected: 2001
Background: Lawyer

Hon. Meira Kumar, MP

Branch: India



Office: Speaker of the Lok Sabha
Party: Indian National Congress Party
First elected: 1985
Background: Diplomatic service

PACIFIC

Hon. Snyder Rini, MP

Branch: Solomon Islands



Office: None
Party: Association of Independent Members
First elected: 1997
Background: Civil service

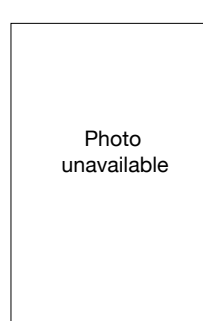
Hon. Dr Tetaua Taitai, MP

Branch: Kiribati



Office: None
Party: Opposition
First elected: 2003
Background: Medical doctor

Hon. Bill Vakaafi Motofoou, MP



Branch: Niue
Office: None
Party: None
First elected: 1999
Background: Agriculture

SOUTH - EAST ASIA

Hon. Datuk Frankie Chong Yu Chee, MLA

Branch: Sabah



Office: Deputy Speaker
Party: Sabah Progressive Party
First elected: 1990
Background: Politics and business

Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, MP

Branch: Singapore



Office: Parliamentary Secretary, National Development
Party: People's Action Party
First elected: 2001
Background: Professor

Hon. Datuk Ronald Kiandee, MP

Branch: Malaysia



Office: Deputy Speaker
Party: United Malay National Organization
First elected: 1989
Background: Government officer

CHAIRPERSON, COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS



Ms Kashmala Tariq, MNA
Branch: Pakistan

Office: None
Party: Pakistan Muslim League-Q
First elected: 2002
Background: Solicitor

“Seismic” changes in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom's first coalition government in 65 years launched a wide-ranging reform programme within two weeks of coming into office after the 6 May general election produced a hung Parliament.

The Conservative-Liberal Democratic Party coalition announced public spending cuts even before its first Queen's Speech on 25 May heralded 18 months of promised reforms across government, including major electoral and parliamentary reforms.

Conservative Leader Rt Hon. David Cameron, Britain's youngest Prime Minister since 1812, described the coalition as an “historic and seismic” shift in British politics as the Conservatives joined with the Liberal Democrats (Lib Dems), led by new Deputy Prime Minister Rt Hon. Nick Clegg, to gain a majority in the 650-seat Commons.

The coalition is Britain's first since Sir Winston Churchill's wartime alliance left office in 1945. It is the first time the Lib Dems have been in government and the first time for the Liberals in a peacetime government since 1935 as five Lib Dems joined cabinet.

The 6 May vote saw a five-per cent swing from Labour to the Conservatives, who fell 20 seats short of a majority. Labour met the Lib Dems to discuss a minority government. When five days of talks between the Conservatives and the Lib Dems produced a coalition, Rt Hon. Gordon Brown resigned as Prime Minister and Labour's Leader, ending 13 years of Labour rule, three under him.

The final results gave the Conservatives 306 seats, up from 166 in the 2005 election. Labour dropped to 258 from 356 and the Lib Dems slipped to 57 from 62. Eight seats went to Ulster's Democratic Unionist Party, six to the Scottish National Party, five to Ulster's Sinn Fein, three to the Welsh nationalist Plaid Cymru, three to the Social and Democratic Party in Ulster, one to Ulster's Alliance Party and one to the Green Party.

Rt Hon. John Bercow was returned running as the Speaker seeking re-election, and he was subsequently re-elected as Speaker.

In a few constituencies people queuing

to vote were unable to cast ballots when polling stations closed at 10 p.m. An inquiry was ordered. Voter turnout rose to about 65 per cent, slightly up on the last two elections but at least six per cent below all other British general elections since 1945.

Among the records set this year was the entry of 232 newcomers into the House, partly due to the number of Members who left because of the scandal over Members' expenses. Women won 143 seats, up from 128 in the 2005 election. The Green Party won its first seat although it received just under 286,000 votes nationally, compared to the U.K. Independence Party and the British National Party who received 918,000 and



Prime Minister Cameron (centre, pale blue tie) flanked by Deputy Prime Minister Clegg (left) and Acting Opposition Leader Rt Hon. Harriet Harman (right) as MPs and Commons officials stood in the entrance to the House of Lords for the Queen's Speech.

564,000 votes respectively but failed to win seats. The first Muslim woman of Asian descent entered the Commons.

Voting was delayed to 27 May in one seat after a candidate died. A candidate in another constituency suffered minor injuries in the crash of a small plane on election day.

The vote was preceded by three nationally televised debates involving the three main party Leaders. Opinion polls generally rated Mr Cameron as winning the debates, with Mr Clegg a close second and Mr Brown third. These results were not reflected at the polls.

Tackling the rising government deficit immediately was given top priority by the coalition. In the last financial year, the government spent about £700 billion, £156 billion more than its revenue. New Chancellor Rt Hon. George Osborne announced on 24

May the first budget cuts, reducing spending for this year by £6.2 billion, including cutting grants to the three devolved Parliaments.

Further cuts are predicted in an emergency budget on 22 June and late this year in the 2011-12 spending plans. Parliament is expected to cut its spending as well.

Under new Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Rt Hon. William Hague, foreign policy focus will focus on an “enhanced partnership” with India. This “genuinely special relationship” will be central to British security, economic and climate policies.

Referenda were promised on: parliamentary reform including changing the voting system, any transfer of powers to the

European Union and any decision to adopt the Euro currency.

Legislation is to come soon to reform the House of Lords, set a fixed five-year term for Parliament and enable voters to recall MPs who break Commons rules. The Lords is to become “wholly or mainly” elected by a proportional representation system in the planned May 2015 election. The fixed-term initiative proposes that an early election can be forced if a government is defeated in the House by a vote of 55 per cent of MPs instead of a simple majority.

Electoral reform was a key demand by the Lib Dems who advocate replacing first-past-the-post with the alternative vote, as used for Australia's House of Representatives.

Constituency boundaries will be changed to cut the number of MPs by 10 per cent and equalize constituency sizes. First-past-the-post and constituency boundaries were blamed for costing the Conservatives seats this year and in 2005. In 2010, they finished first with 36.1 per cent of the vote but won 50 fewer seats than Labour took in 2005 when it came first on a vote of 35.3 per cent. In 2005, the Conservatives came second with 32.3 per cent and 166 seats, while Labour finished second in 2010 with 29 per cent but 258 seats.

On 8 and 9 June, MPs elected three Deputy Speakers and 24 committee Chairs in votes free from the control of party Whips.

New government for Anguilla

The Anguilla United Movement (AUM) led by a former Chief Minister Hon. Hubert Hughes was returned to office in the 15 February election in the Eastern Caribbean British overseas territory.

The AUM took four of the seven House of Assembly seats, compared to the one seat it won in the 2005 election. The AUM lost office to the Anguilla United Front (AUF) in 2000. This year, the AUF led by former Finance Minister Hon. Victor Banks retained two of its four seats and the remaining seat was won by the Anguilla Progressive Party.

Mr Hughes, who also became Finance Minister, ranked job creation as the new government's top priority but reportedly admitted that "the coffers are empty".

A total of 20 candidates sought support from approximately 8,000 eligible voters.

Fourth term in St Kitts

The St Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) was returned for a fourth consecutive term in the 25 January general election.

Prime Minister Dr the Hon. Denzil Douglas and his party won six seats of the eight seats on St Kitts while the main opposition People's Action Movement (PAM) won the remaining two, up from one at the 2005 election. PAM complained of electoral irregularities after leader Lindsay Grant failed to retain his seat.

The Concerned Citizens Movement won two of the three seats on Nevis, with the Nevis Reformation Party winning one seat. The polls were monitored by the Commonwealth, the Organisation of American States and the Caribbean Community.

Second term in Mauritius

Prime Minister Dr the Hon. Navin Ramgoolam's Labour-led alliance won a second consecutive term in office in Mauritius' 5 May parliamentary election.

The alliance won 41 of the 62 contested

seats, up from 38 in the 2005 election when it ended the one-term government of the alliance led by the Mauritius Militant Movement Prime Minister Hon. Paul Berenger. His alliance won 18 seats this year, while three other seats went to smaller parties.

Under Mauritius' "best loser" system, the Electoral Supervisory Commission may appoint up to a maximum of eight additional Members to correct any imbalance in community representation in Parliament.

Turnout at 78 per cent was reportedly higher than previously.

Ethnicity was an election issue as there has reportedly been a growing division between the country's majority Hindu population and other groups. Prime Minister Ramgoolam said the election result was a "vote for national unity".

Female leadership in Trinidad

Former Attorney General Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar led the People's Partnership alliance of five parties into office in Trinidad and Tobago's 24 May general election, becoming the Caribbean nation's first female Prime Minister.

The alliance won 29 seats, ending the three-term government of the People's National Movement (PNM) led by outgoing Prime Minister Hon. Patrick Manning.



Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

Ms Persad-Bissessar's United Congress Party (UCP) took 21 of the People's Partnership seats, while the Congress of the People (COP) won six and the Tobago Organization of the People won both seats on the island of Tobago. Two Partnership

members, the Movement for Social Justice and the National Joint Action Committee, failed to win any seats.

In the November 2007 election, the PNM took 26 seats with almost 46 per cent of the vote, while the UNC won 15 seats on 30 per cent and the COP failed to win any seats despite taking almost 23 per cent of the ballots cast.

Mr Manning called the election in the middle of his third five-year term as he faced an opposition motion of no-confidence in the House of Representatives.

Trinidad, a major Caribbean oil and gas producer, has a population of about 1.3 million, the majority being almost evenly divided between those of African and Indian descent. Historically, the UNC was mainly Indian and the PNM mainly African.

Tasmanian tie

A tied election in Tasmania on 20 March led to a coalition government after Governor Hon. Peter Underwood gave the incumbent Labor government the first opportunity to gauge its support in the House of Assembly.

Premier Hon. David Bartlett and his Labor Party, with 10 seats, formed a coalition with the five Members of the Green Party which included giving Green Leader Hon. Nick McKim a cabinet post and appointing another Green Member as Secretary to Cabinet. The Greens agreed to support the government with supply and in matters of confidence unless gross malfeasance or corruption can be demonstrated.

The coalition won a confidence vote by 14 to 10 when the House sat in early May.

The election saw Labor, in office since 1998, lose four seats. The Liberal Party rose three to match Labour with 10 seats. The Greens won five seats, a gain of one.

Liberal Leader Mr Will Hodgman argued the Governor should have given him the first opportunity to form a minority government since his party won the most votes. Premier Bartlett had reportedly said during the election that the party with the most votes should get the first chance to govern.

Eleven of the 25 Members are new. Six Members are female, three fewer than in the last House. Speaker Hon. Michael Polley, a member since 1972, became the

current longest serving Member in any Australian Parliament.

A government plan in the last House to move to fixed election dates was not proceeded with. The three parties now reportedly agree that the House should revert to 35 Members, as it was prior to 1998.

Sri Lanka's post-war elections

Sri Lanka's first elections after the end of more than 25 years of civil war swept back into office the President and parliamentary alliance under whose leadership Tamil insurgents were finally defeated.

H.E. Rahinda Rajapaksa and the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) won the January presidential and April parliamentary elections respectively, both with increased majorities. They were in office when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam were finally defeated in May 2009, ending a civil war in the nation's mainly Tamil north. The conflict dated back to 1983 and reportedly cost more than 40,000 lives.

The presidential vote on 26 January returned Mr Rajapaksa with over 57 per cent of the vote. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, a former Sri Lankan Army commander endorsed by the United National Party (UNP) and other opposition parties, received about 40 per cent of the vote while 20 other candidates shared the remainder of the vote.

President Rajapaksa called the election early, having won a six-year term in November 2005 with 50.3 per cent, narrowly defeating UNP Prime Minister Hon. Ranil Wickremasinghe who won 48.5 per cent.

In this year's parliamentary election on 8 April, the UPFA won 144 of the 225 seats. It came to power in 2004 with the support of smaller parties when it won 105 seats. This year, the UNP dropped from 82 seats to 60 seats, while the Democratic National Alliance led by Gen. Fonseka won seven. The Tamil National Alliance, the main Tamil ethnic minority party, won 14 seats.

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa, a former Minister and the President's brother, was elected Speaker of the new Parliament.

Gen. Fonseka was taken into military custody on 8 February to face court martials on charges of participating in politics while still in the military and of impropriety

Constitutional reform in Pakistan

A constitutional amendment transferring political power to the Prime Minister and Parliament from the President was signed into law on 19 April by President H.E. Asif Ali Zardari, igniting a legal battle.

The 18th Constitutional Amendment turns the presidency into a largely ceremonial position, removes the power of the President to dissolve Parliament unilaterally and eliminates the two-term limit on occupants of the office of Prime Minister. The amendment was finally passed by the National Assembly on 8 April and the Senate on 15 April.

The amendment was being challenged in the Supreme Court in June by a number of petitions against various provisions and against the authority of Parliament to amend the constitution in what is said to be such an extensive way.

The amendment was reportedly drafted to clear the constitution of changes brought



The National Assembly in session.

in by the regime of former President H.E. Pervez Musharraf. It was to bring stability to the parliamentary system. No elected national government in Pakistan has completed its full term.

The amendment changed other key areas of public life as well. It establishes a judicial commission to appoint judges, ends the role of the courts in endorsing suspensions of the constitution and removes from the President the authority to appoint the head of the Election Commission.

The amendment also enhanced provincial autonomy and ended the President's unilateral authority to declare emergency rule in a province.



Speaker Rajapaksa swearing the oath of office in Parliament.

in defence procurement. He has denied the charges, saying they are political motivated. He was allowed out of custody on 22 April to attend Parliament to be sworn in with other MPs.

Presidents support Commonwealth co-operation

Two Commonwealth Presidents have publicly endorsed the work of the

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Commonwealth.

President H.E. Mwai Kibaki pledged full logistical, security and other support for the 56th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference to be hosted by the Parliament of Kenya in Nairobi in September. Speaking on 10 February after talks with CPA Secretary-General Dr William F. Shija, President Kibaki said Kenya is an active participant in Commonwealth programmes, including hosting the CPA annual conference this year and in 1983.

Eight days later in Bangladesh, President H.E. Zillur Rahman emphasized his univocal belief in the Commonwealth's fundamental principles, its initiatives to support socio-economic and cultural development and its programmes to share good parliamentary practices.

Speaking to a CPA U.K. Branch delegation, the President said Bangladesh's democracy is now more effective after two years of unelected government: all 48 standing committees were constituted in Parliament's first session, and some committees are now chaired by opposition Members.

Technology and democracy

Important issues surrounding technology and democracy were highlighted as the Isle of Man Branch hosted the 41st British Islands and Mediterranean Region Conference from 10 to 14 May.

Delegates from all Branches in the region heard keynote speeches on the theme of "Technology and Democracy: Successes and Challenges" delivered by senior private and public sector leaders in computing and information management.

Sessions focused on the challenges faced by governments in using new technology for large projects. Latest developments in information technology and the protection of individual freedoms such as the right to privacy were also considered.

"Universal concern was expressed about the damage that can be caused at both government and human level by the posting of scurrilous, unfounded comments on website forums," said Manx Treasury Minister Hon. Anne Craine, MHK.

