



## **Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth Communique**

**London, United Kingdom March 2024**

To mark the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the modern Commonwealth, we, the Speakers and Presiding Officers from parliaments of the Commonwealth, met in Westminster to celebrate this significant milestone. We discussed and reflected on the role that all our democratic institutions play in shaping this diverse, and voluntary association.

Our meeting reaffirmed the central role played by parliaments in democratic life in the countries and territories of the Commonwealth. As assemblies that represent all components of society, parliaments are the cornerstone of democratic governance; they embody the wills and expressions of the people through their legislative and scrutiny roles and functions.

On this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Commonwealth, we endorse the core values and principles of the Commonwealth, as declared in the Commonwealth Charter.

We recall and endorse the principle of democracy that states:

*'We recognise the inalienable right of individuals to participate in democratic processes, in particular through free and fair elections in shaping the society in which they live. Governments, political parties and civil society are responsible for upholding and promoting democratic culture and practices and are accountable to the public in this regard. Parliaments and representative local governments and other forms of local governance are essential elements in the exercise of democratic governance.'*

Across the world, the Commonwealth principle of human rights has never been more important, and we are implacably opposed to all forms of discrimination, both within the Commonwealth and throughout the world.

We thank the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for its role, in deepening the Commonwealth's commitment to the highest standards of democratic governance, parliamentary practice and the Commonwealth's fundamental values across our law-making legislative bodies on a national, state or provincial parliament level, as well as the legislatures of dependent territories.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Latimer House Principles, in accordance with the laws and customs of each Commonwealth country. Those Principles provide a framework for the effective operation of and interaction between the executive, parliament, and judiciary, highlighting the importance of the separation of powers between these three branches of government to ensure effective governance and democracy.

By the time of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we hope that our parliaments and assemblies will have continued to contribute to a world that is free of strife, war and inequality and that '*co-operating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress*', as first declared in the London Declaration of April 1949, is as relevant then as it is today and 75 years ago.

We reiterate our support for this 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary communique which outlines our support and commitment to the unique and modern partnership of the Commonwealth and our roles within it.

Agreed in the presence of the following Speakers and Presiding Officers or nominated representatives:

**Australia**

Senator the Hon Sue Lines, President of the Senate, Parliament of Australia

**Bangladesh**

Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP, Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad

**Barbados**

His Honour Mr Arthur Holder, SC., JP., MP, Speaker of the House of Assembly

**British Virgin Islands**

The Hon Corine George-Massicote, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

**Canada**

The Honourable Greg Fergus PC MP, Speaker of the House of Commons

**Cameroon**

Hon. Lawson Tabot Bakia MP

**Cayman Islands**

The Hon Sir Alden McLaughlin KCMG MBE KC JP, Speaker of the Parliament

**Cyprus**

Ms Annita Demetriou, President of the House of Representatives

**Grenada**

Honourable Leo L. Cato, Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Senator the Honourable Dr Dessima Williams, President of the Senate

**Guernsey**

Sir Richard McMahon KC, Bailiff of Guernsey and President of the States

**Isle of Man**

The Hon. Juan Watterson SHK, Speaker of the House of Keys

**Kenya**

The Rt Hon Dr Moses M. Wetang'ula EGH, MP, Speaker of the National Assembly  
Rt. Hon. Amason Jeffah Kingi, EGH, MP, President of the Senate

**Kiribati**

The Hon Tangariki Reete, Speaker of Parliament

**Malawi**

The Rt Hon Catherine Gomezgani Hara, Speaker of the National Assembly

**Malta**

The Hon Dr Angelo Farrugia, Speaker of the House of Representatives

**Namibia**

Honourable Professor Peter Hitjitevi Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly

**Northern Ireland**

Mr Edwin Poots MLA, Speaker of the Assembly

**Nigeria**

The Rt Hon Benjamin Kalu, Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives

**Pakistan**

Ms Shaista Pervaiz Malik, Member of the National Assembly

**Saint Lucia**

The Hon Jeremiah Norbert, Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly

**Scotland**

Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP, Presiding Officer of The Scottish Parliament

**Sierra Leone**

The Rt Hon Abass Chernor Bundu (PhD), Speaker of Parliament

**Singapore**

Mr Seah Kian Peng, Speaker of Parliament

**Sri Lanka**

The Hon Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana MP, Speaker of Parliament

**St Kitts and Nevis**

The Honourable Lanein Blanchette, Speaker of the National Assembly

**The Gambia**

Honourable Seedy SK Njie, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

**Tonga**

Hon. Lord Fakafanua, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

**Turks and Caicos Islands**

The Hon Gordon Burton, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

**United Kingdom**

The Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP, Speaker of the House of Commons  
Rt Hon the Lord McFall of Alcluith, Lord Speaker

**Wales**

David Rees MS, Deputy Presiding Officer of the Welsh Parliament

**Zambia**

The Hon Malungo Chisangano MP, First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly