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CPA UPDATE E-NEWSLETTER

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News

CPA Update e-newsletter: Enhancing the involvement of Parliaments in international human rights is given renewed focus

The end of 2018 brought a number of anniversaries and milestones for the parliamentary community including the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR). Over the past 70 years of the UDHR, the national and international role of Parliamentarians and Parliaments has grown significantly, not only in the breadth and depth of topics that routinely form the legislative programme of a 21st century Parliament, but there has been an increasing focus on international human rights issues.

The final few months of 2018 included activities that reflected the CPA’s focus on human rights including the CPA Chairperson addressing the United Nations Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law in Geneva and the CPA Small Branches Chairperson hosting the CPA Small Branches Climate Change workshop in Kenya.

In 2019, we look forward to the continued work on these and many other issues in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) planned activities as well as the 30th anniversary of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) network and the centenary of the publication of the CPA’s flagship journal, The Parliamentarian.

This edition of the CPA’s e-newsletter highlights CPA events and activities since October 2018. Images of these events can be accessed at the CPA’s Flickr website - click here.

If you have any CPA news or events to feature in future e-newsletters, please email communications@cpahq.org.

Please note: the CPA Headquarters Secretariat has a new address:

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
CPA Headquarters Secretariat
Richmond House, Houses of Parliament
London SW1A 0AA, United Kingdom

Welcome to CPA Update We would like to hear from you. Please send us your comments and suggestions to communications@cpahq.org.

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- 'We need to build a People's Commonwealth for the 21st century' says CPA Secretary-General at Middlesex University Lecture
CPA Chairperson speaks about enhancing the involvement of Parliaments in international human rights mechanisms at United Nations Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law in Geneva

The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Hon. Emilia Lifaka, MP, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon has spoken of the role of Commonwealth Parliaments and Parliamentarians in international human rights mechanisms at the 2nd session of the United Nations Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law in Geneva, Switzerland held from 22 to 23 November 2018.

The CPA Chairperson said: “The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has been developing the ability of Parliamentarians to promote and protect human rights nationally and regionally. As Parliamentarians, we all have a responsibility and a duty as representatives of the people and the voice of the voiceless in ensuring that human rights are placed at the top of the agenda in all aspects of our work, not only by ratifying international conventions but by making sure that our respective governments take a lead in its implementation.”

The CPA Chairperson was accompanied by the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan to the UN Forum where they met with a number of delegates to explore cooperation between the CPA, the UN OHCHR and many other international agencies. The CPA Secretary-General also spoke about the importance of elected Parliamentarians stepping up and democratising human rights for the benefit of their citizens at a joint event hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat Human Rights Unit and the Governments of Fiji and Australia in the margins of the Forum.

To read the full CPA news story please click here.

‘We need to build a People’s Commonwealth for the 21st century’ says CPA Secretary-General at Middlesex University Lecture

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan has spoken of the enduring nature of the Commonwealth which comprises a unique network of peoples, civil society and parliaments as he delivered a Distinguished Lecture to a specially invited audience at Middlesex University in north London.

The CPA Secretary-General explored how the Commonwealth’s networks, including the 17,000 Commonwealth Parliamentarians in over 180 Parliaments and Legislatures of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, mark the Commonwealth out as a uniquely constituted global player. The Commonwealth is the world’s oldest political association and is unlike any other international organisation, which enables it to justifiably claim to be a ‘People’s Commonwealth’ which is democratic and diverse in nature.

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan said: “The strength of the Commonwealth into the 21st century lies in our shared history and the remarkable genius of the Commonwealth to remain enduring based on its inherent flexibility.
and agility to changing global circumstances. What is distinctive and unique about the Commonwealth is its people-centred approach. People are not only the beneficiaries of democracy and development but importantly directly contribute to these outcomes as key actors and enablers."

