POST ELECTION SEMINAR
FOR THE
PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

OPENING REMARKS BY
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CPA SECRETARY-GENERAL

11 APRIL, 2013
FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE
Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Deputy-Speaker,
Honourable Justice Edmond Cowan, Ombudsman and former Speaker of the Parliament of Sierra Leone
Hon. Majority Leader,
Hon. Minority Leader,
Hon Majority Whip,
Hon Minority Whip,
Honourable Members of Parliament
Honourable Clerk,
Parliamentary Officials and Staff,
The Press
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

Honourable Speaker, I am honoured and privileged to be able to give some brief remarks at the opening of this important Post Election Seminar for newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs), as well as those returning to Parliament.

On behalf of my delegation, the resource team and indeed, on my own behalf, I wish to thank you all for the very warm hospitality and friendship extended to us since our arrival here in Freetown.

Indeed, it was a great honour and privilege to meet His Excellency, the President of Sierra Leone, yesterday at State House where he briefed me on the progressive developments in the country.

Honourable Chairperson, Honourable Members,

The Post Election Seminar is one of the core programmes of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). Held following a general election, the Post Election Seminar is aimed at building the capacity of newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) so that they function efficiently and effectively in the performance of their democratic duties. It is also serves as a refresher course for returning MPs.

I believe this Seminar is timely, since the CPA last conducted one after the 2002 elections here in Sierra Leone. The Post Election Seminar can be a means of healing the wounds and acrimony of elections, promote national reconciliation and the development agenda.

Honourable Chairperson, Honourable Members,

Assisting me in this process, is a team of experts, drawn from the western Africa sub-region of the CPA as well as South Africa and partner organisations. The experts will share their experiences, as well as learn from you as we work together to assist you to function effectively in Parliament, in its committees and in your other political duties.

On the team are: Hon. Jerry Thibedi, MP, of South Africa; Justice Edmond Cowan, Ombudsman & former Speaker of the Parliament of Sierra Leone; Mr Rex Owusu-Ansah, a former Clerk of the Parliament of Ghana; Dr Rasheed Draman of the Parliamentary Centre’s

As mentioned yesterday during the press briefing, the CPA has held in excess of 50 Post-Election Seminars in 30 other Commonwealth jurisdictions since 1991 as part of its programme of strengthening the institution of Parliament and the Members and officials of the Parliaments and Legislatures. These Seminars and the Association's other events and its electronic and paper publications promote understanding of the parliamentary system in its many forms throughout the Commonwealth.

Honourable Chairperson, Honourable Members, I look forward to very interactive sessions on the various topics in the programme before you.

I wish you the very best of your deliberations.

I thank you.