CPA Update e-newsletter: Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy in the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has seen a busy second quarter of 2018 with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018 in the UK; CPA Post Election Seminars in the Caribbean Region; the updating of the CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures with Commonwealth and international partners; and CPA Branch visits to Guyana, Nevis and Jamaica.

This edition of the CPA’s e-newsletter highlights these and other CPA events and activities between April and June 2018. Images of these events can be accessed at the CPA’s Flickr website - [click here](http://www.flickr.com/photos/). If you have any CPA news or events to feature in future e-newsletters please email [communications@cpahq.org](mailto:communications@cpahq.org).

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

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CPA News

Commonwealth Parliamentarians play a vital role at CHOGM 2018 to influence outcomes and activities

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings and Commonwealth Summit 2018 took place in London and Windsor, United Kingdom from 16 to 20 April 2018. The theme of the summit was 'Towards our Common Future' which linked to the theme for Commonwealth Day 2018.

Commonwealth Parliamentarians participated in the main meetings for Heads of Government and Foreign Ministers as well as four associated Commonwealth Forums along with over 5,000 people from parliament, government, business and civil society. Members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) including the CPA Chairperson, Hon. Emilia Lifaka, MP (Cameroon) and CPA Officers as well as the CPA Secretary-General participated in the Summit, the Forums and other events which took place.
During the 2018 Commonwealth Women's Forum, the CPA and CWP held a joint session on ‘Women's Political Participation at All Levels’ emphasising women’s positive political, economic and societal contributions in partnership with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and the CPA UK Branch.

CPA Secretary-General, Akbar Khan said: “CHOGM 2018 will deliver better global outcomes for the Commonwealth’s 2.4 billion citizens, 60% of whom are under the age of 30 by all parts of the Commonwealth family working more closely together towards a common future. Members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association representing over 180 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures and 17,000 Parliamentarians across the Commonwealth have been at the heart of the discussions taking place at key Forums and side events. The CPA brought its unique perspective to CHOGM 2018 through focusing on the key role that Parliamentarians can and do play in every aspect of a nation’s life to bring transformational change to Commonwealth citizens’ lives.”

For the full round-up of all of the CPA’s events and activities at CHOGM 2018 including the Commonwealth Women’s Forum please click here.

Images of these events can be accessed at our Flickr page click here.

Special issue of The Parliamentarian - Post-CHOGM 2018 issue: A special issue of the CPA’s flagship publication, The Parliamentarian has been published with outcomes and news of activities at CHOGM 2018. For more information about this issue please click here.

Parliamentary partners work to update the CPA’s Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures to assist Parliaments to meet contemporary challenges across the Commonwealth

The updated CPA Benchmarks will also 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 development agenda and all of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

More than a decade on from the launch of the CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and its partners, a new body of work is being undertaken to revise and update the parliamentary Benchmarks to reflect the changed landscape in which democracies now operate.

A joint study group convened by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) undertook a review of the CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures at Wilton Park in the United Kingdom from 18-20 June 2018. The study group included representatives from six of the nine CPA Regions - Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; India; Pacific - as well as leading experts in the field of parliamentary strengthening to review the CPA Benchmarks and continue with this seminal work in setting standards for modern Parliaments.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.
**CPA Secretary-General speaks to young people about the importance of Commonwealth political values during first official visit to Jamaica**

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan spoke to young people at the inaugural CPA Roadshow for young people in Jamaica alongside Minister of State in the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Alando Terrelonge who urged more young Jamaicans to participate in the country’s political process and to become activists for a cause as they can have an impact on the lives of their peers. During the bilateral visit to Jamaica, the CPA Secretary-General attended a parliamentary reception as well as meeting with Members of the Jamaican Parliament who have participated in CPA Programmes.

The CPA Secretary-General attended the launch of the Jamaica Houses of Parliament Design Competition launched by the Jamaican Prime Minister during his visit to Jamaica. Mr Akbar Khan also held a number of bilateral meetings with key figures in Jamaica at Gordon House including: Hon. Karl Samuda, MP, House Leader and Hon Mr Justice Bryan Sykes, the Chief Justice of Jamaica to discuss the Commonwealth Latimer House Principles.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.

**International Expert Committee meets in London, UK to discuss the future status of the Association**

The CPA Headquarters Secretariat hosted an International Expert Committee in London, UK for Commonwealth Members to discuss the future status of the Association attended by Hon. Russell Wortley, MLC (South Australia), Chairperson of the Committee; Speaker Justin B. Muturi, MP (Kenya); Hon. Alexandra Mendes, MP, Vice-Chairperson of the CPA (Canada); Hon. Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods, MP (UK) with the CPA Treasurer, Vicki Dunne, MLA (ACT), CPA Secretary-General, Akbar Khan and CPA Headquarters Secretariat staff.

**CPA Secretary-General attends special multi-faith Commonwealth service at Chelmsford Cathedral**

The CPA Secretary-General Mr Akbar Khan attended a special multi-faith and multi-cultural service at Chelmsford Cathedral in Essex, England to mark the founding of the Commonwealth and its past, present and future. The service was hosted by the Queen’s representative, the Lord-Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst and was one of many Commonwealth services and celebrations across the United Kingdom following the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018. The CPA Secretary-General gave two readings at the service including the Commonwealth Affirmation.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.
CPA Programme Update

CPA helps to embed good governance in Nevis, one of the smallest legislatures in the Commonwealth

The CPA has helped to strengthen parliamentary practice and procedure with the delivery of a CPA Post-Election Seminar for the recently elected Nevis Island Assembly from 15 to 16 May 2018. The CPA Post-Election Seminar, held in Charlestown, Nevis, was held to enable current and recently elected Parliamentarians to gain a broader understanding of the principles of parliamentary democracy and to strengthen their skillsets.

The eight Member Nevis Island Assembly is one of the smallest legislatures in the CPA’s membership of over 180 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures. The CPA is the only Commonwealth body that works to strengthen small legislatures like the Nevis Island Assembly as well as working with larger national, state and provincial legislatures.

Hon. Mark Brantley, the Premier of Nevis said: “The Commonwealth is diverse and democracy among its member states takes different shapes and forms. It is therefore critical that we become inclusive and embrace different cultures, traditions and values as we endeavour to strengthen and promote democracy globally. As we become more inclusive, we must however continue to commit ourselves to the values and tenets that define us - free and fair elections, rule of law, separation of powers, respect, understanding, tolerance, freedom of expression, gender equality, good governance and human rights.”

The newly elected and current Members of the Nevis Island Assembly were joined by Senator Wade Mark (Trinidad and Tobago); Hon. Gail Teixeira, MP, Opposition Chief Whip (Guyana); Mr Nigel Jones, Deputy Clerk of Parliament of Barbados; CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan as well as local Members and officials from St Kitts and Nevis National Assembly.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.

CPA Roadshow for young people in Nevis brings Commonwealth democracy to life

During the visit to Nevis Island, the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan delivered a CPA Roadshow for 25 students from two local schools, Charlestown Secondary School and Gingerland Secondary School. The Secretary-General was accompanied by local Members including Hon. Farrel Smithen, President of the Nevis Island Assembly; Hon. Alexis Jeffers, Deputy Premier of Nevis; and Senator Wade Mark from Trinidad and Tobago who spoke to students about their roles as Parliamentarians. The students also heard from Nevis Islander, Michelle Slack who attended the 9th Commonwealth Youth Parliament in Jersey earlier this year.

The CPA Roadshows provide an opportunity for young people to learn about the political values of the Commonwealth such as diversity, development and parliamentary democracy; to discuss issues of concern about the society in which they live; and to find out about the work of the CPA.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.
Commonwealth Assembly at Twickenham Prep School in South West London

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan visited Twickenham Prep School in South West London to speak at a Commonwealth Assembly in May.