“The strength of the Commonwealth lies not only in the membership of governments but significantly in its Commonwealth grouping of peoples, businesses and civil society networks which together constitute the Commonwealth as a unique international family and a uniquely positioned global actor. This breadth of perspectives allows for new and necessary conversations to take place around issues such as global inequality, social and economic rights, the importance of peace-building and climate change.”

To read the CPA Secretary-General’s lecture titled ‘Democracy and Diversity: A People’s Commonwealth for the 21st century?’ please click here.

Updated CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures provide framework for Parliaments to meet contemporary challenges across the Commonwealth

A newly updated CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures has been launched at an event held by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). The updated CPA Benchmarks include measurements for Parliaments to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the recommendations contained in the Commonwealth Charter. Effective parliaments are one of the principal institutions of any functioning democracy and they are central to the attainment of SDG 16 on the role of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Speaking at the launch event for the new CPA Benchmarks, the CPA Chairperson, Hon. Emilia Lifaka, MP (Cameroon), said: “The pioneering Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures is one of the CPA’s most important pieces of parliamentary strengthening work and the updated CPA Benchmarks is vital as we seek to further strengthen Parliaments and Legislatures in line with the aspirations of the Commonwealth Charter, the SDGs and the changing demands of our citizens.”

Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and UN speaks at the launch of the CPA Benchmarks.

Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and UN said: “The Commonwealth was founded to promote and instil democratic values, and these CPA Benchmarks offer clear standards for us all to adhere to, to help us to live up to the Commonwealth’s founding principles. Maintaining, and indeed strengthening, our democratic standards was important twelve years ago when the first set of Benchmarks were launched. It is even more so now, when democracy and democratic values are under threat all over the world.”

To access the updated CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures please click here.

- Sustainability and gender equality on the agenda for Commonwealth Parliamentarians at 37th CPA Pacific and Australia Regional Conference in the Cook Islands
- CPA Chairperson at CIS Interparliamentary Assembly: Parliamentarians have a duty to hold governments to account on international humanitarian law
- CPA Small Branches Chairperson at Parliamentary Conference on the WTO as it addresses major issues facing world trade in Geneva
- Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Africa Region Chairperson supports Malawi Women’s Role-modelling Conference to inspire future Women Parliamentarians ahead of elections
- Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) UK Members hold panel discussion on empowering women’s voices during UK Parliament Week
- Visitors to the CPA Headquarters Secretariat and CPA meetings, October to December 2018
Commonwealth Parliamentarians meet in London, UK for CPA Executive Committee meeting to discuss governance matters

Over 40 Commonwealth Speakers and Members of Parliament met in London, United Kingdom for the CPA Executive Committee from 5 to 9 November 2018. Members of Parliament representing the nine regions of the CPA - Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands & Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean; Americas & Atlantic; India; Pacific; and South East Asia - attended the CPA Executive Committee, the governing body of the Association. The CPA meetings enable Commonwealth Parliamentarians to reach beyond their own Parliaments to contribute in a global setting to the development of best parliamentary practices and the most effective policies for parliamentary strengthening.

The Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP said: “The CPA Executive Committee meetings are an essential aspect of the CPA’s governance and also an opportunity for the CPA’s Members to effect change within the organisation.”

A number of governance meetings took place and the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Hon. Dr Dato’ Noraini Ahmed, MP (Malaysia) also held a teleconference of the CWP International Steering Committee during the meetings held in London. The CPA Executive Committee meetings were attended by the CPA Regional Secretaries and a separate meeting of the Regional Secretaries also took place. The CPA Executive Committee Members also heard a presentation by Jacques Chagnon, President of Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) on the structure, constitutional arrangements and programmatic work of the APF.

The CPA Executive Committee meetings were held in the absence of an annual conference and General Assembly for the CPA in 2018. The next annual conference will be the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) and General Assembly due to be held in Uganda in September 2019.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.

Commonwealth Parliamentarians find that the world’s smallest nations can be global innovators in combatting the impacts of climate change

Commonwealth Parliamentarians representing the Small Branches Network of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) have examined the global implications of climate change and its impact on the smallest nations and territories in the world. Climate change is of great concern to the 53 Commonwealth countries, especially its 31 small and developing states which are often the least polluting but the first casualties of climate change.