The Manx Branch, chaired by Hon. Clare Christian, MLC, hosted the meeting, which included a tour of the Manx Parliament.

Pacific votes

Nauru's 26 April general election and two subsequent elections for Parliament's Speaker have so far failed to end the central Pacific nation's political stalemate.

The general election returned the same 18 Members who sat in the House when Hon. Marcus Stephen, President since 2007, called the vote a year early because he said the nine opposition Members kept blocking legislation. By early June, two Speakers had been elected and had resigned as the dispute between Mr Stephens' supporters and critics continued.

In **Bougainville**, former Governor Mr John Momis was elected as President of Papua New Guinea's autonomous province, defeating President James Tanis in May elections. Mr Momis received about 40,000 votes, more than double Mr Tanis'.

In the parliamentary vote, independents won 24 of the 39 seats, while the New Bougainville Party took 13 seats and two went to a small party.

Recording star becomes CPA Scotland envoy

Musician and campaigner Annie Lennox has become a special envoy for the CPA Scotland Branch to update Members on the fight against HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Presiding Officer Mr Alex Fergusson, MSP, announced on 27 May that the former Eurythmics star will report to MSPs on a regular basis and will appear again at the Scottish Parliament's Festival of Politics in August. She will speak on developments in her SING Campaign to help fight HIV/AIDS and support people living with HIV in Africa. The Scottish CPA Branch is twinned with the CPA Malawi Branch.

"We were delighted last year when Annie expressed a strong interest in taking on a role with the Scottish Parliament. We are pleased that this has now been achieved under the auspices of the CPA Scotland Branch," said Mr Fergusson.

"In 2009 Annie shared her personal experience of witnessing the effects of HIV/AIDS in Africa and the action we can all take in



Scotland's Presiding Officer Mr Alex Fergusson with Annie Lennox.

fighting the pandemic. This year we look forward to an update from Annie on the positive developments the SING Campaign continues to have on people living with HIV."

Annie Lennox said: "I'm absolutely delighted to be officially made a special envoy for CPA Scotland Branch with regard to the issue of HIV AIDS. In this way I hope to contribute to the longstanding Scottish tradition of standing up for human rights and justice, with special regard to women and children in the developing world."

Ms Lennox will give Scotland's General Teaching Council Annual Lecture at this year's Festival of Politics organized by the Scottish Parliament.

Voting in Dominica

Voters in two of Dominica's 21 constituencies are expected to go back to the polls soon following a boycott by two candidates who won seats in the Caribbean country's 18 December 2009 election.

The election gave the Dominica Labour Party led by Prime Minister Hon. Roosevelt Skerrit its third consecutive term in office with 18 seats, up from 12 in 2005. The United Workers Party (UWP) led by Mr Ron Green fell to three seats from eight.

The UWP protested that the election was fraudulent and two of its winning candidates did not take the oath of office or their seats for three consecutive sittings, thus leading to their disqualification. By-elections are expected before the end of July. The UWP said it would participate in an alternative "Peoples Parliament".

The UWP have reportedly filed petitions against five of the results. They have also alleged that Mr Skerrit holds dual nationality and so is ineligible for election.

Norfolk records

Norfolk Island's Legislature set records in March when one-third of its nine seats were won by women, a seat was won by a member of a political party and the Assembly elected its first female Speaker.

The 17 March vote elected six men and three women. The Assembly on 24 March elected as Speaker Hon. Robin Adams, its former Clerk. Hon. David Buffett, a former Speaker and Chief Minister, was elected as Chief Minister again. Three Ministers and a Deputy Speaker were also elected by Members in the island's consensus government system.

Three non-executive Members included Mr Michael King of the Labor Party who declared himself Leader of the Opposition.

The Territories Law Reform Bill before the Australian Parliament proposes to increase the Australian government's power to set policy for the territory which has been experiencing financial problems after 30 years of internal self-government.