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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

***Report of the Australian Parliamentary Delegation to the  
56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth  
Parliamentary Conference,  
Nairobi, Kenya***

**10 to 19 September 2010**

November 2010  
Canberra

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## ***Membership of the delegation***

**Leader**      Senator the Hon. John Hogg

**Member**      Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan

Ms Robyn McClelland

Delegation Secretary



## ***Introduction***

- 1.1 The Australian Parliamentary Delegation attended the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya from 10 to 19 September 2010. The conference was hosted by the Kenyan Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).
- 1.2 This year the delegation to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference did not involve a bilateral visit to a nearby country in the week or weeks preceding or following the conference as has occurred in recent years. It proved not to be possible to arrange a bilateral visit as the timing was not convenient for countries concerned. However, the leader of the delegation, the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon. John Hogg, undertook an official visit to Tunisia following the conference, from 19 to 21 September 2010. This is covered in a separate report.
- 1.3 The delegation was also impacted by the timing of the general election in Australia, which was announced on 17 July 2010 and held five weeks later on 21 August 2010. Members of the House of Representatives were not able to participate in the delegation as a result.
- 1.4 This report is in three chapters – following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 reports on the delegation’s attendance at the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, and Chapter 3 reports on reform of the CPA.
- 1.5 In 2010, the Executive of the CPA established a Working Party to inquire into CPA reform. The President of the Senate represents the Australian region on the Working Party. The first meeting of the Working Party, along with the meetings of the Executive Committee, which Senator Hogg attended, were held in the lead-up to the conference.

## Acknowledgements

- 1.6 The delegation wishes to express its appreciation of the efforts of all those who contributed to its visit. In particular, the delegation acknowledges the following contributions.

### Canberra

- 1.7 The delegation received written briefings prior to its departure, from staff of the Parliamentary Library. The delegation records its thanks to all staff who contributed to these briefings.
- 1.8 The delegation also thanks the staff of the Parliamentary Relations Office, in particular Ms Lyn Witheridge, for their administrative assistance prior to departure.

### Nairobi

- 1.9 The delegation thanks Mr Todd Mercer, A/g High Commissioner and staff of the Australian High Commission in Nairobi, for the initial briefings and continuing assistance during the delegation's visit. In particular, the High Commission arranged for Senator Hogg to visit an integrated poverty reduction program in the Eastern and Rift Valley, funded by AusAID. This successful project involved providing dedicated, separate clean water sources for both the community and their livestock at Olooyiankalani in the Kajaido District. The High Commission also hosted a reception for the delegation on 13 September, at which delegation members met Australians living in Kenya and discussed their work and perceptions of the country.
- 1.10 The delegation wishes to thank the Speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya, the Hon. Kenneth Marende, EGH MP, the National Organising Committee for the Conference, and the CPA Kenya Branch for hosting the conference. It also wishes to record its appreciation of the work of the many staff of the National Assembly of Kenya, led by the Clerk, Mr Patrick Gichohi, CBS, who contributed to the running of the conference.



## ***56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference***

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 The 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 10 to 19 September 2010. The conference was hosted by the Parliament of Kenya and led by the Hon Kenneth Marende EGH MP, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya and President of the CPA.
- 2.2 The CPA is an association of Commonwealth parliamentarians. The aims of the CPA are to promote knowledge and understanding about parliamentary democracy and respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, irrespective of gender, race, religion or culture.
- 2.3 The CPA is composed of branches formed in parliaments and legislatures in Commonwealth countries which subscribe to parliamentary democracy. There are over 170 branches at national, state, provincial and territory levels in 53 of 54 Commonwealth countries, representing approximately 17,000 members. Branches are grouped, geographically into nine regions: Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean; Americas and Atlantic; Pacific; and South-East Asia.
- 2.4 Some 900 delegates, observers and officials from member parliaments attended the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. The Commonwealth of Australia Branch of the CPA was represented by a

parliamentary delegation comprising Senator the Hon. John Hogg, President of the Senate and Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan. In addition, a number of delegates attended from other Australian parliaments.

2.5 The theme of the conference was 'Parliament and Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Thus far and beyond'.

2.6 The conference encompassed a number of components and associated activities. These were:

- meetings of the Executive Committee of the CPA
- a meeting of the Working Party on CPA reform
- a plenary session and eight workshops
- the annual general assembly of the CPA
- meetings of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians
- meetings of regional groups of the CPA
- the 30<sup>th</sup> Small Branches Conference of members from small legislatures
- the 47<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the Society of Clerks-at-the-Table, comprising parliamentary officials.

## **Business of the Conference**

### **Opening ceremonies and speeches**

2.7 The official opening of the conference was held on Tuesday, 14 September 2010.

2.8 The Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Hon. Dato'Seri Mohd. Shafie bin Hj Apdal, MP, presented the first speech.

2.9 The President of the CPA and Speaker of the Kenyan National Assembly, the Hon. Kenneth Marende, EGH, MP made his remarks and read a message of goodwill from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth and Patron of the CPA.

2.10 The guest of honour at the opening, His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki, CGH, MP, President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kenya formally addressed the gathering of participants and officially opened the conference.

- 2.11 The Rt Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Vice-President of the CPA and representing the incoming President of the CPA, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, gave a vote of thanks.
- 2.12 After the opening ceremony, the business of the conference commenced with addresses to the plenary from the Commonwealth Secretary-General Mr Kamallesh Sharma and the CPA Secretary-General Dr William Shija. The text of these speeches is at Appendix A.

## **Plenary and workshop sessions**

- 2.13 The principal business part of the conference comprised eight workshops and a plenary session with the following topics:
- Workshop A: The Role of Parliament in Peace Building: The Case of Kenya in Addressing Post-Election Violence in 2008
  - Workshop B: The Role of Parliamentarians in Natural Disaster Management
  - Workshop C: Energy and Environment: Achieving Sustainable Development
  - Workshop D: Parliament, Accountability and the Role of Internet Governance in Strengthening Oversight
  - Workshop E: The Role of Parliamentarians in Facilitating Grassroots Projects
  - Workshop F: The Role of Parliamentarians in the Protection of Migrant Workers
  - Workshop G: The Global Water and Food Crisis
  - Workshop H: How prepared is the Commonwealth for the Emerging New World Economic Order?
  - Plenary session: Commonwealth Initiatives in Handling Migration Issues.
- 2.14 Members of the Commonwealth of Australia Branch delegation attended plenary and workshop sessions and participated in discussions. Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan was a lead speaker in Workshop G, presenting a paper on 'The Global Food and Water Crisis'. A summary report of the workshop and plenary sessions is at Appendix B.
- 2.15 However, the delegation was disappointed to witness the poor attendance by conference delegates at most workshops with numbers at any one

workshop struggling to reach the mid-30s. A number of workshops were unable to proceed for the lack of interest.

## **General Assembly**

- 2.16 The 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference included the General Assembly of the CPA (the annual general meeting of the Association), held on 18 September 2010. The main business of the meeting was the consideration and adoption of the Association's annual report, financial statements and budget estimates, and the election of office bearers and regional representatives.
- 2.17 The meeting ratified the reappointment of Dr William Shija as Secretary-General of the CPA, for a second five year term, commencing from January 2012. The delegation believes this was most unfortunate as it was a decision taken in advance of the report of the current Working Party on CPA reform being completed. In addition, Dr Shija's current term did not expire for another 15 months. This is further discussed in Chapter 3.
- 2.18 The meeting also passed a resolution for Commonwealth support for Pakistan, in the face of the recent and unprecedented nation-wide floods in that country.

## **Executive Committee**

- 2.19 The Executive Committee met on 11, 12 and 18 September. The Australian region was represented at these meetings by the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon John Hogg, the Hon. Michael Polley (meetings on 11 and 12 September, representing the Tasmanian CPA Branch), Mr John Pandazopoulos, MP (meetings on 11 and 12 September, representing the Victorian CPA Branch), Mr Andrew Cripps, MP (meeting on 18 September, representing the Queensland CPA Branch) and the Hon Doug Parkinson MLC (meeting on 18 September, representing the Tasmanian CPA Branch).
- 2.20 The continuing unfortunate aspect of these meetings is that 'consensus' no longer prevails and the business of the Executive Committee is determined by a regional bloc of votes based on an alliance of the African, South Asian and Caribbean regions.

## **Working Party**

- 2.21 As mentioned, the Executive Committee has appointed a Working Party to inquire into reform of the CPA. Senator the Hon. John Hogg, the

Australian Region's representative on the Working Party, attended the first meeting of the Working Party which was held on 9 September in conjunction with the conference. The Working Party is further discussed in Chapter 3.

## **Small Branches Conference**

- 2.22 The Small Branches Conference was held on 11 and 12 September. Discussions focussed on achieving environmentally sustainable development, the effect of political corruption, challenges to sovereignty of small states, and how to strengthen the accountability of the executive to parliament.
- 2.23 Australian region delegates: Mr John Hargreaves, MLA; Mr Lisle Snell, MLA; Ms Kezia Purick, MLA; and the Hon. Doug Parkinson, MLC representing branches in the Australian Capital Territory, Norfolk Island, the Northern Territory and Tasmania, respectively, attended the conference. A summary report of the conference proceedings is at Appendix B.

## **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Meeting**

- 2.24 The theme of the meeting of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) was 'The status of women in 2010'. Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan attended the meeting which took place on 13 September and was a lead speaker for the session on 'Reform of Political parties - Working towards democracy'. Ms Kezia Purick, MLA representing the Northern Territory CPA Branch also attended the meeting. A summary report of the meeting is at Appendix B.
- 2.25 Senator Coonan also attended the business meeting of the CWP on 17 September at which the Hon. Alix Boyd Knights, Speaker of the Dominican House of Assembly, was elected, amidst considerable controversy and claims of irregularities, as the new chair of the CWP.
- 2.26 The election process left much to be desired with heated exchanges between delegates and the Chair as to whether the roll was complete, who was eligible to vote and when the roll was closed, and also querying the fact that some votes had already been cast and placed in ballot boxes prior to commencement of the ballot.
- 2.27 Although the end result was clear, the lack of transparency and unsatisfactory processes surrounding the contested ballot was an

unfortunate blemish in an otherwise positive and affirming agenda adopted by the women delegates.

### **Meeting of the Society of Clerks-at-the-Table in Commonwealth Parliaments.**

- 2.28 The annual meeting of the Society of Clerks at the Table was held on 17 and 18 September concurrently with sessions of the conference. The delegation secretary, Ms Robyn McClelland, Clerk Assistant (Table), Department of the House of Representatives, represented the Clerk of the House at the meeting and presented a paper and the report for the Australian region.
- 2.29 The society aims to assist members to exercise their professional duties in their respective legislatures through the exchange of information, views and experience. The Parliaments of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory were also represented at the meeting.

### **Concluding Session**

- 2.30 At the closing ceremony on 18 September 2010, the incoming President of the CPA, the Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, made his remarks.
- 2.31 The Rt Hon. Raila Odinga, EGH MP, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya, then formally addressed the session and closed the conference.

### **Concluding Comment**

- 2.32 The Australian delegation again extends its thanks to the National Assembly of Kenya for its work in hosting the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and its hospitality.
- 2.33 The Australian delegation is extremely concerned at the current direction of the Association. We believe there are legitimate questions around the role, purpose and cost of the Association. Issues include:
- a perceived lack of direction for the Association;
  - the relevance of the Association;
  - a need to ensure the highest standards of transparency and accountability of the Association, particularly with respect to fiscal matters, structure and delivery of programs and activities, and power sharing;

- a diluting of the role of the General Assembly as the Association's supreme authority and of the Executive Committee through the dominance of bloc voting and the concentration of decision-making authority in the hands of a select few;
  - the need to restructure the secretariat to deliver the highest standards of accountability and transparency including the relationship of the Chief Executive Officer to the Executive Committee and General Assembly and to the Directorates within the Secretariat;
  - the need for audit and risk management arrangements based on clearly defined key performance indicators (KPIs); and
  - the need for non-discriminatory representation to ensure all regions have access to the full range of positions over the fullness of time.
- 2.34 The delegation notes that previous Australian delegations have made a number of suggestions relating to conference arrangements, including changes to the format of the conference to encourage more focussed discussion<sup>1</sup> and the need to reconsider the frequency and duration of conferences.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.35 In this era of global communication technologies and active CPA programs at regional levels, and given the economic pressures facing all nations today, the delegation commends these suggestions.
- 2.36 The Australian delegation is a strong supporter of genuine reform of the CPA to achieve greater transparency and accountability and improved performance. This is discussed in Chapter 3.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, *Report of the Australian Parliamentary Delegation to Sri Lanka and to the 49<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Bangladesh, 1 – 12 October 2003, November 2003*, p 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the Australian Parliamentary Delegation to Morocco and Algeria and to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Nigeria, 27 August to 9 September 2006*, p 60.





## **Reform of the CPA**

3.1 The Australian delegation strongly supports genuine and substantive reform of the CPA. The delegation notes that the CPA Executive Committee agreed in October 2009 in Tanzania to establish a Working Party:

to inquire into reforms needed to ensure the CPA continues as a vital and relevant inter-parliamentary organisation as it enters its second century.<sup>1</sup>

3.2 A number of speakers at the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference referred to the need for change in the CPA. In particular, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the CPA, the Hon Dato' Seri Mohd. Shafie bin Hj Apdal, MP, proposed a six point action plan for change<sup>2</sup> and the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr Kamalesh Sharma, referred to the need for the CPA 'to keep its credentials burnished'<sup>3</sup>. The challenge will be for the reforms to match the rhetoric of some speakers.

3.3 The Australian delegation supports reform in the following areas:

- the structure of the Executive Committee, including term limits and filling top positions on a rotational basis across the CPA regions;
- changes to the role, and reductions in the duration, frequency and cost, of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences; and

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1 CPA Executive Committee Document E 16 CPA 2010 Working Party - Preliminary Report, p 1.

2 Remarks at the opening of the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference on 14 September 2010, pp 5 - 8.

3 Presentation to the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 14 September 2010, p 2.

- introduction of additional transparency and accountability measures, including measures to monitor and assess the performance of the Association and its Secretariat.

## 2010 CPA Working Party

- 3.4 The leader of the delegation, Senator the Hon. John Hogg, attended the first meeting of the 2010 Working Party on 9 September 2010 as the Australian region's representative. He presented a paper to the Working Party on issues for its consideration, proposing reforms aimed at achieving greater openness and transparency and enhanced performance. A copy of Senator Hogg's paper is at Appendix C.
- 3.5 In his opening remarks to the Working Party, Senator Hogg outlined a package of reform proposals that addressed:
- the need for openness, transparency and accountability of the Association;
  - reform of the Association's governance structure including the adoption of a modern constitution and procedures for the running of the Association by its Executive, and the proper disclosure of interests, loans and advances to all employees of the Association;
  - the need to move to a consensus based organisation with power being shared among the regions on a rotational basis;
  - a single term limit for the post of Secretary-General of the CPA, and filling the post based on regional rotation;
  - reform of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference to enhance its effectiveness; and
  - the establishment of an Audit Committee as a sub-committee of the Executive to ensure the conduct of regular and independent audits, including performance audits.
- 3.6 The delegation notes that a preliminary report of the Working Party was presented to the Executive Committee at the conference, and Working Group members are to consult Branches on the report. Responses from the Australian Region Branches are due by 31 December 2010. There will be further meetings of the Working Party in February and April 2011 before the final report is submitted to the Executive Committee and then the General Assembly in July 2011.

- 3.7 The preliminary report sets out the terms of reference for the Working Party as agreed by the Working Party at its first meeting. The terms of reference are wide-ranging:
- to examine the history, status and mission of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in its mission to promote the advancement of parliamentary democracy in the Commonwealth, in partnership with other international organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond;
  - to review the constitutional and legal provisions of the Association with a view to suggesting amendments;
  - to review the structural, governance and human resource policies and needs in relation to the mission and future activities. This work will include the Strategic Plan for the period 2013 – 2017;
  - to examine a possible transformation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, parliamentary programmes and role and size of the Executive Committee. This area includes the financing of the annual Parliamentary Conference;
  - to examine the overall financial regime of the Association with the aim of reforming the budget including further examination of the membership fees;
  - to consider any other proposals by Branches and other sources; and
  - the final report of the Working Party is expected to be considered by the Executive Committee by July 2011.
- 3.8 The report outlines four primary themes for the inquiry, as follows:
- the legal status of the Association as a registered charity and proposals to change the status to that of a diplomatic organisation or other corporate entity;
  - enhancing the governance of the Association, to ensure transparency and accountability;
  - changes to CPA practices to ensure the relevance of its activities is maintained and communicated; and
  - possible use of regional rotation to fill the Executive Committee offices and the post of Secretary General.
- 3.9 It lists a large number of issues for consideration, under the following headings:

- CPA status (including whether the status of the CPA should change from a charity to a diplomatic organisation or to some other status appropriate to an inter-parliamentary organisation and the implications of any change);
  - legal issues;
  - the structure of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee;
  - the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference;
  - the Secretariat (including whether the Secretary-General should have a residence in London); and
  - finance.
- 3.10 Senator Hogg briefed Australian delegates to the Conference in Kenya on the Working Group's meeting and preliminary report at the meeting of the Australian Regional Group on 14 September 2010.
- 3.11 This delegation, representing the Commonwealth of Australia Branch of the CPA, considers that the focus on the legal status of the organisation as a primary theme for the inquiry is misplaced. The delegation anticipates that any change to the status of the Association would have significant and adverse financial implications. The delegation also rejects as totally inappropriate the use of CPA funds to purchase a residence for the Secretary-General in London. However, the delegation supports other measures canvassed as consistent with principles of increased transparency, accountability for results, enhanced performance, and scrupulous financial performance.
- 3.12 The delegation encourages the CPA branches in the Australian Region to meet and carefully consider the Working Group's report and to provide detailed feedback on it by 31 December 2010.
- 3.13 Finally, and significantly, the delegation notes that while there have been many CPA working parties over the years, only limited change has been forthcoming.
- 3.14 CPA Working Parties to review certain operations of the CPA and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee were established in 1967, 1984, 1992, 1998 and 2003<sup>4</sup>. While there has been a range of recommendations, the need for change has been a clear theme in many reports. That many sensible recommendations in previous reports have not been addressed is of concern. The delegation suggests that in future
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4 CPA Working Party documentation, 24 August 2010, p 3.

there be a stringent focus on, and accountability for, implementation of agreed recommendations. It will be important that recommendations are consistent with principles of transparency, accountability, enhanced performance, and scrupulous financial performance.

## **Reappointment of Secretary-General**

- 3.15 The General Assembly at its meeting on 18 September 2010, agreed to extend the employment contract for the Secretary-General, Dr William Shija, for a second term of 5 years, with effect from January 2012 to December 2016.
- 3.16 The Australian delegation notes, however, that, in September 2006, the Executive Committee agreed to a policy whereby each Secretary-General would serve one five-year term. Despite this, in May 2010, the majority of the Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that the current Secretary-General's employment be extended for a second term of five years from January 2012.
- 3.17 The Australian delegation further notes that an amendment to the motion for reappointment of the Secretary-General was moved from the floor of the General Assembly, but was defeated. The amendment, moved by a delegate from Papua New Guinea and seconded by a delegate from New Zealand, was to defer consideration of the matter until after the Working Party had reported. A total of 39 delegates voted for the amendment, 156 voted against the amendment and there were 2 abstentions.
- 3.18 The Australian delegation strongly supported the amendment from a governance perspective. The Secretary-General's term was not due to end until December 2011 and reappointment thus could await the outcomes of the review of the organisation. Implementation of the agreed outcomes of the Working Party may require particular capabilities in a Secretary-General.

## **Concluding Comment**

- 3.19 The Australian delegation considers that there is a great deal of scope, and indeed necessity, for reform of the CPA and it is important that successful

and substantive reform occurs. The centennial year of the CPA is a fitting year for that reform process to commence.

John J Hogg

Delegation Leader



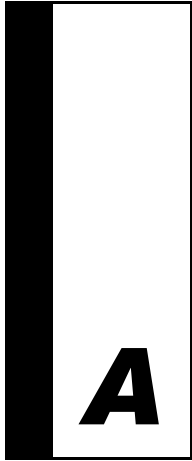
Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan, a lead speaker for the workshop on 'The Global Food and Water Crisis', held on 17 September 2010



Voting at the General Assembly of the CPA on 18 September 2010







## ***Appendix A***

### ***Addresses to the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference***

by –

**Mr Kamalesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary-General,  
and**

**Dr William Shija, CPA Secretary-General**

**14 September 2010**

**Kamalesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary-General**

**56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference**

**Nairobi, Kenya**

**Theme: 'Parliament and Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: thus far and beyond'**

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**\*\*1\*\***

*Two anniversaries, and a call for renewal and partnership*

To Speaker Marende and to all our Kenyan hosts ...

... to all Honourable Speakers and Parliamentarians, national and local, from far and wide across this great Commonwealth ...

... and to Secretary-General Shija and all of his team at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association ...

... I thank you warmly for this invitation to address you today, and sincerely wish you good and productive conferencing here in Nairobi.

Two years ago, just a few months into my tenure as Commonwealth Secretary-General, I joined you in Kuala Lumpur. One year ago, I was very pleased that Deputy Secretary-General Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba was able to represent me in Arusha. In 2010, I am delighted to be back with you again – and particularly to be in Kenya at the dawn of a new era, with a brand new Constitution ushered in at Uhuru Park a fortnight ago, amidst scenes of great jubilation.

My medium may be words, but what came to me when I first began to think about this address were, in fact, numbers.

The number 56 – this is, of course, the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, in a long history of global service.

The number 60, because you well know that the modern, inter-governmental Commonwealth reached its diamond jubilee last year: justifiably proud of its past, and pressing ahead. A precious stone must always be polished. The Commonwealth of values; the Commonwealth that moves with its times; the Commonwealth of the vulnerable; the Commonwealth of partnership: this Commonwealth has been true to its core, yet it has always evolved. And I do believe that it has fulfilled the implausibly prescient hope of King George VI, at the close of that momentous meeting in London in 1949 – which so bravely and far-sightedly reconstituted this association, 'freely and equally associated' – that this fledgling organisation would 'redound to the happiness of millions'. I believe it has done just that. We are here today because the Commonwealth is a mighty cause, and a 'great global good'.

Yet it has no inherent right to think that it can and will remain so, without constant questioning and constant renewal. There are very real areas of expectation from the inter-governmental Commonwealth, and we are the first to acknowledge them. Like increasing our impact – especially given that our human and financial resources are so modest. Like strengthening our networks – especially given the task of mobilising and coordinating all those communities in the public, the private and the ‘third’ sectors, which are our most precious asset. Like raising our profile – especially given the constraints in making public what we often deliberately do in private, and in galvanising opinion – amongst both governments and peoples – around the principle and values that bind us.

This is why our Heads of Government, meeting in Port of Spain last November, tasked us to create an Eminent Persons Group – to look at these questions, and more. Eleven exceptional people have been chosen – representing in every way the incomparable variety of the Commonwealth; and under the distinguished chairmanship of former Prime Minister Badawi of Malaysia, a great friend to this organisation – to make their recommendations. Their ongoing task is to hear the voices of all – of ordinary people, of civil society, of business, and of course of governments and parliaments. The EPG, as we call it, will report to our next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, in Perth next October.

I cannot over-emphasise the importance of this Parliamentary community playing its part in that process of constructive self-appraisal, and renewed and forward-looking commitment. By letter to Secretary-General Shija, I have already invited you to do so. And in doing so, you will be marking the full significance of my next number: 99.

For you yourselves stand on the brink of a century – and Commonwealth cricketers and non-cricketers alike will rise to their feet to applaud this magnificent hundred. The CPA is one of the oldest Commonwealth organisations. It is older, as we have seen, than the modern inter-governmental Commonwealth itself.

Yet it, too, like any other body, has to keep its credentials burnished. It, too, is tasked with maximising its impact, its networks, and its profile. The potential we see in this room – in which an organisation with 16,000 members has assembled representatives of its 175 national, state, provincial and territorial Parliaments – is formidable. The fact that it is bound by the same democratic values makes this community one of huge potential, another ‘global good’. So the challenge for the Commonwealth parliamentary community in its 100<sup>th</sup> year – just as the challenge already issued to the wider Commonwealth in its 61<sup>st</sup> – is to define how that potential can best be realised.

Invaluable though it is, especially as a chance for peer-to-peer exchange and support, this Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference is but one small part of the power and potential of your own networks, Your strength is your numbers,

and the quality of the experience you bring and share, about the things which matter to you most. Without partnerships, we are nothing: my words are all about partnership.

Time and again, we hear that what defines this Commonwealth is its common and voluntary commitment to the principles of democracy, freedom and human rights – and, with them, lives lived to the full. The burden of my words today is strengthening and applying those principles, because I believe that together we could do much, much more – in sharing ways to make democracy work better, and in sharing ways to make democracy deliver its greatest dividend, which is one of the special themes of this meeting: ‘Development’, and its core task of reducing poverty.

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*A democratic sketch – shared Commonwealth values*

Before I say how we might properly mark our joint anniversaries and promote democracy and development through parliament, I would like to paint the most impressionistic of pictures as to the world – and particularly the world of democracy – which we inhabit.

First and foremost, it is a shared world.

Shared, in the sense of the fast globalising world in which boundaries get blurred, as both civil and uncivil society gets globalised.

And shared, in the ways in which Commonwealth citizens feel at home on five continents. Whatever our different models of parliamentary democracy, they are built on the same foundations.

On the small and beautiful island of Tobago last November, I had the pleasure of attending a Commonwealth youth parliament at the House of Assembly in Scarborough, the second oldest in the Caribbean after Barbados. With the utmost propriety, 12 young men and women sitting at fine teak tables begged leave of the Presiding Officer to speak to a motion on climate change. It must be said that there seemed to be no opposition: both sides of the House were unanimous, that those even younger than themselves must be made wise to the effects of climate change, and that they must be made effective in following the wisdom of consuming less energy. That day, I was privileged to witness articulate, impassioned, reasoned, responsible, good-humoured but purposeful debate.

The Ayes duly had it, and I reflected that I had witnessed something which I might have seen on a placid day in the Lok Sabha in Delhi, in the Palace of Westminster in London, or anywhere in the Commonwealth on this continent of Africa, or the Pacific.

The power of the Commonwealth network is formidable. And this network transcends the details of size, and structure, and practice. Whether a parliament sits for 100 days of the year, or 200...

... whether it is the 700-plus MPs in the two houses of the Indian Parliament, or the 10 members in the single chamber in Tuvalu ...

... whether it is a national assembly in a Caribbean state or a regional one like the East African Legislative Assembly ...

... whether half of its members are women (as they are in Rwanda), or a third, or a quarter ...

... whether there is a sizeable majority in a country like Mozambique, or a majority of one in our most recently elected parliament in Australia ...

... in each, it is essentially the same in spirit.

So democracy is always recognisable – and the journey of democracy pushes onwards. I cannot but reflect that in some of the Commonwealth's oldest and strongest democracies – take Australia, Canada, India and the UK – no single party has won a majority at the last election. Yet the business of democracy and of government continues. Coalitions – and political give-and-take – are themselves an increasingly important and evolving feature of the democratic culture.

Earlier in the year, in the Northern Ireland Assembly, I quoted the great John Pym, a passionate Parliamentarian in a rather different – 17<sup>th</sup> century – Commonwealth. "... A Parliament is that to the Commonwealth which the soul is to the body. It behoves us therefore to keep the facility of that soul from distemper." You all enjoy the privilege – and the trust, the responsibility, and the hope – of having been elected. You are indeed 'the soul to the body', and I urge you to see the collective potential that you, as a Commonwealth parliamentary community, can and should have.

The need to proclaim and demonstrate democracy as our chosen path has not gone away with what some perceived as the great global contest with communism having gone in democracy's favour. This proved not to be 'the end of history', but certainly a historic surge, and an opening of the prospect before us. In our national struggles – as mostly nascent independent states in the vast sweep of our history – to secure and advance the freedoms, dignity and welfare of our peoples, the great democracy project will remain work-in-progress.

It is in these circumstances that we recall our most cherished beliefs, in that parliaments and parliamentarians are the repositories of the trust of all people, with the task to keep Governments as true servants of the people. All of you will know that the Latimer House Principles of 2003 – drafted with the CPA's help and also that of the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association – are an integral part of the body of belief which the Commonwealth espouses. They affirm, of course, that the three branches of government may be mutually dependent – but so, too, that they are independent. And when countries have

flouted them, they have flouted our most cherished values, and faced consequences. For instance, when Pakistan was suspended from the councils of the Commonwealth in November 2007, this was done in part because the executive's dismissal of the judiciary in that country was a clear breach of the Latimer House Principles. Soon after I became Secretary-General, it was my great pleasure to see Pakistan reverse this, and to welcome it back to our councils. Likewise, the full suspension of Fiji in September 2009 was closely related with the dismissal of the judiciary, along with the jettisoning of the constitution. And when we see creative tension between the three branches – as, for instance, we currently do in the Maldives, now a vibrant multi-party democracy – we must at least welcome the fact that we are seeing evidence of boundaries being drawn and defended.

The Commonwealth remains a partner for all – and the foundations of our Principles should be held firm. Our Principles should be held sacrosanct. The culture of parliamentary democracy defines this Commonwealth, and at every turn we reaffirm it. We are tenacious in defending it, but so too are we affirmative in supporting our members' efforts to strengthen it, and indeed sometimes to return to the democratic path when they have strayed from it.

**\*\*3\*\***

*A democratic sketch – CHOGM 2009*

It was the spirit of critical affirmation which was seen at the last Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in November 2009, with the formal endorsement of the appropriately-named Trinidad and Tobago Affirmation of Commonwealth Values and Principles.

This Affirmation was in part a compendium of the existing body of Commonwealth democratic belief of 40 years ...  
... from the Singapore Declaration of 1971, to those of Harare in 1991 and Millbrook in 1995, and to the Latimer House Declaration itself of 2003 and the Aberdeen Agenda (where we set out our principles on the primacy of local government) in 2004. But it also pointed the way forward. It *strengthened* those beliefs, and raised the bar.

That CHOGM was also the setting where Heads of Government accepted Rwanda as the 54<sup>th</sup> member of this association, and the CPA will formally receive the Rwandan parliament amongst its membership later this week. Here, again, was another act of Commonwealth democratic affirmation. Rwanda, 'the land of a thousand hills', has climbed remarkably since its darkest days in 1994, not least in leading the world in the women in its parliament. By the same token, it and the Commonwealth knew then and know now that it has many more hills to climb, and the Commonwealth walks with it. Just as the independent observer group raised significant concerns about the lead-up to the country's presidential elections

in August, it recognised the peaceful and purposeful way in which they unfolded on polling day. The Commonwealth stands ready to partner Rwanda in strengthening its electoral practice and culture.

This task of strengthening electoral procedures was another result of the last CHOGM, which approved a new network of Commonwealth election commissioners, which was recently launched in Accra. In effect they were endorsing a form of comprehensive peer support to each other in conducting elections which will win the trust of all citizens: a giant step forward for the Commonwealth. We have the highest hopes that the idea will be epochal, in progressively shaping a commonly agreed 'gold standard' for the conduct of elections. We believe the network can share all our best practice in areas like voter registration, universal mobilisation of electorates, polling practices, security oversight, media policy, the use of public funds in election processes, and all other aspects of creating a fair and level playing field.

We have similar hopes that the Commonwealth can have another gold standard in its midst, in the form of a more effective Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, or CMAG.

The 15-year-old CMAG is, of course, the guardian of what we most cherish. It has distinguished the Commonwealth from other organisations, both in being able to hold its members responsible and even to suspend them, but also always to hold out to them the hand of support in the restoration of democracy. Many of you will know that CMAG has suspended five countries in its 15 years: Nigeria, Pakistan and Sierra Leone sought to return and did so; Zimbabwe sadly walked away; and Fiji – despite our best efforts and, indeed, our ongoing attempts at dialogue – remains suspended.

The CMAG, too, received a boost at the last CHOGM, when Heads of Government asked us to look at how we can strengthen it within its existing mandate to consider serious and repeated violations of the Harare Principles in member states. In the task of reforming itself, the Group has started to scope out what this new mandate means, and how it can refine the process whereby it engages itself. So we do envisage a wider scope of CMAG activity. The Group would no doubt wish to reinforce its image as a body which engages and encourages, as well as censures when it must. There are other institutions the Commonwealth builds, which will be applauded by democratically elected parliaments, such as national human rights institutions, but this brief sketch has, I hope, given not just a painter's outlines of our Commonwealth democratic belief, but some of the detailed brushwork too.

**\*\*4\*\***

*A democratic sketch – the role of Parliaments*

And how does it relate to the particular role of parliaments themselves, as guardians of our democracies?

Here, the CPA is recognised for doing its own detailed brushwork – in applying form to the outline of our democratic values. We appreciate the advice it has given to the Commonwealth Secretariat in choosing parliamentary members of our Commonwealth election observer groups. I cite another good example of partnership in thanking it for co-organising our pioneering and significant Government and Opposition workshops, which have worked towards embedding a true belief in the value of a constructive Opposition across the Commonwealth. I am pleased to say that another seminar is currently being planned for Asia, and thereafter we plan one on your doorstep here in East Africa. It was my predecessor Chief Anyaoku who once bemoaned the fact that there is, on this continent, a very limited cultural concept of a ‘loyal’ Opposition, as an integral and respected element of politics, working in the national interest. Our communal task is to work against this polarisation of political ‘friend’, and ‘foe’.

We also pay tribute to the painstaking, behind-the-scenes work which is the basis of any good parliament, and which is the CPA’s bread and butter. In the last three years, it has run eight orientation courses for newly elected MPs. Perhaps here we can add a special word of appreciation for CPA-UK, which takes advantage of being deep in the belly of the beast in Westminster to offer an impressive array of support programmes. Not only does it bring parliamentarians to the four national assemblies in the UK and the regional European one in Brussels: it also sends out on assignment UK MPs and parliamentary staff, to offer assistance to Commonwealth parliaments on four continents. Indeed, I read last week of staff from the Guyanese Parliamentary Committee Division coming to London for training, and I know too that in August a clerk and three parliamentarians from London were invited to advise on committees and administration by the speaker of the parliament of Botswana.

Distinguished colleagues, the task is to empower parliaments and parliamentarians – which means giving them belief in their own function, and which also means giving them the wherewithal to do their job. Capacity-building and administrative support is never glamorous, but any parliamentarian will surely tell you that it can make the difference between success and failure. I refer to the role of parliamentary clerks and researchers; the availability of libraries and research sources; the computerisation of parliamentary business; the effective running of parliamentary committees, be they Public Accounts Committees scrutinising the use of funds, or subject-specific committees scrutinising policies, programmes and expenditures. These were the stuff of a report which we submitted to the Ugandan parliament in recommending improvements in 2006 –



and they are the stuff of the CPA's and national parliaments' work now, and in the future.

The Commonwealth headquarters, as you well know, are based in London, not even a mile away from the oldest elected legislature in the world, with its roots in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. As with all organic growth, that particular legislature is still evolving, and it offers various lessons to other Commonwealth countries. It is fair to say that its recent expenses scandal has been a sobering experience for it, and for the British electorate. Meanwhile the quality and the quantity of its back-up go unnoticed, but ensure that it can offer the highest standards of scrutiny. The things which it takes for granted – for instance, the confidence it can place in its administrative staff's ability to provide an a-political brief – are in demand elsewhere, and that is why all our communities are called upon to share ideas and expertise wherever they can.

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*The theme: 'Parliament and Development'*

So let me, in these last few minutes, try and turn some of these thoughts towards your chosen theme of 'Parliament and Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: thus far and beyond'. I make no excuses for having ranged so broadly to get to this point, and for making just a few comments now, in the knowledge that you will discuss this further yourselves.

First, the Commonwealth is clear that we must avoid false dichotomies between democracy and development. Because Parliamentarians, as guardians of democracy and holders of their peoples' trust, are also guardians of development – the two are 'of a kind', organically linked and inter-twined, and mutually reinforcing. A seminal Commonwealth report on democracy and development in 2003, produced by a team led by Dr Manmohan Singh, the present Indian Prime Minister, argued that democracy and development are two sides of the same coin, and that they reinforce each other. Human development, it said, is manifested not just in areas like health and education and economic empowerment, but also in the development of the human person through the guarantee of human rights and democratic choices and freedoms.

Development will henceforth be measured in terms of the Millennium Development Goals, with their targets of poverty reduction, schooling, gender equality, child, maternal and adult health, and environmental sustainability. The MDGs, as we know, have five years to run, and we struggle to meet them. This morning, Honourable Speaker Marende quantified the grim challenge before us, and spoke, too, about the centrality of the Commonwealth's women and the Commonwealth's young people in that task. Even without the transformations we have seen since 1990 in India and China, great gains have been made in the pursuit of these Goals. But still – particularly in swathes of Asia and Sub-Saharan

Africa – they remain unmet. And with global populations growing so fast, and estimated to reach 9 billion by 2050, they threaten to remain so. As I speak, my other Deputy Secretary-General, Ransford Smith, is preparing to address the MDG Review Summit which takes place in 12 days' time at the UN in New York. He will speak on behalf of all our member states, and their combined needs, and he will also relay the messages which came out of Commonwealth Health and Women Affairs Ministers Meetings which happened in May and June.

Let us remember the essence of the 'development deal' which has unfolded since the Millennium Summit, the Monterrey Summit, the Gleneagles summit, and other points after and in between. It was the core understanding that the developed world undertook to support the developing world through a combination of aid, debt relief, investment and trade liberalisation and facilitation – while the developing world committed to prioritise and plan its own development path, and to promote efficiency, opportunity, transparency and accountability in the way that the path was travelled.

If parliament is the representative of its people, it must be passionate about Development and the MDGs, and be at the epicentre of national and global debate. It will recognise the stresses created, particularly in small and vulnerable economies, by a series of economic crises and by the need to show democratic solidarity in achieving collective goals, and in exercising the wisdom function so desperately needed today, to embrace the entire world in the solutions we seek.

For this reason, Governments cannot develop national and global development strategies without vigorous examination in their parliaments; and governments should invest resources with fastidious scrutiny from parliament, in terms of transparency and outcomes.

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*A robust parliament: Kenya*

I close by giving an example of an empowered and supported Parliament at the centre of national debate and life.

I look no further than our host nation today, Kenya.

The realisations – in the appalling aftermath of violence at the last presidential elections in this country – were that division was quite literally deadly, and that unity was the only hope. Kenya – hitherto seen as something of a beacon of democracy and development in Africa – had to rebuild a reputation. What transpired was a coalition government – however large – which means, in fact, that there is no official opposition, and which also raised the prospect that the executive could overshadow the legislature.

But that is not what has happened. The parliament has been integral to the rebuilding of Kenya, and the realisation of its democracy and development dreams. Speaker Marende and Clerk Gichohi can take particular credit for that. The parliament has taken a strong line in scrutinising the budget. And just as it had pushed for, and then passed, the Constituency Development Fund Act in 2003, it has pushed hard for probity in the management of those funds. It brokered the work on drafting the historic new Kenyan constitution which was voted in just a few weeks ago; and as a result of it, it will grow by introducing an upper chamber, and it will be stretched to the limit of its capacity in passing new legislation. It saw partnership as the key to Kenyan success – an all-embracing coalition of the willing. I am pleased to add that ‘the willing’ very much includes the Commonwealth, which will provide legislative drafters to develop aspects of the new Constitution, as I agreed with Attorney General Amos yesterday. We will also use our existing networks of both national election commissions and national human rights commissions, to support those two new bodies in this country.

All in all, I believe I am describing an empowered parliament, attuned to planning and scrutiny, focussed on delivering democracy and development, and answerable to the people who elected it. Let it be food for thought for two organisations – one just over 60, and another nearing 100 – which need to ask again, how best they can strengthen their impact, their networks and their profile, and share their ‘Common wealth’. I wish you all well in your gargantuan and inspiring task.



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**ADDRESS AT THE  
56th COMMONWEALTH  
PARLIAMENTARY  
CONFERENCE**

**NAIROBI, KENYA  
14TH SEPTEMBER, 2010**

**BY  
DR WILLIAM F. SHIJA  
CPA SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**Hon. Kenneth Marende, MP., Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly and CPA President;**

**Rt. Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst representing the Hon. John Bercow, MP., Speaker of the House of Commons, United Kingdom and CPA Vice President**

**Hon. Dato' Seri Shafie Mohd. Apdal, Minister of Rural and Regional Development, Government of Malaysia and CPA Chairperson of the Executive Committee**

**Hon. Kathleen Casey, Speaker of Prince Edward Island, Canada and CPA Vice Chairperson**

**Hon. Hashim Abdul Halim, Speaker of West Bengal, India, and CPA Treasurer**

**Hon. Amina Abdalla, MP., Kenya, Member of Parliament of Kenya and President of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)**

**Hon. Kashmala Tariq, MP., Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)**

**Hon. Speakers and Presiding Officers**

**Distinguished Heads of Delegations and Conference Delegates**

**Clerks and CPA Branch Secretaries**

**Invited Guests, Observers, Friends**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

Jambo, Habari Gani.

I am happy join you Mr President in your welcome to all the delegates to this other part of the wonderful East Africa, this year the city of Nairobi in Kenya for the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference after being in Tanzania last year.

I am delighted to join you all in thanking our host, the CPA Kenya Branch, the government and people of Kenya, for the warm reception and wonderful hospitality extended to us since we first arrived in Nairobi. I join you in expressing our gratitude to His Excellency, Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya and Commander-in-Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces for his words of wisdom, advice and encouragement when he officially opened the conference this morning. We congratulate him and the people of Kenya for conducting a referendum and launching a new constitution to guide the future political, economic and social activities of this beautiful country, which is full of hard-working and exuberant people. It was also an act of extreme hospitality and leadership for the President of the Republic of Kenya accepting to meet and greet all the Members of the CPA Executive Committee at his office in Nairobi yesterday. I believe Mr President of the CPA you will continue to convey our words of gratitude to him way after we have left this country.

I am also delighted that once again the Commonwealth Secretary-General, His Excellency, Kamallesh Sharma, other dignitaries and partner organisations have accepted to join us at this conference. Mr Sharma and your delegation, you are most welcome.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

Let me also join you all in expressing our most heartfelt condolences and sympathy for the people of Pakistan, for the loss of lives and property due to the floods that hit that country recently, affecting millions of people to this day. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee and I have since sent messages to all CPA Branch Presidents, urging them to prevail on their governments to assist the people of Pakistan in every way possible to rebuild their country. Indeed, I wish all the people of Pakistan all the best in their struggle to recover from the disaster and to rebuild their country and lives.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

This year's Conference Theme, "*Parliament and Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: thus Far and Beyond*", is timely, particularly as we approach the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Association. This Theme and workshop topics reflect the core of work of the Association for the last several years. When I am asked what the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association does, I usually reply in brief that: **It is a School for**

**Parliamentarians and Parliamentary Staff.** Indeed it is because over the years, the CPA has contributed to the capacity building, parliamentary reform, parliamentary administration and parliamentary practice through thousands of workshops, seminars and conference sessions in various parts of our regions and in the world in general. In fact, newly independent African and Asian countries utilised the CPA network to consolidate their parliamentary activities. The Association originally assisted in the political struggles for independence and the removal of discriminatory systems. In recent years, it has also assisted thousands of Parliamentarians, staff and individual Parliaments to standardise parliamentary practice and improve skills. These activities have largely been facilitated through numerous discussions, exchange of professional information and actual in-house training. The CPA conferences therefore, contrary to critics, are not 'talking shops'. They are serious parliamentary training sessions. These training sessions increase the capacity of individual parliamentarians to effectively practice in their national legislatures and also to play a meaningful role in the arena of international politics and economics.

This year's topics ranging from Peace Building to Natural Disaster Management, seek to engage Members at this conference on issues that affect the lives of the people you represent. This is in keeping with the pace to find solutions to national, regional and global problems that we face. It is an effort to strengthen democracy and obtain the value for politics as well.

Further, in recent years, Commonwealth Parliamentarians have mostly discussed global issues such as climate change, terrorism, financial crises, poverty alleviation with a view to reforming parliament and strengthening governance for the benefit of the ordinary citizens. Again, these have been training sessions carried out by the Association to strengthen the capacity of Parliamentarians. Among these recent topics climate change continues to dominate due to the catastrophic threats it poses, should it remain unaddressed. Controversial as it may be among contemporary scientists, the climate change issue has been generally accepted by world leaders as a serious problem. For example, the leaders of the world's largest economy, the United States, did not initially accept to sign the Kyoto Protocol. However, in recent times, President Obama is known to have said and I quote:

**"This is the moment when we must come together to save this planet. Let us resolve that we will not leave our children a world where the oceans rise and famine spreads and terrible storms devastate our lands"**

These words reflect a significant departure by the United States due to the increased evidence that the extraordinary accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, caused by the huge burning of fossil fuels, has led to the unexplained climate occurrences. We can actually say that the world community suspects that the floods which have, for example, devastated countries like Pakistan, the tsunamis that have caused disasters in the Maldives, Samoa and other parts of

Asia and the Pacific; the typhoons and hurricanes that often cause havoc in the Caribbean and the Americas, and again the floods and drought that constantly hit African countries, are as a result of climate change conditions.

Climate change was hugely debated at the last UN Climate Change Conference (COP15) in December 2009, in Copenhagen. In December this year, participants will again hold an extensive dialogue at the next UN Climate Change Conference (COP16) to be held in Cancun, Mexico in an effort to find solutions to the ongoing threat to our planet.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

Over the years, Members of this Association have sought to contribute to world leadership in addressing the problems arising from climate change. Hence, last year in Tanzania, a CPA Task Force on Climate Change was created to focus on this issue. Some Members of the Task Force represented the Association at the Copenhagen conference, last year. In July this year, the CPA Task Force, comprising Members from Australia, Bangladesh, Botswana, The Gambia, India, The Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Zambia, met in London under the sponsorship of the CPA UK Branch's 3<sup>rd</sup> International Parliamentary Conference on Climate Change (IPCC). Partner organisations, including the World Bank Institute (WBI), the Commonwealth Secretariat and AWEPA were also represented. Among other things, participants observed that while addressing climate change, it is important to include Small Island Developing States who are feared to suffer more from the effects of climate change. It is on the basis of these concerns that the CPA plans to be represented in Cancun, Mexico in December this year to stay connected with other organisations on the issue.

At the CPA UK Branch's 3<sup>rd</sup> International Parliamentary Conference on Climate Change, participants from developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific voiced their concern that the issue of climate change was being thwarted by the lack of political will of industrialised countries to fully fund the process to change to a carbon friendly economic system. This simply means that developing countries are demanding that those who have ruined the atmosphere through excessive carbon emissions should bear the expenses of finding the solutions.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

Secondly, the other part of this conference theme involves what we are challenged to do as a parliamentary body of the Commonwealth in the environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Although the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has ushered in the tenets of a global village, with rapid scientific and technological growth, there are still persistent problems of poverty, illiteracy, hunger and disease in many parts of the world. The challenge of meeting the demands of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is still wide open. The challenges are compounded by the existence of terrorism, corruption, drug and human trafficking and other similar ills. These



basic problems, spread across the world, form economic disparities that could persistently be the sources of violence, disruption, war, starvation and disease.

It appears to me that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will depend on how leaders will embrace a development philosophy to develop, embrace, teach, encourage and legislate humanistic and social economic practices, the ideology of which will be based on stronger partnerships seeking to eradicate poverty and other ills. In fact, I believe that the world today has enough resources and skills to do so. What it lacks is fair trade and partnership. The world needs the entrenchment of democratic values, equality for resources, opportunities for women and the younger generation. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Commonwealth in general are poised to contribute to the full development of the concept of “value for politics” to mean that every citizen has the right to a fair share of the resources, such as land, housing, water supply, basic education, and basic health. This further means that the benchmarks for our Commonwealth legislatures should in future be measured against these rights and services, over and above the established parliamentary practices required for legislation and oversight functions.

**Thirdly, Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

The CPA, as mentioned before, is now nearly a century old. We plan to celebrate its centenary in July next year. Since its establishment in 1911, the CPA membership, as is the case for the entire Commonwealth, has increased, with a corresponding change in character and the manner in which the Association carries its mandate. This means that the character of the Association has been determined by the winds of change. **This factor has led the Executive Committee to approve a new CPA logo to conform to the concept of the century old activities through the winds of change, which again, will be witnessed in the future.**

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

Structurally, we have nine Regions whose people are different in terms of culture, political climate and socio-economic levels. We all, however, share the resources of this planet. We are all vulnerable to global health hazards, financial breakdowns, changes in our climate and environment, as we are all touched by international migration, terrorism and other problematic issues.

In view of the winds of change for the future, how then, and to what extent, should the Association reform in order to be more resourceful in its contribution than before and to remain relevant to the future generations?

In response to the concern for the future of the Association, I am happy to inform you, Distinguished Delegates that the Executive Committee, at its meeting in Arusha, Tanzania last year decided to form a CPA Working Party to conduct a detailed study on the matter. The Working Party comprises 10 members (10 Regional Representatives, one from each Region, two from the Africa Region). The

Chairperson of the Executive Committee, Vice- Chairperson, Treasurer and the CWP Chairperson will participate as Ex Officio Members. Consequently, the Working Party had its first meeting here in Nairobi on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 where Ms Moana Mackey, MP., of New Zealand was elected its Chairperson and Hon Keith Flax, MHA, Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly, British Virgin Islands, as Vice Chairperson. The main Term of Reference of the CPA Working Party is to re-examine the CPA's future in order to ensure that it continues to be a vibrant and strong international organization as it enters its second century.

The Working Party is expected to present its final report for the Executive Committee and the General Assembly to consider at the 57<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in London in July next year.

I therefore wish to urge all Members and staff to support the Members of this Working Party by offering progressive ideas regarding activities you would like to be considered to reform and strengthen the Association in the future.

The formation of the Working Party, in a way, corresponds with the decision of Commonwealth Heads of State and Governments to form the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) with a mandate to examine how "the Commonwealth will remain relevant to its times and people in future" and will help to build "a stronger and more resilient and progressive family of nations founded on enduring values and principles". Also the results of the research conducted by the Royal Commonwealth Society under the title "Commonwealth Conversation" show that there is every reason for concern that the relevance and network of the Commonwealth family need to be revitalised. I believe that these reforms have been prompted by similar concerns as those contained in the general Theme of this 56<sup>th</sup> Conference Parliamentary Conference, here in Nairobi.

**Fourthly, Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

I am happy to report that, in spite of the financial crisis that has swept the world, the finances of the Association remain sound. We have moved from a deficit of nearly £500,000 when I took my position in January 2007, to a balanced budget in 2009. The investments from our Reserves amount to £7.5 million at the market rate, as at June 30, 2010; thanks to you Honourable Members for the Reserves Policy you approved at the General Assembly in Malaysia in 2008.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

Our annual reports for the last three years show that we have delivered programmes in almost all regions, albeit in varying percentages, for direct parliamentary training and global involvement. The programmes delivered, to name a few, have included:

- Workshop on CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures for the Pacific Region

- CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures for the Asia, India and South East Asia Regions
- Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Seminar for West Africa held in Ghana
- Post Election Seminars for Dominica, Grenada, Kenya, Lesotho, Turks and Caicos, Zambia
- Staff Development Workshop for the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region held in Antigua and Barbuda
- Climate Change Study Group held in Abuja, Nigeria
- Regional Trade Workshop for African Parliamentarians, held in Tanzania
- Regional Trade Workshop for Pacific Parliamentarians, held in Samoa, and
- The Parliamentary Workshop on HIV/ AIDS and Unpaid Care Work held in the wings of the 9<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women Ministers Meeting in Barbados.
- Commonwealth Whips Network workshop, held in Australia

Other programmes that Members benefitted from are:

- The World Economic Forum for Africa, held in South Africa
- Public Accounts Committee Seminar for West Africa
- CWP Australia Region Conference
- National Council of State Legislatures, Louisville, Kentucky, USA
- Meeting of Commonwealth National Women's Machineries, New York, USA
- 40<sup>th</sup> Africa Regional Conference, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
- Commonwealth Ministerial Debt Sustainability Forums and others.
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Programmes planned for the rest of the year into the first half of next year include:

- The Pacific Regional Gender Seminar
- Parliamentary Staff Development Workshops for the Africa Region
- Parliamentary Staff Development Workshops for the Pacific Region
- Government and Opposition Workshop for the South Asia Region
- Financial Scrutiny Workshop for the Asia and India Regions
- Constituency Development Funds Workshop
- Technical Assistance Programme for Parliament of The Gambia
- Technical Assistance Programme for the Parliament of Swaziland
- Establishment of a Parliamentary Training Institute in Ghana
- Technical Assistance Programme for Malawi to be funded by the Scottish Parliament under the auspices of the CPA.
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**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

In recognition that the younger generation are tomorrow's leaders, we annually organise a one day programme in London on Commonwealth Day to engage and introduce young participants from Commonwealth countries to parliamentary practice. We also encourage Branches to hold Youth Parliaments and other events

to commemorate Commonwealth Day. Last year, Mr President, I stated that contemporary work in parliamentary reform activities and research now has other players, hence the importance of forming partnerships. Our partners; the Commonwealth Secretariat, the World Bank Institute, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), AWEPA, the SADC Forum, SUNY New York and others continue to collaborate with us in the delivery of some of our programmes.

I would like to urge all Branches to keep the CPA Secretariat informed of programmes that you need for the strengthening of your Branches, for the purpose of planning, budget allocation and delivery.

I believe that future programmes suggested by Branches should include Members' interests in the sectors of agriculture, extractive industries, health, live stock management, finance and trade, tourism, etc., because the future demands of constituents lie in the implementation of tangible productive programmes and that is what I mean by the concept, "value for politics".

We at the Secretariat will always continue to proactively propose programmes we believe will benefit Members and Parliamentary Staff.

**Lastly, Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

I am very happy to report that since we last met in Arusha, Tanzania last year, I have visited 16 Branches in our various regions and nearly 70 Branches over the last three years. I have also represented the Association at events in and outside the Commonwealth. I am glad that for the last three years I have worked with many of you in all the nine Regions to respond to Members' and staff needs in order to strengthen the legislatures and the activities of the Association in general.

I am especially happy that the Executive Committee which sat in Swaziland in May, this year, recommended that the General Assembly in Nairobi admit Rwanda as a new Member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, a matter which the General Assembly is expected to consider.

I wish to thank the Executive Committee, Speakers, Presiding Officers, individual Members of the Association, Parliamentary Clerks and Secretaries, as well as Parliamentary staff for the support you have extended to me in the discharge of my duties and responsibilities as Secretary-General during the last three years.

In a special recognition of the activities of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, I wish to salute and congratulate the active role played by the outgoing CWP Chairperson, the Hon Kashmala Tariq, for the work she did to promote the rights and interests of women in the Commonwealth, as well as, for her support and challenge to our duties and responsibilities. On behalf of my

colleagues at the Secretariat, I wish her all the best but we shall always remember that she still belongs to this CPA family in the future.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,**

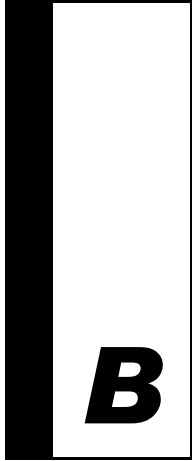
There would be no conference in Kenya without the stamp of your personal commitment, Mr President. On behalf of the CPA Secretariat I wish to thank you very much for the wonderful cooperation you extended to us in the planning of this conference. We also felt and appreciated the cooperation from the Chairperson of the National Organising Committee, the Hon David Musila, Assistant Minister for Defence, the Clerk of the Kenya National Assembly, Mr Patrick Gichohi and all the support staff from Kenya who went to great lengths to ensure the success of the conference. I am also sincerely grateful to my staff at the CPA Headquarters Secretariat, who have always worked tirelessly to service the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference while serving the needs of your Branches as well.

**Mr President,**

I wish you the best of your deliberations over the coming week and I look forward to interacting with as many of you as possible.

Asanteni Sana, Thank you very much.





***Appendix B***

***Summary Report of the 56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth  
Parliamentary Conference***



**56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference  
Nairobi, Kenya  
10 – 19 September 2010  
Parliament and Development in the 21st  
Century: Thus Far and Beyond  
Summary Statement**

Inter-parliamentary consultations must augment intergovernmental negotiations if the best solutions are to be found to global issues in virtually all spheres of governance, argued Commonwealth Parliamentarians meeting in September in Nairobi.

Effective inputs and scrutiny by Parliamentarians will improve the performance of public policy in matters such as disaster management, environmentally sustainable development, the advancement of women, the protection of small communities and the management of migration in a globalized world. More effective Parliaments produce more effective governments and thereby reinforce in all societies a commitment to the peaceful and democratic resolution of problems, agreed Members attending the 2010 Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.

The 56<sup>th</sup> annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), hosted by the Parliament of Kenya from 10 to 19 September, put forward policy alternatives to resolve global problems as over 800 Members and officials considered solutions to issues affecting the approximately 175 Parliaments and Legislatures of Commonwealth nations, states, provinces and territories.

The meeting in Nairobi, chaired by Hon. Kenneth Marende, EGH, MP, Speaker of the Kenyan National Assembly, included the CPA Small Branches Conference on 11 and 12 September and the meeting of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians on 13 September. Summary Statements from all three conferences appear below.

Noting that separate reviews are way to chart new directions for the CPA and the intergovernmental Commonwealth, Members agreed to urge their Parliaments



and governments to maximize their Commonwealth connections to share policy experiences in the development of principles and guidelines which will be benchmarks for the 54 member nations and for all the world. Climate change counter-measures, environmentally sustainable energy production, food and water sources, domestic peace-building, responses to natural disasters, access to information, migration rules, economic development in the new world order, the advancement of women in all decision-making roles and the protection of the environments, economies and sovereignty of small states are all areas where Commonwealth collaboration will produce dividends and strengthen the global role of the Commonwealth as a force for good in a troubled world.

Specific points of agreement reached in all three conferences follow below.

## **56<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference Parliament and Development in the 21st Century: Thus Far and Beyond**

### **Workshop A: The Role of Parliament in Peace Building: The Case of Kenya in Addressing Post-Election Violence in 2008.**

There was consensus that election-related conflicts were not new to Kenya and other democracies. However, the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya was the most severe. Parliament was instrumental in establishing the coalition government and in ensuring its sustainability and success.

Members inevitably play a critical role in achieving durable peace which is linked to the existence of credible democratic institutions and enhanced government accountability. Initially, state-sponsored violence was used as a tool for manipulating election results. In properly elected governments, Parliaments hold enormous responsibility and capacity to stem conflict and ensure existence of an all-inclusive society, the workshop heard.

The role of legislating is key in creating a framework for addressing historical injustices, political stability and sustainable peace. However, Members do not yet perform this role perfectly. To stem future reversals, participants concurred that the following are imperative: the focused implementation of Kenya's new constitution, the enhancement of multi-stakeholder fora, the entrenchment of a culture of constitutionalism and the promotion of continuous peace-building processes, even in the absence of potential conflicts.

### **Workshop B: The Role of Parliamentarians in Natural Disaster Management**

Commonwealth Parliamentarians must ensure that governments co-operate to learn from past mistakes, both in disaster management policies and practices and in environmental policies, to ensure the catastrophic effects of natural disasters are minimized rather than exacerbated.

Parliamentarians were urged to help educate the people and to pass effective legislation to check the unlawful damage people do to themselves and the environment, damage that makes the effects of natural disasters worse. They should work together to share ideas to identify the best solutions. Pakistan, for example, has constituted a Special Committee on Disaster Management to frame laws not only to fix responsibilities but also to suggest genuine actions to reduce the effects of disasters by improving response times and increasing assistance.

Unlike the response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the workshop was told that countries took longer to respond to the flooding in Pakistan. Parliaments must use their democratic platform to rise above sovereign suspicions to address natural disasters.

Deforestation and other related examples of environmental negligence must be stopped to help save the environment and check the disasters. Parliamentarians can help people to understand the grave consequences of environmental degradation.

While countries have disaster management plans and policies in place, the session noted that preparedness levels can be very low. It was agreed that countries need to move from policies to implementation and action to address disasters effectively. In addition to mainstreaming disaster management in development planning, it is prudent that countries emulate best practices and draw lessons from those states that have suffered catastrophic disasters in recent history.

Parliaments were singled out as the best avenue to engage in high-level advocacy to press for government actions. At the same time, Parliaments need to sustain linkages and networks, and participate in global platforms to address issues. Noting that climate change and human activity have played a significant role in disasters, participants recommended that the CPA should have an on-going programme on climate change and disaster management.

### **Workshop C: Energy and Environment: Achieving Sustainable Development**

The main focus of the discussion was on seeking solutions on how to better balance environmental management and protection with energy and resource development. As global citizens, there is a collective role all must play – and a responsibility all must assume – in protecting the environment not just for today, but for future generations as well. Some countries do not proceed with development at the expense of the environment, so the demand for energy can be met in a way that respects and maintains the natural environment. The safety of the land, air and water is paramount.

In some countries, environmental features such as forests, wetlands and agricultural lands contribute a large percentage of gross domestic product through exports and tourism; their health is essential for sustainable development. Strict reclamation standards and financial guarantees are used so companies restore all land so it can be productive again.

While climate change is a serious environmental problem, scientific evidence has confirmed that it is a consequence of reckless human economic activities such as

burning fossil fuels. The workshop was told that fossil fuel burning has contributed significantly to the production of ozone-depleting substances which have led to global warming and unsustainable use of the environment.

The workshop said climate change has changed the world by causing, among others:

- The loss of crops,
- Declining productivity,
- Reduced food security,
- Increased water scarcity,
- Increased challenges to energy access,
- Risk to poverty alleviation,
- Inability to produce some valued crops,
- Loss of houses in flood-prone areas and
- The increase of diseases like malaria.

The Commonwealth must develop strategies on sustainable energy technologies and also the adaptations necessary to bring them into smaller jurisdictions to create a healthy population and enhance the quality of life for all.

### **Workshop D: Parliament, Accountability and the Role of Internet Governance in Strengthening Oversight**

The delegates attending this Workshop argued that the CPA ought to ensure that information communication technology is embraced by all member states. This ought to be done by including aspects of information access as a benchmark of the Association.

The workshop heard of the World Bank's governance and anti-corruption strategy of March 2007 and the key pillars of the strategy. The Workshop also discussed the impact of the internet on society.

Parliamentarians were urged to embrace the use of information technology to enhance parliamentary oversight. While the need to have access to information was applauded and the importance of the internet stressed, delegates cautioned that there is a particular need to keep children safe when they use the internet.

Most speakers emphasized the importance of information technology as a means to enhance transparency and act as a deterrent to corruption. Speakers in the Workshop also discussed the challenges of use of the internet in overseeing policies and programmes related to poverty, infrastructure issues, age and low access.

## **Workshop E: The Role of Parliamentarians in Facilitating Grassroots Projects**

Participants hailed the role played by Parliamentarians in facilitating grassroots projects. They urged the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to publish information on the best practices in the use of constituency development funds in various countries. It should share knowledge to create Benchmarks on the subject.

The need to entrench full public participation and probity were seen as key to the success of grassroots projects. The workshop also discussed the challenges related to the effectiveness and sustainability of grassroots projects, including the questions of accountability and transparency, efficiency, equity, co-ordination and institutionalization of these projects. The challenges were not seen as insurmountable.

Participants argued that, although grassroots projects may be seen as political tools and may be unpopular with some aid donors, their significance in creating equity amongst all Members of Parliament in representation is enormous.

## **Workshop F: The Role of Parliamentarians in the Protection of Migrant Workers**

The participants discussed the issue of migrant workers with a focus on respect for their human rights as it was noted that most are exploited and discriminated against. The primary role of Parliamentarians is to legislate, so they should enact anti-trafficking laws that impose heavy sanctions against human trafficking and protect migrant workers and all citizens. They must amend outdated laws to ensure the human rights of migrant workers are not violated. Additionally, Parliamentarians were urged to initiate education against negative behaviour and hostility such as racism or xenophobia directed at migrant workers.

Governments were called upon to ratify international conventions and treaties that protect migrant workers; but Parliamentarians have an ongoing oversight role to ensure the ratified conventions are incorporated into domestic law, implemented and enforced. Countries also were encouraged to view migration positively and have flexible laws that seek to streamline migration flows.

Noting that bilateral and multilateral relations or regional caucuses on migrant workers are important, Parliamentarians must foster these partnerships. Participants noted it is common that refugees from neighbouring war-torn countries become migrant workers in the countries where they seek asylum; as such, Parliamentarians must maintain peace and stability in their own countries. The Commonwealth should develop principles and guidelines on migrant workers that all Commonwealth countries will be expected to respect.

Dual citizenship, which has led to an increase of migrant workers, can prove to be a challenge and should be dealt with on a country-to-country basis.

Parliamentarians must focus on tackling challenges such as unemployment, low education levels, poverty and increased rural-to-urban migration that cause workers to move in search for better conditions.

Parliamentarians have the ultimate responsibility of protecting both legal and illegal migrant workers from exploitation and the violation of their human rights. Migration must no longer be regarded only as an issue of economics; it is a human rights issue as well.

### **Workshop G: The Global Water and Food Crisis**

Highlighting the various food and water crisis scenarios currently being experienced around the world, participants noted that population is a key factor in food and water shortages. The competition for potable water in an overpopulated world poses an enormous threat to humanity. There was a general consensus that population growth, industrialization and urbanization are not only depleting lakes, rivers and aquifers, they are also polluting them.

The state of food security and water accessibility in many nations is an indicator of the ever-increasing burden on governments to sustain the livelihood of their people. Food security is also a major water-resource issue. Food production consumes the vast majority of fresh water resources. Therefore, increased agricultural activity will place greater demands on water resources. Given present consumption trends and production practices, sources of fresh water need to double.

Moreover, human-induced global warming is likely to cause increased risk of hunger and famine, especially among the world's poor. During recent years, the global food problem has been worsened partly from the steep escalation in the price of fossil fuels and partly due to emerging weather problems arising from climate change.

The workshop was told that water shortages threaten to reduce global food supply by more than 10 per cent in the next 25 years. Global water use rose six fold between 1900 and 1995 – twice the rate of increase in population. Demand for food is expected to rise by 50 per cent over the next 20 years and will double during the next 50 years.

In order to meet this demand, Members agreed that use of scientific knowledge and technological advancement in the field of agriculture must be enhanced and shared among all nations. Governments should also provide adequate funds to the agricultural sector.

It was also agreed that careful management of water resources should be on the top of every government's agenda so soil, water and climate are managed sustainably. Governments should promote the sustainability of water resources and consequently food security.

Members were concerned that the workshop should not be just any other talk-shop but should lead to fruitful implementation of resolutions. Members agreed that a taskforce on global water and food crisis should be established under the auspices of the CPA to examine proper management and sustainability of water resources which will lead to food security.

### **Workshop H: How prepared is the Commonwealth for the Emerging New World Economic Order?**

The extent to which the world economic crisis has affected countries varies; but delegates agreed it was more significant in industrialized countries. In the wake of this crisis, developing countries of Latin America and Asia were emboldened by a rapid growth in their work-force, technology and financial integration. They have caused a major shift in the balance of economic power.

Participants observed that the recent expansion of the G8 into the G20 will help mitigate inherent weaknesses requiring sustained recovery. Commonwealth countries should engage and dialogue with China rather than being antagonistic. Stronger Commonwealth economies should support weaker ones.

Parliamentarians emphasized the need to face the challenges of emerging stronger economies creatively and ensure inter-parliamentary conference resolutions bear tangible results. However, assessments of preparedness should be country-specific.

Delegates agreed to use their common heritage to bolster collective bargaining power, initiate persuasive interventions against unfair multilateral trade regimes, embrace peer review mechanisms, implore upon Bretton Woods institutions to give appropriate assistance, share experiences, build capacities and fully integrate with partner states.

### **Plenary: Commonwealth Initiatives in Handling Migration Issues**

Arguments for and against free migration, both legal and illegal, were voiced by lead speakers as some focused on the protection of the rights of migrant workers while others expressed concerns about the effects of migrants on small communities and on each society's culture and values.

There was agreement, however, on the need for international co-operation and collaboration to ensure that migration is managed properly in a globalized world where the movement of people is posing problems for all states.

Migrant workers are often exploited and their human rights abused because they do not know their rights and domestic legislation and institutions can fail to deal with foreigners. Parliamentarians should therefore scrutinize governments to ensure foreign workers enjoy the same rights as domestic workers and that they have access to education programmes so they know what those rights are.

Migration was seen as beneficial by providing needed labour and exposing people to new cultures which enrich societies. But it was also seen as a threat to the resources, cultures and values of the receiving countries, and it was acknowledged that a brain drain to the developed world could hinder development in poorer countries. Helping all countries to develop was seen as a longterm solution which would reduce the need for people to migrate to improve their lives.

International and bilateral strategies, with the Commonwealth in a key role, were seen by all speakers as the most effective short-term way to manage migration, including containing the illegal movement and trafficking of people, protecting migrants from exploitation, protecting small states, examining the reasons for domestic controls on migration and harmonizing all domestic laws.

## **29th Small Branches Conference**

### **1st Plenary: Energy and Environment: Achieving Sustainable Development**

Members from small Branches regarded the topic as vitally important and argued that the current state of energy consumption and the concomitant effect on the environment is not sustainable. With climate change advancing at an alarming rate, small states too often suffer a disproportionate share of the consequences and more funds are required from developed nations to assist developing nations to combat the effects. Sea-level rise and the warming of the North were but two examples cited with very real and dire consequences if global warming is permitted to continue unabated.

Delegates agreed that access to sustainable energy is a necessity in order not only to protect our environment, but also to improve the economic development opportunities of small states. Demand for sustainable energy opportunities and sustainable food production go hand in hand. Governments must be mindful that developing sustainable energy projects may not be done in isolation of the realities of a real and growing sustainable food shortage. There is considerable pressure on



the world's arable land base and the focus of development of new energy technologies ought not to take more of this land out of the production of food.

Alternatives to present methods of energy production were discussed, including: solar power, wind power, biomass and bio-diesel production, tidal generation, geothermal, nuclear and hydro electric opportunities. Advances in the development of these technologies were accepted yet there are other factors to consider as well, including: access to, and distribution of, power to small, isolated geographic areas; metering; willingness of utilities to embrace less profitable projects and initiatives, and subsidized energy production.

Energy is essential for industry to thrive, for transport, lighting, agriculture, space heating, domestic use and for the whole of the economy. In meeting these increasingly challenging demands, Parliamentarians, in establishing and contributing to policy development in this area, must also balance the protection of our environment in realizing sustainable development. All jurisdictions have an important role to play: governments must listen if there is an overwhelming consensus at the parliamentary level. No one can argue against the desirability of sustainable and environmentally sensitive energy alternatives, with enhancing sustainable development opportunities in a responsible way and with the protection of the world's most precious resources, its environment and its people.

## **2nd Plenary: The Effect of "Political" Corruption in Small States**

In his remarks during the conference opening ceremony, CPA Secretary-General Dr William Shija intimated that "political" corruption was an issue which affects all countries, both large and small, and which can undermine democracy and retard good governance. This view was repeated in this session as the Discussion Leaders and delegates engaged in a lively and constructive discourse on a potentially thorny subject. The issue focused on the abuse of political and public powers for personal and private gains.

Many delegates indicated that, within their own countries, their concerns ran more toward unethical behaviour and the perception of possibly corrupt or illegal practices by their constituents and/or local media, rather than toward actual cases of serious or major corruption and criminal activity on the part of elected officials. Throughout the session, an over-riding sentiment coming to the fore was the general frustration of many delegates at what seems to be a growing perception among many of their constituents and electorates in general that corrupt practices and personally or politically self-serving agendas have become the norm for many elected officials. These perceptions, whether generated by known instances of public corruption at home and elsewhere or by inferences made in the media, can impact on their abilities to govern effectively while also surviving and succeeding politically.

All the delegates could agree that however unfair or untrue these perceptions may be in most cases, and however one chose to define “political” corruption, they can be extremely difficult to overcome and reverse, particularly without the benefit of positive media relations, and a less critical press that will refrain from inferences, if not outright allegations, of corruption that are made without substantiation. Delegates spoke of the need for transparency and accountability, and for elected officials and public officers to be more conscientious about good governance practices, both individually and collectively. It is not enough to just refrain from clearly illegal and corrupt activities: it is also important to strive to avoid any appearance of unethical or questionable behaviour that could be misinterpreted or that could be portrayed in a malicious light by political opponents or the press.

### **3rd Plenary: The Challenges to Sovereignty of Small States**

Despite the communality of the subject for small states, the three discussion leaders put forward different perspectives on the challenges to the sovereignty of small states in an extremely lively and sometimes passionate session.

Delegates viewed with concern the United Kingdom's suspension of the Turks and Caicos Islands' constitution and the removal of its democratically elected government. While mindful of the serious challenges facing the people of the Turks and Caicos prior to the U.K.'s intervention, delegates encouraged the U.K. government to make the restoration of democracy for the people of Turks and Caicos a demonstrated priority.

The challenges to the ability of a state to govern itself were identified as size, geographical location, governance and constitutional arrangements. Could there be true sovereignty where many states have constitutions that are Orders-in-Council of the U.K. and the U.K. government reserves the power to suspend constitutions, as in the Turks and Caicos. The U.K. also retains the right to disallow certain laws, and tax and taxation can be changed by the OECD, UN, G8 and others, impacting on self-regulation and the creation of wealth. During discussion, the meeting also noted that piracy around the Seychelles damaged trade with important consequences.

The vulnerability of small states to threats from stronger neighbours, such as the threats to the Falkland Islands from Argentina and to Gibraltar from Spain were recounted. Sovereignty must be respected and higher external authorities must help smaller threatened states. Discussions at a high level on the future of small states must include the small state concerned. International organizations should uphold their own stated values when they consider small threatened states.

Interdependence today was seen is the way forward, but sovereignty cannot be described simply in political, legislative and economic terms. Environmental sovereignty regarding climate change and the protection of natural resources, and

cultural sovereignty are also important elements. This led to a discussion on the values, national pride and soul of a community. It has become very difficult to distinguish between internal and external affairs, given the intense scrutiny of taxation. Small states have to consider whether independence, an increased international personality or joining a larger geographical entity offers viable solutions.

#### **4th Plenary: Parliament and Accountability - Strengthening Oversight in Small Parliaments**

Bodies to oversee the executive can be used to great effect by small Parliaments.

While some Legislatures have established substantive organizations such as independent commissions against crime, misconduct and corruption, often these are costly to operate and staff, and for small Parliaments such costs may be beyond their ability to provide.

The creation of Public Accounts Committees and Auditors-General is very effective and less costly. Analysis of how PACs in particular operate in small jurisdictions has shown that they have a greater tendency, relative to larger jurisdictions, to ask oral and written questions of the executive, hold hearings and conduct inquiries, and to have their Chairs drawn from non-government Members.

While PACs and Auditors-General are powerful tools, it is important to supplement these tools by improving the environment for accountability generally, for instance by establishing freedom of information laws and by making the default to be for information to be available rather than having to be sought. Whistle-blowing legislation is also a very useful tool.

Parliaments should look at their own procedures and try to move away from scrutiny being reactive to one of it being proactive. Also, it is important that adequate time be provided for the Legislature to consider budgets.

# Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Meeting The Status of Women in 2010

## **Session 1: Strategies to Increase Women's Representation in Parliament**

The representation of women in leadership is critical for development and democracy in any country. However, women Parliamentarians noted that despite increases in female representation, progress has been slow and women still struggle to acquire and maintain leadership positions. Culture and traditions were identified as the main challenges to the low representation of women.

Strategies to improve female representation were advanced with examples from India, Wales, the Caribbean and the Americas. Strategies put forward included: affirmative action in terms of quotas or reserved seats especially at the political party level, increased access to and training of women in leadership skills, expanded scope for women at the grassroots level, synergized efforts to fight terrorism and violence which affect women the most, the equipping of women with the skills to gain media attention.

Other strategies proposed included: the formation of cross-party parliamentary women's groups, reforms to existing laws to promote gender equity, partnerships with the media and civil society organizations, the reform of electoral systems to adopt proportional representation and the creation of a campaign school to train women on campaigning skills and how to survive in politics and public life.

There was agreement that there is a need to expose young women to parliamentary activities so as to boost their confidence and prepare them for political life as women are criticized for trivial things such as their make-up choice. Discussion leaders called on women to support each other if they are to increase representation in leadership positions.

## **Session 2: Enhancing Participation of Women in Decision-Making Processes**

Recent democratization of societies leading to political, social and economic transformation adds impetus to women's struggle for greater influence in public life. Throughout history women have not been accorded adequate facilitation and goodwill to actively engage in national electoral processes on an equal footing with men. Sustained domination of leadership positions by men persistently grants women minimal opportunities to exploit their full potential.

Therefore, a continuous critical analysis and review of the barriers women encounter is desirable. Issues outlined in the discussions that stand in the way of women and are perpetuated globally include:

- Legal mechanisms that are unresponsive to women;
- Attitudinal, cultural and structural impediments in society that ostracize women and deter upward political mobility;
- Economic disparity between men and women;
- Non-democratization of political parties and lack of practical policies to address gender issues;
- Women's access to technology and media;
- Violence against women running for political office, and
- Lower education levels and opportunities and a deliberate lack of leadership capacitybuilding for women.
- 

Women Parliamentarians concurred on the effective tools to promote women in politics, such as: mentorship opportunities among them; establishment of a women's wing in political party structures; caucuses for women Parliamentarians; quotas and reserved seats, and financial assistance to women seeking political seats. Overall, affirmative action cutting across all sectors was deemed the best action to favour women. Facilities in institutions like Parliament and offices can be made female-friendly to nurture young women leaders.

### **Session 3: Women as Migrant Workers**

The global context of migration fuelled by rapid globalization of economies and demand for low-wage services is rapidly changing with numbers of female migrants on the rise. This increasing "feminization" of migration has turned the spotlight on the unique challenges women migrant workers encounter.

The general view was that emerging trends impact on gender roles and are a departure from the traditional view of women as social producers and wives. This is leading to change in family structures as women migrant workers become financially empowered.

Migration is mutually beneficial with immense opportunities either way in terms of human, economic and social capital. However, available international conventions and protocols fail to address the special circumstances of female migrant workers who are usually more exposed to human rights abuse than male counterparts. Women Parliamentarians were urged to be vigilant and press their governments to sign and ratify relevant conventions.

The meeting was unequivocal in insisting that governments should revise legislation to transform women migrant workers from victims to victors. Migrants are looking for basic human rights: safety, a home, and an enabling environment

to provide for themselves and their families. All these rights are guaranteed to them under international human rights laws.

#### **Session 4: Reform of Political Parties – Working towards Democracy**

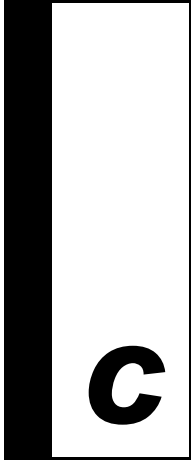
Effective political party structures are central to democratic ideals and the effective functioning of electoral systems. Backed with progressive reforms, political party reforms also accelerate female participation in democracy and decision-making. Kenya's new constitution was lauded for its reformist orientation including reforms to political parties.

Despite skewed representation favouring men in the higher echelons of political parties, women still make up the majority of party followers. Any changes undertaken should ensure the cultural base of the community is reflected in its constitution and in arrangements to share party positions.

Transparent processes are a significant step in reforming political parties. Gender equity in all leadership roles is the entry point to kick-start political party reforms. Equity in party leadership positions is a major step in the democratization of a society. Strict adherence to a proportional system helps in entrenching female participation in party echelons.

The session reiterated that agitation by women for equity is continuing to redefine what democracy ought to be and the direction to take to remain relevant. Participatory democracy must also cascade to women's participation and representation in all decision making levels including in socio-economic structures.

A breakthrough could be achieved through, among others: the training of trainers; communication skills training to enable women to gain confidence and enhance competency in political affairs, and grant-financing women to vie for electoral and party positions. Women Parliamentarians should agitate for a "zebra" formula as a model for sharing party positions to ensure that women are adequately represented.



## ***Appendix C***

### ***Proposals for Consideration by the Working Party of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association***

Senator the Hon. John Hogg

President of the Senate, Parliament of Australia and

Australian Region Representative, Executive Committee

**Proposals for Consideration by the Working Party of the Commonwealth  
Parliamentary Association**

**Senator the Hon. John Hogg**

**President of the Senate, Parliament of Australia and  
Australian Region Representative, Executive Committee**

A Working Party has been established to “re-examine the CPA in order to ensure it continues to be a vital and strong international organization as it enters its second century”. The Working Party provides a unique opportunity to set up the Association to meet the challenges of the next 100 years. The Working Party is tasked to review:

1. the mission of the Association in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;
2. its constitutional and legal provisions;
3. its structure and capacity to fulfil its mission;
4. the annual conference and other programmes;
5. governance arrangements including the role of the Executive Committee;
6. the budget and financial arrangements.

The CPA has always been an Association of member Parliaments who act co-operatively and assist each other in the promotion of the ideals of parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth. With 175 Branches in national, state, provincial and territorial parliaments and a total membership of approximately 17,000 parliamentarians, the CPA is a complex organisation in scale, membership and diversity of interests and geographic distribution of members. Moreover, on the eve of its centenary, and in an era of severe economic austerity for all nations as well as international organisations, there are legitimate questions around the role, purpose and cost of the Association. Issues include:

1. A perceived lack of direction for the Association;
2. The relevance of the Association;
3. Financial management arrangements – especially the payment of membership fees;
4. The governance framework - need to ensure the highest standards of transparency and accountability of the Association, particularly with respect to fiscal matters, structure and delivery of programs and activities, and power sharing;
5. Need to restructure the secretariat to deliver the highest standards of accountability and transparency including the relationship of the Chief



- Executive Officer (Secretary-General) to the Executive Committee and General Assembly and to the Directorates within the Secretariat;
6. Need for audit and risk management arrangements based on clearly defined key performance indicators (KPIs);
  7. Need for non-discriminatory representation to ensure all regions have access to the full range of positions over the fullness of time.

Throughout the history of the Association, there have been changes to its structure and organisation as well as proposals to address the relevance of the Association such as aligning the Association with the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

There is general agreement, that in order to maintain the confidence of members in the Association, major reform designed to achieve openness, transparency, and accountability in the Association as well as address the growing costs of running Association activities is absolutely necessary. Three areas require immediate attention:

- A. The structure of the Executive Committee - needs to be simple and unambiguous such that it does not lend itself to structural stagnancy and control by limited vested interests;
- B. The selection of the Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) - introduce term limits and the rotation of the position so that all regions have the opportunity to have someone in that role;
- C. The timing and format of the Parliamentary Conference - address the increasing costs of hosting the conference and determine whether the current arrangements are the best use of limited financial resources in troubled economic times - remove the opportunity for public criticism as a junket .

The reforms outlined below are premised on taking effect from July 2011 at the conclusion of the Centennial Conference in London (*see attached spreadsheet*). The centenary of the founding of the Association provides a unique opportunity to renew the way the Association is governed, strengthen its administration and improve the delivery of its programs to all members.

#### **A. Structure of the Executive Committee**

The CPA is not a large organisation in financial terms - CPA income and expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2009 were GBP 2.7M and GBP 2.2M respectively, with net assets of GBP 7.2M.

The Executive Committee currently consists of 35 members, comprising the five Officers of the Association, the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, three regional representatives from each region except Africa which has six representatives. The current arrangements are as follows:

- The Chairperson, elected by the General Assembly, holds office for a term three years;
- The Vice-Chairperson, elected by the Executive Committee from among its members but must be from a different Region to that of the Chairperson, holds office for a term of one year;
- The Treasurer, elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Executive Committee, holds office for a term of three years;
- Regional Representatives are elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of their respective Region for a term of three years (from the conclusion of the General Assembly at which they are elected to the conclusion of the General Assembly of the third plenary conference after that election).

The nine regions and the number of representatives per region are as follows:

<b>Region</b>	<b>No. of Branches</b>	<b>No. of Representatives</b>
Caribbean, Americas & Atlantic	18	3
Canada	14	3
Australia	10	3
India	31	3
South-East Asia	15	3
British Islands & Mediterranean	13	3
Pacific	10	3
Africa	56	6

By contrast the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a much larger organisation, is composed of 17 members including the IPU President serving four year terms.

The CPA Executive Committee has two sub-Committees - Planning and Review and Finance. The latter has 15 members. By contrast, the average size of corporate boards is perhaps of the order of 10 people. The existing 'board' structure is

excessive in governance terms and is not warranted for an organisation the size of the CPA. A smaller Executive Committee would offer substantial cost savings to the Association.

One of the most important reforms therefore is that of the Executive Committee itself. There have been previous proposals to change the method in which key Executive Committee positions are filled because of concerns about bloc voting, whereby a few large regions voting in blocs have sufficient numbers to win all contested elections, potentially to the exclusion of candidates and opinions from other regions.

What is required is reform to the composition and operation of the Executive Committee that ensures a more open, transparent and equitable distribution of positions to all members and creates a more effective and accountable governance structure. This could be achieved through the following means:

- i. Introducing a fixed-term rotational system for membership of the Executive Committee and its subordinate bodies;
- ii. Each region to determine its nominees for the senior positions on the Executive Committee;
- iii. Dividing the work of the Executive Committee among three sub-committees;
- iv. Creating three directorates within the Secretariat; and
- v. Inviting Regional Secretaries to attend specific meetings of the Executive Committee.

Under this proposal the positions of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Treasurer would rotate for a two year term through each of the nine regions with no renewal of term and no region being able to sustain the domination by any single member entity. It would be implicit in the rotation that the Deputy Chairperson (or the region's nominee in the absence of the then Deputy Chairperson) would succeed the Chairperson. The maximum period of all combined offices of the Association for any one individual would be four years. This would apply to the Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) as well where the rotation would be every four years.

This includes the establishment of three sub-committees of the Executive Committee to oversee the work of the Association and monitor performance:

- i. Finance & Administration Sub-Committee:
  - Prepares budget (administration and programs).
  - Reviews expenditure.
  - Includes Treasurer and Director Finance as non-voting members.

ii. Programs/IT/Communications Sub-Committee:

- Prepares forward program in consultation with the regions.
- Prepares conference agenda.
- Responsible for communications including ITC and the implementation of more cost-effective means of conducting Association business.
- Includes Director Programs as non-voting member.

iii. Audit & Governance Sub-Committee:

- Responsible for conduct of both financial and performance audits.
- Responsible for remuneration and terms and conditions of employment for Secretariat staff.
- Establish and review of KPIs for the Association.

Membership of each sub-committee would be selected from members of the Executive Committee on the basis of one member per region for all regions with the exception of Africa which would be two members from the Executive Committee. Each sub-committee would be chaired by a representative from each region in rotation (*see attached spreadsheet*). It would include the appropriate director at the administrative level without voting rights. The Executive Committee Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Treasurer would take their place on the respective committees as ordinary members with the same voting rights as any other member but could not serve as either Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of any sub-committee.

To ensure both fresh ideas and the holding of a degree of corporate knowledge, the following is proposed:

- The Executive Committee to comprise 30 members elected by and from each region plus one representative from the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians group.
- Members are elected through a staggered system of election based on two rounds in a four year cycle.
- Each Region, except Africa, elects up to three Representatives over the two rounds of the electoral cycle for four year terms (*see below*).
- The African Region, the largest in terms of the number of Branches (56), has the opportunity to elect three delegates every two years.
- The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer, each elected by their respective regions on a rotational basis, serve for two year terms.
- The members to be elected following the biennial plenary conference (*see below*) by each region to take office on 1<sup>st</sup> March in the following year.

The regions, except Africa, are divided into two electoral groups as follows (the regions are numbered according to size – ie. the number of Branches per region):

		Round 1	Round 2
ExCo A	3 <sup>rd</sup> largest (Caribbean, Americas & Atlantic – 18 Branches)	1	2
	5 <sup>th</sup> largest (Canada – 14 Branches)	1	2
	7 <sup>th</sup> largest (Australia – 10 Branches)	1	2
	9 <sup>th</sup> largest (Asia – 8 Branches)	1	2
ExCo B	2 <sup>nd</sup> largest (India – 31 Branches)	2	1
	4 <sup>th</sup> largest (South-East Asia – 15 Branches)	2	1
	6 <sup>th</sup> largest (British Islands & Mediterranean – 13 Branches)	2	1
	8 <sup>th</sup> largest (Pacific – 10 Branches)	2	1
Sub-total		12	12
+ Africa		3	3
+ CWP		1	
Total		31	

***Transitional arrangements:***

*In Exco A one member would be replaced from 1 March 2012 for a four year term and two members would be replaced from 1 March 2014 for four year terms.*

*In Exco B two members would be replaced from 1 March 2012 for four year terms and one member replaced from 1 March 2014 for a four year term.*

*For the African region three members would be replaced from 1 March 2012 for four year terms and three members from 1 March 2014 for four year terms.*

*In any of the above cases where a casual vacancy occurs then a region is entitled to nominate a replacement for the remainder of the term and that service is deemed to be service for the full period of that term.*

In addition to the General Assembly which remains the Association's supreme authority, the governance and administrative structure for the Association would be as follows:

<b>Executive Committee</b>	
<b>Office-holders</b>	<b>Key points</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chairperson</li> <li>2. Vice-Chairperson</li> <li>3. Treasurer</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each position rotates through all 9 regions</li> <li>• Vice-Chair becomes Chair by rotation</li> </ul>
<b>Other ExCo Members</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CWP Representative</li> <li>2. 27 Regional Representatives</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current CWP arrangements remain</li> </ul>
<b>Sub-Committees</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finance</li> <li>2. Programs &amp; Communication</li> <li>3. Audit &amp; Governance</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotation through the 9 regions</li> <li>• four year term</li> </ul>
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 year non-renewable term</li> <li>• Rotation through all 9 regions</li> </ul>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Director Finance</li> <li>2. Director Programs</li> <li>3. Director Audit</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three directorates</li> <li>• Each supporting their respective sub-committee</li> <li>• Directors report to the CEO &amp; their respective sub-committees</li> <li>• Directors employed on 4 year renewable contracts</li> </ul>

NB. All positions on the Executive Committee are subject to no individual or region holding any position or positions cumulatively for more than four years.

### *Directorates*

The CPA secretariat currently has a staff of 14 headed by the Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) of the Association. There are two directorates reporting to the Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) – Communications and Research and Administration and Finance. Both directorates share the organisation of Association activities and events between them.

In line with the establishment of three portfolio sub-committees of the Executive Committee, under this proposal three directorates would be created:

- i. Finance & Administration;
- ii. Programs/IT/Communications; and
- iii. Audit & Governance.

The directors of each would report directly to the Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) and attend the meetings of the Executive Committee as well as the relevant Sub-Committee. Each directorate would support the work of their respective Sub-Committee.

Directors would be chosen through a merit-based selection process and employed on four year renewable contracts.

### *Regional Secretaries*

The attendance of Regional Secretaries at Executive Committee meetings has been proposed by several regions. It would have benefits for:

- continuity of the organisation (as Regional Secretaries tend to retain much of the institutional knowledge of the CPA within their regions);
- communication (as Regional Secretaries are the communication link between the international secretariat and the regions); and
- significantly, strategic planning (as Regional Secretaries coordinate activities within their regions and could help the Executive Committee in considering the forward agenda).

At its 2010 mid-year meeting, the Executive Committee considered the proposal but, on that occasion, chose not to support it. A sensible and practical compromise would be to invite Regional Secretaries to attend an Executive Committee meeting

once every two years (the year when the Parliamentary Conference is not being held – see below) to discuss with the Executive Committee the forward plans for the Association. Regional Secretaries could then hold their regular meeting at that time, rather than having the Regional Secretaries meeting held at a separate time and venue.

### **B. Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General)**

It is proposed that, in line with the term limits imposed on membership of the Executive Committee, the position of Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) be limited to one four year non-renewable term from July 2011 and that the position be rotated every term through the regions.

It should be noted that, in September 2006, the Executive Committee agreed to a policy whereby each Secretary-General serves one five-year term. However, in May 2010, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that the current Secretary-General's employment be extended for a second term of five years from 2012 to December 2016.

In the spirit of taking the Association forward and subject to the approval of the General Assembly, it is proposed that the term of the next Chief Executive Officer (Secretary-General) would begin post-conference in July 2011.

The position of Chief Executive Officer would be subject to performance criteria. There would be a mid-term review of the performance of the Chief Executive Officer. Where the performance of the Chief Executive Officer was not satisfactory, then the Association would terminate the contract. The Region from which the person came would be requested to nominate a replacement for the remainder of the four-year term. This person would not be subject to re-appointment.

### **C. Annual conference**

The format of the annual conference has been reviewed previously. However, there remain grave concerns about the costs, length of time, format and the public perception that parliamentarians are indulging themselves in some grand form of junket. The current format is open to extreme criticism as a waste of parliamentary resources. The costs of hosting the conference are increasingly becoming prohibitive to all but the largest and most well resourced Branches.

From the public perception it is unsustainable in the short and long term to maintain a conference that costs Parliaments of the Association more to run annually than the total income of the Association.



The current format is increasingly hard to comply with because of the great reluctance by sovereign nations in difficult economic times to host such an elaborate and expensive exercise.

In order to address this inequitable situation, two approaches are proposed:

- introduce a user-pays model for conference participation; and
- the conference to be held every two years rather than annually.

The biennial conference would be organised on the basis of a strict business agenda established by the Executive Committee on the advice of the Programs Sub-Committee. Any cultural/social or other activities would be:

- a. optional; and
- b. at the cost to the participant at the conclusion of the conference.

All delegates attending the conference would do so at the expense of their participating Branch.

The conference host would provide at a minimum an appropriate venue, a welcome reception and morning and afternoon teas.

Additional activities and events such as a conference dinner would be on a user-pays basis.

The adoption of such a proposal would mean that smaller parliaments and countries would be able to host this prestigious event.

The urgent desire arising out of the adoption of this format is that there would be a rotation of the biennial conference throughout the regions of the Association and that no one region became favoured more than another even by default for the hosting such conference.

Where a Branch indicates that it would have financial difficulties in attending the conference, then a subsidy may be made to that Branch following a two thirds majority decision of the Finance Committee and with a two thirds majority approval of the Executive Committee.

In lieu of an annual conference, each region will be actively encouraged to organise regional and possibly even inter-regional conferences between the meetings of the General Assembly. Funds from the intervening defunct annual conference would be redirected into the delivery of programs at these regional and/or inter-regional conferences.

To ensure the due diligence and proper control of the affairs of the Association between the biennial conferences, there would be an extended number of Executive Committee meetings to ensure the continued openness and accountability of the organisation (*see attached spreadsheet*).

All Executive Committee meetings would be held in London where the Secretariat is located. This would negate the need to continually find suitable venues and hosts for meetings and hence provide a reasonable cost saving to the Association.

Complementary efforts in the area of IT communication will be encouraged to ensure greater access by Branches to the most up-to-date information to assist them in the conduct of their business.

The judicious use of IT stands to improve Branch interaction and take advantage of the new technology to reduce costs to the Association accordingly.



Figure 1.2 Proposed Executive Committee and sub-committee membership

		2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023	2025	2027	2029	2031	2033	2035	2037	2039	2041	2043	2045
EXCO	Chair	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6
	Deputy	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1
	Treasurer	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3
Finance	Chair	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5
	Deputy	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4
Programs	Chair	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7
	Deputy	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8
Audit	Chair	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2
	Deputy	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9	5	2	8	3	7	4	6	1	9
CEO		6		4		7		3		8		2		5		9		1	