Parliamentarians from eight CPA Small Branches representing five CPA Regions met in Kenya from 10 to 13 October 2018 for the CPA Small Branches Climate Change Workshop at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Headquarters. The workshop heard from experts in the field and discussed ways to introduce renewable energy, waste reduction with a specific focus on plastics, marine protection, the best scientific resources for action, electric transport, the involvement of non-state actors, fiscal policy, regional integration, and technological innovation. Through this partnership, the CPA Small Branches network and UNEP will
continue to examine the role of legislators in combating climate change and support Parliamentarians in the Parliaments and Legislatures of the Commonwealth to further pursue these goals.

At the closing of the workshop, the CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta said: “As former UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon says, when it comes to climate change, there is no plan B, since we do not have a planet B. Now that we have come together as a network of CPA Small Branches Parliamentarians to discuss these pressing matters, to compare action plans and to engage with top experts in the field, it is time for action. Climate change is not just a threat to humanity - it is a tremendous, unique opportunity in our history to show what humans have done best throughout the centuries: champion innovation and growth.”

CPA Programmes Update

Joint programme developed between CPA and McGill University to strengthen skillset of Parliamentarians wins industry award

The CPA Fundamentals Programme in partnership with McGill University, Canada has been awarded the Best Custom Program Award at the 2018 Conference on Management and Executive Development (CMED). The award recognises unique and innovative high-impact programmes for their exceptional design and customisation. The programme content was adapted to the needs of participants by McGill University's School of Continuing Studies, which helped to develop the programme for Commonwealth Parliamentarians from the CPA Small Branches, a network of CPA Branches of less than 500,000 people.

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan said: “The recognition of the CPA Fundamentals Programme on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure with our programme partner, McGill University in Canada through this award shows the advances that this programme has made in meeting the CPA's aims of advancing parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. This programme specifically supports our CPA Small Branches and the CPA is in a unique position in the Commonwealth in supporting Members from national, sub-national, territorial and provincial Legislatures in this way.”

The CPA Fundamentals Programme on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure was first launched in 2016 and is the first course of its kind. The programme aims to assist Commonwealth Parliaments in building the capacity of their newly-elected and returning Parliamentarians, by equipping them with: greater depth of knowledge of parliamentary practice and procedure; increased in-depth and practical knowledge based on accepted theories and international good practices; an accredited qualification from an internationally recognised university that will benefit participants for life during and after Parliament.

The CPA programme is provided in partnership with two prestigious Commonwealth universities - the specialised CPA Fundamentals course for CPA Small Branches in partnership with McGill University in Canada, in the form of the Professional Development Certificate in Parliamentary Governance, and the CPA Fundamentals course (General) with the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa.

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CPA Working Group of Parliamentarians meet in London, UK to review CPA Programmes activities

The CPA Headquarters Secretariat has hosted an International Working Group of Parliamentarians in London, UK to review the revised CPA Programmes Strategy and programmes activities. The CPA Working Group was chaired by Hon. Alexandra Mendes, MP, Vice-Chairperson of the CPA (Canada Federal).

Members of the CPA Working Group representing the Regions of the CPA included: the CPA Treasurer, Vicki Dunne, MLA (Australian Capital Territory); the CPA Small Branches Chairperson and Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP; the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson, Hon. Dato Dr Noraini Ahmad, MP (Malaysia); Hon. Lindiwe Maseko, MP (South Africa); Hon. Clayton Mitchell, MP (New Zealand); Hon. Ms. Tahiara Aurangzeb, MNA (Pakistan).

Members of the Working Group heard presentations on CPA Programmes activities from the CPA Secretary-General, Akbar Khan and CPA Headquarters Secretariat staff.

CPA Post-Election Seminar in Grenada focuses on parliamentary democracy, Members’ skills development and gender equality

The CPA helps to strengthen parliamentary practice and procedure with a CPA Post-Election Seminar for the recently elected Members of the Parliament of Grenada, held in St George’s from 9 to 10 January 2019. The CPA Post-Election Seminar gave Members of the House of Representatives, as well as Members of the Senate of Grenada, an excellent opportunity to develop their skills and gain a better understanding of the parliamentary system and democratic processes in other Commonwealth jurisdictions, particularly from the CPA Caribbean Region.

The Parliament of Grenada is one of the smallest Legislatures in the CPA’s membership of over 180 Commonwealth Parliaments and it is located on a small island with a population of 107,000 people. The CPA is the only Commonwealth body that works to strengthen small Legislatures as well as working with larger national, state and provincial legislatures.

Regional experts attended the seminar to share their knowledge and experience with Members of the Grenada Parliament. Senator Hon. Alincia Williams-Grant, President of the Senate of Antigua and Barbuda presented on the separation of powers between the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary and on the impact of parliamentary privilege on Members. Ms. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel, Senior Clerk and CPA Branch Secretary at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago demonstrated her extensive knowledge with contributions on the Parliamentary Committee system and parliamentary procedures.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.
CPA Regional Conferences

Sustainability and gender equality on the agenda for Commonwealth Parliamentarians at 37th CPA Pacific and Australia Regional Conference in the Cook Islands

Hon. Niki Rattle, Speaker of the Parliament of the Cook Islands and CPA Cook Islands Branch President reiterated her desire to increase the number of women in the Cook Islands Parliament and across the CPA Pacific Region at the 37th CPA Pacific and Australia Regional Conference. The three-day regional conference was hosted by the CPA Cook Islands Branch in Rarotonga, Cook Islands from 22 to 24 October 2018.

Speaker Niki Rattle said: “I am elated once again for the third time as the Speaker to warmly welcome delegates to Rarotonga for the 37th CPA Pacific and Australia Regional Conference. The Parliament of the Cook Islands is delighted to host this regional conference to discuss issues of mutual interests for the welfare of our people in our Regions. The theme of ‘Towards a common future for growth and sustainability’ at this regional conference gives us the mandate to have robust and meaningful deliberations for a better future for those we hold close to our hearts.”

“This week, I believe the topics for our regional conference are really relevant in talking about gender equality and my focus while I’m Speaker of Parliament is to increase the number of women in the Parliament. Out of 24 Members, we have four women and there are many women in the Cook Islands who could actually be sitting in the House and sharing the opportunity of making decisions on the welfare of the people of this country.” A meeting of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Pacific Region also took place during the regional conference.

Speaker Rattle also paid tribute to the CPA Branches from the wider Australia and Pacific Regions for their assistance to their counterparts in the Pacific islands. The regional conference was co-chaired by Speaker Rattle and Hon. Peter Watson, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia. Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, Australia and CPA Executive Committee Member gave the keynote address to the regional conference and said: “The strategic direction established since the appointment of the current CPA Secretary-General is now evident with enhanced professional development opportunities for Members and regular communications from CPA Headquarters.”

Around 60 Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff attended the regional conference from 17 CPA Branches across the two regions.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.
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Working with partners

CPA Chairperson at CIS Interparliamentary Assembly: Parliamentarians have a duty to hold governments to account on international humanitarian law

The CPA Chairperson, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP has addressed the 48th Plenary Session of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States in St Petersburg, Russia. The CPA Chairperson was invited by the Interparliamentary Assembly and the International Committee of the Red Cross to address their conference commemorating the 150th anniversary of the St Petersburg Declaration of 1868.

The CPA Chairperson said to the conference: “We, as Parliamentarians, have a duty to hold our governments to account. There can be no greater decision for a government than to use force and to commit its men and women to the conflict zone. In order to fully understand the issues relating to the laws of war, Parliamentarians need to stay up to date on legislation and developments related to international humanitarian law. We also need to ensure that our countries are party to international treaties which govern and regulate the use of force and weapons, and provide for the humanitarian treatment of combatants once captured.”

The CPA Chairperson stressed that Parliamentarians should pay more attention to the law-making process, current trends and international humanitarian law in their work. The CPA Headquarters Secretariat is working to upskill its membership in the field of international humanitarian law and is currently producing a new Handbook on International Humanitarian Law for Commonwealth Parliamentarians together with the British Red Cross, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the University of New South Wales.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.

CPA Small Branches Chairperson at Parliamentary Conference on the WTO as it addresses major issues facing world trade in Geneva

The 2018 Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organisation (WTO), jointly organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament, attracted more than 300 Members of Parliament representing more than 100 countries to the two-day meeting held at the WTO on 6-7 December 2018. The participants discussed a wide range of issues, such as the reform of the WTO and the impact of technology on trade, and issued an outcome document at the end of the meeting highlighting the pivotal role of the WTO in strengthening multilateralism.

The Chairperson of the CPA Small Branches, Hon. Angelo Farrugia MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta participated in the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO on behalf of the CPA. The CPA Small Branches Chairperson presented to the conference on the parliamentary perspective and the mobilisation of parliamentary action on trade, with specific reference to the Commonwealth and the CPA Small Branches. The CPA Small Branches Chairperson also highlighted the greater impact of climate change on small
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states as an important issue in relation to non-discriminatory, multilateral trading systems and the impact of trade processes on smaller jurisdictions.

The Co-Chair of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is Hon. Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia who also attended the conference. According to the rules of procedure for the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is one of the international organisations represented on the Steering Committee and at the main conference.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) news

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Africa Region Chairperson supports Malawi Women’s Role-modelling Conference to inspire future Women Parliamentarians ahead of elections

The Malawi Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare in partnership with UN Women, the UNDP and the South African High Commission to Malawi, has convened a role-modelling conference for aspirant women Parliamentarians from 20 to 21 November 2018, in Lilongwe, Malawi. In preparation for the upcoming 2019 Malawi Tripartite General Elections, the Ministry of Gender has been working with the Women’s Caucus to encourage women to take part in the upcoming elections with over 800 women showing interest. This is in addition to the 32 women who are serving as Members of the Malawi Parliament, who have also expressed their intention to run for office once more.

As part of their strategies, the women’s multiparty caucuses in Malawi have been visiting each other’s constituencies as a way of supporting women and expressing solidarity. The women’s role-modelling conference was convened to give women the opportunity to share the dialogue amongst each other and to hear from those who are currently in Parliament, those who are aspiring to become Parliamentarians and those that are part of the broader movement. The women’s role-modelling conference was held on the overall theme of: ‘Women in Politics: Learning from Mama Albertina Sisulu: A women of fortitude’. As part of celebrating the centenary of Mama Albertina Sisulu, an activist as well as one of the first women MPs during the first democratic Parliament in South Africa, the organisers of the conference also felt that sharing her life as a role model will inspire women aspirants.

The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region, who is also the Deputy Chairperson of Committees in the South Africa Parliament, Hon. Angela Thoko Didiza, MP, spoke as the guest speaker at the conference about the work of the CWP and its programmes across the Africa Region and beyond. The CWP Chairperson also paid tribute to the life and work of Mama Albertina Sisulu.

Please click here to read the full CWP news story.
Members of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) from the CPA UK Branch held a panel discussion event as part of the UK Parliament’s ‘Parliament Week’ on ‘Empowering Women’s Voices in Parliament’. The panel debate was held against the background of the Vote100 campaign celebrating the centenary of women’s suffrage in the UK.

The panellists were: Rt Hon. Maria Miller, MP, Chair of the Women and Equalities Select Committee who highlighted the Committee’s work; Baroness Jenkin of Kennington who discussed the importance of encouraging and supporting women to stand for public office; and Hon. Angela Rayner, MP who spoke about her journey in becoming an MP.

A key focus of the CWP’s work is achieving representative democracies by helping women promote themselves in Parliaments across the Commonwealth, and developing the skills they need to succeed in their work. The panel event also looked at how women can effectively access, connect with and influence politics both outside and inside Parliament.

Visitors to the CPA Headquarters Secretariat and CPA meetings, October to December 2018

CPA Maharashtra delegation visit CPA Headquarters

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with a high-level delegation from Maharashtra, India at the CPA Headquarters Secretariat. The delegation was led by Shri Haribhau Bagade, Speaker of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly together with four Members and Legislature staff.
Belize Speaker visits CPA Headquarters

The CPA Secretary-General welcomed the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belize, Hon. Laura Tucker-Longsworth to the CPA Headquarters. The Speaker was accompanied by Hon. Lee Mark Chang, Senate President and several Members of Parliament as well as Mr Eddie Webster, Clerk of the Assembly. The Belize delegation were in London as part of an exchange programme with the CPA UK Branch and the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

New South Wales MP visits CPA Headquarters

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with Hon. Anna Watson, MP from the New South Wales Legislative Assembly in Australia at the CPA Headquarters Secretariat to discuss parliamentary strengthening and the CPA’s activities in the Australia Region.

CPA and PGA discuss potential project cooperation

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with the Secretary-General of the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), Dr David Donat-Cattin during Human Rights Week as the parliamentary community marked the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The two Secretaries-General discussed potential cooperation on future projects for parliamentary strengthening and democracy.
The Parliamentarian – 2018: Issue Four: Human rights in the modern era: 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights

The Parliamentarian is the quarterly Journal of Commonwealth Parliaments published by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and features articles and news written by Members of Parliament, parliamentary staff and global experts across the Commonwealth about international issues.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE MODERN ERA: 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) continues to be a momentous document, which reinforces international human rights law and inspires us to continue to work to ensure everyone can gain their freedom, equality and dignity.

The UDHR was drafted by representatives from all across the world with different legal and cultural experiences, and was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris in 1948. It is said to be one of the most translated documents in the world, available in more than 500 languages.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has engaged in the global discourse on a strengthened role for Parliaments and Parliamentarians in the field of human rights for a number of years and this issue of The Parliamentarian explores a wide range of topics linked to human rights as we reach the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This issue of The Parliamentarian features many contributions from across the Commonwealth on human rights topics including on the role of Parliaments and Parliamentarians in implementing human rights; women's economic rights; the impact of climate change on the world’s smallest states as a human right; and the evolving role of Parliamentarians and of Parliaments to step up as key enablers of human rights. This issue features a tribute to Nelson Mandela: a true advocate for human rights; a personal view of defending and promoting the protection of human rights across the Commonwealth; media rights; disability rights; and the status of human rights defenders.

This issue of The Parliamentarian also highlights a number of other topics including the new Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D); and article on how trade and investment can help to remove people in the Commonwealth 'out of poverty'; the successful Branch-level ‘twinning’ partnerships between the CPA Pacific and Australia Region.

The Parliamentarian continues to report on a number of significant anniversaries in the history of women’s suffrage and the passing of significant equality legislation across the Commonwealth in 2018. The Parliamentary Report and Third Reading section in this issue includes parliamentary and legislative news from Canada Federal, British Columbia, India, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and Australia Federal. This issue also features an obituary for Somnath Chatterjee, the legendary Speaker of India (1929 – 2018).

The latest issue of The Parliamentarian is available through CPA Branch Secretaries or by subscription. Email editor@cpahq.org if you have not received your copy or wish to purchase a print copy. Digital issues and archived editions are available via the CPA website - please click here for previous issues.

Further information can also be found at www.cpahq.org/cpahq/parliamentariancurrentissue

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CPA Headquarters Secretariat
c/o Richmond House, Houses of Parliament
London SW1A 0AA, United Kingdom
Phone: +44 (0)20 7799 1460 | Email: hq.sec@cpahq.org | Website www.cpahq.org

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