The CPA has a programme of outreach that provides opportunities for young people to learn about the political values of the Commonwealth such as diversity, development and parliamentary democracy; to discuss issues of concern about the society in which they live; and to find out about the work of the CPA. The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan and members of the CPA Headquarters Secretariat team attended Headmaster, Mr David Malam’s Commonwealth Assembly where the students heard about the Commonwealth and the role of the CPA in promoting diversity, development and democracy. The students at the school had been learning about the Commonwealth for the past few weeks as part of a series of assemblies and the CPA Secretary-General was the latest to contribute his perspective.

CPA Regional Conferences

43rd CPA Regional Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region discusses the building of small developing states as it takes place in the Cayman Islands

The Cayman Islands Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has successfully hosted the 43rd CPA Regional Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic (CAA) Region, which took place between 15th and 23rd June 2018 in Georgetown, Grand Cayman, and saw over 60 delegates from across the CAA Region - and the wider Commonwealth - attend and participate in the week-long conference.

The theme of the annual CPA Regional Conference was ‘Building Small Developing States’ and it focused on the pressing issues facing the region such as de-globalization, climate change and population growth. The regional conference was attended by Speakers, Members of Parliament and guest delegates from across the region and was hosted by Hon. Dr W. McKeever Bush, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands.

The CPA Caribbean Regional Conference saw several other important events take place alongside the main conference including the Annual General Meeting for the Regional Executive Committee, the 11th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) and the 14th Caribbean Regional Youth Parliament Debate.

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.
**CPA Branch visits**

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretary-General supports social cohesion and diversity during a bilateral visit to Guyana

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan has completed a bilateral visit to Guyana where he undertook a programme of events with the National Assembly of Guyana and CPA Guyana Branch.

The CPA Secretary-General was the guest of the Prime Minister and First Vice-President of Guyana, Hon. Moses V. Nagamootoo at the 3rd National Guyana Social Cohesion Day Observance ‘celebrating lasting relationships in a diverse society’ at the National Cultural Centre in Georgetown. The CPA Secretary-General said: “I am delighted to attend the Social Cohesion Day celebrating Guyana’s diverse society and am inspired by the wise remarks of Prime Minister Nagamootoo that only when we appreciate difference can we deepen our respect for each other. Congratulations to Guyana on leading the way!”

Please click here to read the full CPA news story.

**Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) news**

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Chairperson visits CPA Headquarters Secretariat in London

The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Hon. Dato’ Noraini Ahmad, MP (Malaysia) visited the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Headquarters Secretariat to be briefed on the ongoing activities of the CPA and CWP and to meet with the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan and CPA Headquarters Secretariat staff in London, UK.

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met also with Hon. Shamsul Iskandar, MP (Malaysia) of the CPA Malaysia Executive Committee at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Headquarters Secretariat to hear about activity in the South-East Asia Region.
Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference held in London

The United Kingdom Parliament and CPA UK Branch hosted the annual British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference for Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) on 26 and 27 April 2018. The theme of the conference was ‘Women in Parliament: Past, Present and Future’ and it was attended by over 25 Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians from across the region. The conference focused on the centenary of the UK Parliament passing the Representation of the People Act, alongside topical issues such as sexual harassment and online abuse.

UK Parliamentarian, Hon. Meg Hillier, MP delivered the keynote address and spoke about her role as Chair of the UK House of Commons Public Accounts Committee and the importance of gender representation on Parliamentary Committees.

Rt. Hon. Maria Miller, MP spoke about her work as Chair of the UK House of Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee and conference delegates also heard from the CWP BIM Regional Chairperson, Joyce Watson, AM (Wales). States of Alderney Member, Norma Paris spoke about being the only woman Member in her Parliament, one of the smallest in the Commonwealth.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Regional Workshop in Eastern Cape discusses women’s economic empowerment

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region have held a three-day workshop and women’s parliament dialogue for Commonwealth Parliamentarians at the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature in South Africa from 18 to 20 June 2018.

The objectives of the CWP Africa Regional workshop were to expand accountability by Members on women’s representation; to mobilise the active participation of women in government programmes; to ensure the involvement of women in the Africa 2063 Agenda and sustainable development goals with a view to mainstream gender in the budgetary process. The dialogue also aimed to raise awareness and debate towards the emancipation of women and representation of women in leadership.

