

The Parliamentarian



Journal of the Parliaments of the Commonwealth

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The Commonwealth: Adding political value to global affairs in the 21st century

PAGES 190-195

PLUS ▶

Emerging Security Issues
for Parliamentarians
and the impact on
Democracy

PAGE 222

Defending Media
Freedoms in the
Commonwealth

PAGES 226-237

Putting Road Safety
on the Commonwealth
Agenda

PAGE 242

Building A 'Future-
Ready' Parliamentary
Workforce

PAGE 244

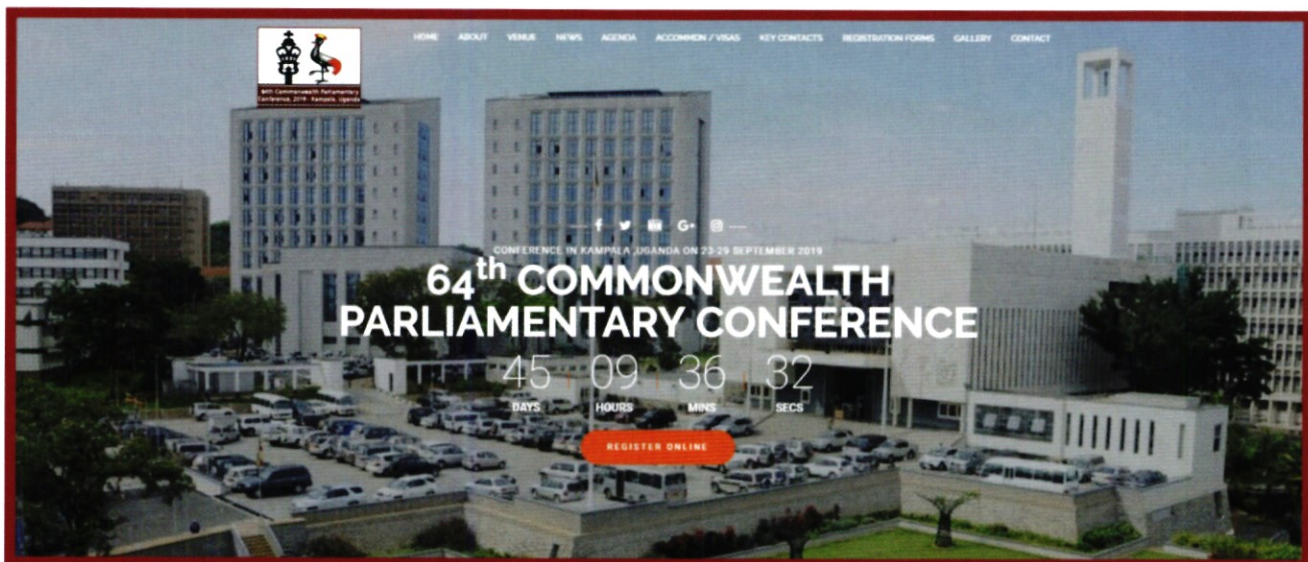


64th COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE KAMPALA, UGANDA

22 to 29 SEPTEMBER 2019 (inclusive of arrival and departure dates)

For further information visit www.cpc2019.org and www.cpahq.org/cpahq/cpc2019

CONFERENCE THEME: 'ADAPTION, ENGAGEMENT AND EVOLUTION OF PARLIAMENTS IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING COMMONWEALTH'.



- One of the largest annual gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians. Hosted by the CPA Uganda Branch and the Parliament of Uganda.
- Over 500 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth for this unique conference and networking opportunity.
- CPA's global membership addressing the critical issues facing today's modern Parliaments and Legislatures.
- Benefit from professional development, supportive learning and the sharing of best practice with colleagues from Commonwealth Parliaments together with the participation of leading international organisations.

During the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, there will also be a number of additional conferences and meetings including: 37th CPA Small Branches Conference; 6th triennial Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference; 64th CPA General Assembly; meetings of the CPA Executive Committee; and the Society of Clerks at the Table (SOCATT) meetings. This year, the conference will hold elections for the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), the CPA Treasurer and the CPA Small Branches Chairperson for new three-year terms.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE



The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) exists to connect, develop, promote and support Parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance, and implement the enduring values of the Commonwealth.