The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region and the Deputy Chairperson of Committees in the South Africa Parliament, Hon. Thoko Didiza, MP, gave a keynote address under the theme of ‘Women at the centre of radical economic transformation’.

Delegates attending the CWP Africa Regional workshop included Speakers and Members of Parliament, Government Ministers, Members of Provincial Legislatures, councillors from local municipalities, civic society organisations, academic institutions, businesses and student organisations.
Visitors to the CPA Headquarters Secretariat and CPA meetings, April to June 2018

CPA Maharashtra delegation India visit CPA Headquarters

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with a high-level delegation from Maharashtra, India led by Shri Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar, Chairman, Maharashtra Legislative Council and Shri Haribhau Bagade, Speaker, Maharashtra Legislative Assembly together with four Members of Legislative Council and Maharashtra Legislature Secretariat staff.

CPA Western Australia Branch President meets CPA Secretary-General

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with Hon. Kate Doust, MLC, President of the Legislative Council of Western Australia to discuss the CPA’s work in parliamentary strengthening for state parliaments in the Australia Region and the CWP’s work in gender equality.

St Helena Member meets CPA Secretary-General

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with Hon. Christine Scipio-O’Dean, MLC from the St Helena Legislative Council to discuss the recent CPA Post-Election Seminar in St Helena for newly elected Members, the launch of the CPA Roadshows for young people in St Helena and parliamentary development opportunities for one of the CPA’s smallest Branches and legislatures.
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly Member visits CPA

Hon. Sardar Hussain Babak, MPA from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly in Pakistan together with officials visited the CPA Headquarters Secretariat to meet with the CPA’s Director of Operations, Mr Jarvis Matiya to discuss the CPA’s parliamentary strengthening opportunities and the CPA’s work in the Asia Region and Pakistan.

Malta MPs visit CPA Headquarters

A group of MPs from the Parliament of Malta visited the CPA during a week-long exchange visit to the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Hon. Edward Zammit Lewis, MP, Hon. Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi, MP, Hon. Robert Cutajar, MP and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi, MP visited the CPA Headquarters to discuss parliamentary strengthening opportunities and the CPA’s work in the region.

New Pakistan National Assembly Secretary meets CPA Secretary-General

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with Mr Tahir Hussain, Secretary of the National Assembly of Pakistan to discuss the CPA’s work across the Commonwealth and in the CPA Asia Region and parliamentary strengthening opportunities for the National Assembly.
Yukon Speaker visits the CPA Headquarters

The Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly, Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA visited the CPA Headquarters with Mrs Janet Clarke to meet with the CPA's Director of Operations, Mr Jarvis Matiya and Ms Meenakshi Dhar, Head of the Secretary-General's Office to discuss the CPA's parliamentary strengthening opportunities and the CPA's work in the Canada Region.


*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.

**TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE: CHOGM OUTCOMES**

Following recent events, there is a renewed focus on the Commonwealth that we have not seen for a number of years. The diverse community of the 53 Commonwealth nations has an opportunity to increase its promotion of prosperity, democracy and peace and to tackle the worldwide challenges such as climate change that affect all of our global population. The role of the Commonwealth’s wide network of organisations is of huge importance in giving the Commonwealth a unique role in responding to the world’s universal challenges.

This issue of *The Parliamentarian* reports on a wide range of recent events and activities that have reached our membership in all nine CPA Regions including the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018 and Commonwealth Summit in the United Kingdom with a wide range of activities involving Commonwealth Parliamentarians; three of the four Commonwealth Forums - Women’s, People’s and Youth; the impact of the successful XXI Commonwealth Games in the Gold Coast in Australia from a Minister’s perspective; the Modern Slavery Project in partnership with the UK Government that is reaching many Commonwealth countries; Commonwealth Day 2018 with young people; and the 9th Commonwealth Youth Parliament took place at the States Assembly in St Helier, Jersey.

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](http://www.cpahq.org/cpahq/parliamentariancurrentissue)

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