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

Confirmed as of 6 August 2019

2019

August

30 Aug to 5 Sept 50th CPA Africa Regional Conference, Zanzibar.

September

19 to 20 September Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference, Jersey

22 to 29 September 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC), Kampala, Uganda – including 37th CPA Small Branches Conference and 6th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference.

October

8 to 10 October 3rd Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Australia Regional Conference, South Australia.

November

18 to 21 November 38th CPA Australia and Pacific Regional Conference, South Australia.
November 2019 10th Commonwealth Youth Parliament, New Delhi, India - *final dates to be confirmed.*

2020

January 2020 25th Conference of the Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC), Canada - *final dates to be confirmed.*

The CPA calendar fosters the exchange of events and activities between CPA Regions and Branches. For further information on any events, please contact the CPA Branch concerned or the CPA Headquarters Secretariat. CPA Branch Secretaries are asked to send notices of CPA events to hq.sec@cpahq.org in advance of the publication deadline to ensure the calendar is accurate.

Further information can also be found at www.cpahq.org or by emailing hq.sec@cpahq.org.



CPA Parliamentary Fundamentals Programme

Enrolment is now open for the CPA Parliamentary Fundamentals Programme - on the general course for Commonwealth Parliamentarians or the course specifically developed for Members from CPA Small Branches. Programmes are accredited with McGill University, Canada (Small Branches programme) and the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa (General programme).

Programme includes: Online modules | Residential components | Teaching by world-class academics and parliamentary experts.

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CONTENTS: *THE PARLIAMENTARIAN*

2019: ISSUE THREE



PAGE 224



PAGE 226

The Parliamentarian:
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IEWS & COMMENT

Editor's Note
Page 188

**View from the CPA
Chairperson**
The CPA: Adding political value to
global affairs in the 21st century
Page 190

**View from the
Commonwealth Women
Parliamentarians (CWP)
Chairperson**
The Commonwealth: Adding
political value to global affairs in
the 21st century
Page 192

**View from the CPA Small
Branches Chairperson**
'The Commonwealth Effect?'
Page 194

**View from the CPA
Secretary-General**
Celebrating the Geneva
Conventions and building
respect for International
Humanitarian Law
Page 196

NEWS & PHOTOS

CPA Photo Gallery
Page 198-199

CPA News
News reports include:

- Preparations for 64th CPC Uganda
- CPA's Benchmarks highlighted at CP4D event in New York
- 44th CPA Caribbean Regional Conference and CPA Roadshow for Young People in Trinidad and Tobago
- CPA Trinidad and Tobago twinning with CPA Ontario
- 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference for CPA Australia and Pacific Regions in Queensland
- CPA Queensland Branch renews twinning with Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea
- CPA Branch visit to Belize
- CPA seminar in Bermuda
- 48th CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Guernsey
- 57th CPA Canada Regional Conference in Nova Scotia
- CPA Workshop in Zambia
- 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference in Pakistan

Pages 200-213

**Commonwealth Women
Parliamentarians (CWP)
News and Events**
Pages 248-251

FEATURE ARTICLES

**Fit-for-purpose
Parliament: Reviewing
and enhancing
parliamentary
effectiveness**
A case study of the
Parliament of New Zealand
Page 214

**Emerging security issues
for Parliamentarians
and the impact on
democracy**
The Deputy Speaker of the UK
House of Commons examines
increasing security issues for
Parliamentarians
Page 222

**Working together and
playing to our strengths
in the Commonwealth**
Jersey and the Commonwealth
Page 224



100th year of publishing
The Parliamentarian

PAGE 242

PAGE 264



MEDIA FREEDOM IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Commonwealth countries show leadership in defending media freedom

The first Global Conference for Media Freedom: View from the UK
Page 226

Defending media freedom in the Commonwealth

The first Global Conference for Media Freedom: View from Canada
Page 230

Policy Responses to Disinformation

A public health approach to the media
Page 232

Fake news and the phenomenon of 'no platforming'

The dilemma facing universities
Page 235

In Defence of Multilateralism

A View from the UK's Shadow Foreign Minister
Page 238

Putting Road Safety on the Commonwealth Agenda

The launch of the Commonwealth Road Safety Initiative
Page 242

Building A 'Future-Ready' Parliamentary Workforce

Professional Development Programme for Parliamentary Staff with McGill University in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
Page 244

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS

Parliamentary Report

Featuring parliamentary and legislative reports from Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Uganda, Australia and India
Pages 252-267

CPA Organisational Structure

CPA Executive Committee Members, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Committee Members and CPA Regional Secretaries
Page 268

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Disclaimer

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Contributors

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THE COMMONWEALTH: ADDING POLITICAL VALUE TO GLOBAL AFFAIRS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The Editor's Note

It was stated nearly fifteen years ago that "the Commonwealth will continue to be a major player on the global scene. The challenge now is to consolidate its inherited strength, the achievements of the past, and use these as a basis for planning towards a better and more fulfilling future. In doing this, we must strengthen the organisation and its structures, deepen our bonds, expand the scope of our activities, build more viable networks within the organisation and with other partners, and define our priorities clearly at all times. The strength of the Commonwealth lies in its origin, its tradition, its diversity, as well as its *modus operandi*."¹

This statement is still relevant today in 2019 and the Commonwealth continues to strive to make an impact on global affairs in the 21st century. The Commonwealth is the only international organisation that has members on every continent and region of the world and representation in every global forum. Since the 'modern' Commonwealth came into existence, the relevance and value of the relationships within the Commonwealth have been reaffirmed and consolidated. For the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), its membership expanded across the CPA's nine Regions and to over 180 Branches including national, state, provincial and territorial Parliaments and Legislatures.

The **Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Executive Committee, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP** (Cameroon) in her *View* article examines the role of the CPA in adding political value to global affairs in the 21st century.

In this issue of *The Parliamentarian*, the **Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP** (Malaysia) writes about the wider Commonwealth and its role in adding political value to global affairs in the 21st century through political will and operationalisation.

The **CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP**, (Malta) writes about 'The Commonwealth Effect' in his *View* article and its impact on the CPA Small Branches.

Following a recent visit to Rwanda to speak at the Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Conference, the **CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan**, celebrates the Geneva Conventions and building respect for International Humanitarian Law in the Commonwealth in his *View* article.

CPA news reports in this issue include: the CPA's Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures highlighted at Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) event in New York; 44th CPA Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Regional Conference and CPA Roadshow for Young People in Trinidad and Tobago; CPA Trinidad and Tobago Branch twinning partnership signed with CPA Ontario Branch; 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference for the CPA Australia and CPA Pacific Regions held in Queensland; CPA Queensland Branch renews twinning agreements with CPA Vanuatu and CPA Papua New

Guinea Branches; CPA Secretary-General highlights youth engagement and parliamentary successes during visit to CPA Belize Branch; CPA Parliamentary Seminar in Bermuda; 48th CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Guernsey; 57th CPA Canada and Caribbean Regional Conference in Nova Scotia; CPA Technical Assistance Programme Workshop in Zambia; and 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference in Pakistan.

This issue also reports on the historic publishing of *Erskine May* online: the most widely used guide to parliamentary procedure and a royal visit to commemorate the 20th anniversary of The Scottish Parliament.

This issue of *The Parliamentarian* features two papers from the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference for the CPA Australia and CPA Pacific Regions held in Queensland - **Rt Hon. Trevor Mallard, MP**, Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives provides a detailed case study of the Parliament of New Zealand as he examines 'fit-for-purpose Parliament: reviewing and enhancing parliamentary effectiveness'; and the Deputy

Speaker of the House of Commons in the UK Parliament, **Rt Hon. Sir Lindsay Hoyle, MP** writes about the emerging security issues for Parliamentarians and the impact on democracy.

Jersey's Minister for International Development, **Deputy Carolyn Labey** reports on an innovative project linking Jersey and Rwanda which demonstrates how the Commonwealth can connect vastly different places.

Commonwealth Parliamentarians gathered in London, UK for the first *Global Conference for Media Freedom* in July 2019 to scrutinise how freedom of expression is being stifled and barriers are preventing the functioning of an independent media in many countries. The global conference was co-hosted by the UK and Canada and is part of an international campaign to shine a global spotlight on media freedom and to increase the cost to those that are attempting to restrict it. In this issue of *The Parliamentarian*, **Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt, MP**, at the time UK Foreign Secretary, speaks about Commonwealth countries showing leadership in defending media freedom and **Hon. Chrystia Freeland, MP**, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, herself a former journalist, writes about defending media freedoms in the Commonwealth.

Continuing the theme of media freedom in the Commonwealth, **Professor Victoria Nash** from the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford looks at the policy responses to disinformation and asks if a public health approach is required. Historian and commentator on international affairs, **Victoria Schofield** writes about fake news and the phenomenon of 'no platforming'.

UK Parliamentarian, **Helen Goodman, MP** is the UK Shadow Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and she writes a defence of multilateralism.



**Jeffrey Hyland, Editor
The Parliamentarian,
Commonwealth
Parliamentary Association**

References: ¹ The Commonwealth in the 21st Century: Prospects and Challenges - 2005 Commonwealth Lecture delivered at the Institute of Education, University of London, Tuesday 15 March 2005 by HE Chief Oluogun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria



The Commonwealth Road Safety Initiative has recently launched with the aim of halving road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030 and leading advocate for the campaign, **Jim Fitzpatrick, MP** (United Kingdom) writes about the new initiative and how Members of Parliament can become involved.

The importance of building a 'future-ready' parliamentary workforce in the context of the Professional Development Programme for Parliamentary Staff with McGill University in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is observed by **Ms Inna Popova-Roche** (McGill University's School of Continuing Studies) and **Ms Bénite Dibateza** (CPA Headquarters Secretariat).

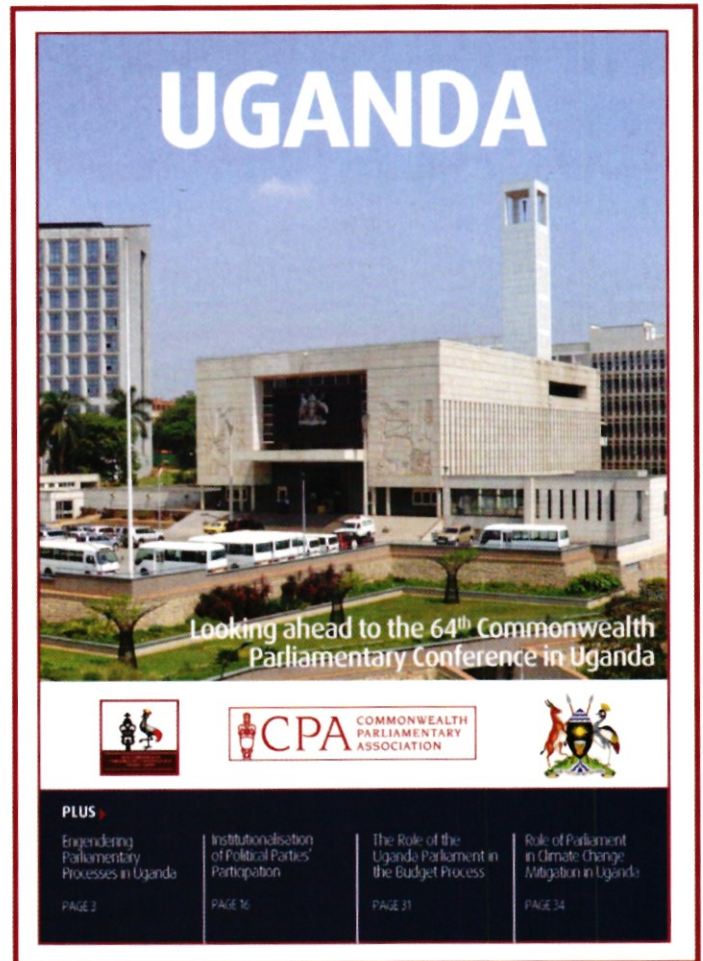
This issue of *The Parliamentarian* features news and reports of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) activities including the 12th CWP Regional Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic Region in Trinidad and Tobago on theme of 'Women in Leadership'; CWP Stepping Up Programme in New South Wales; CWP Canada Region meet in Nova Scotia to discuss inclusion and supporting women entrepreneurs; CWP Asia Region seminar discuss impediments and challenges facing women in politics in Pakistan; and Commonwealth Parliamentarians focus on gender sensitive scrutiny of legislation at Westminster Workshop.

The *Parliamentary Report* and *Third Reading* section in this issue includes parliamentary and legislative news from Canada Federal, Trinidad and Tobago, India, New Zealand, Uganda, United Kingdom and Australia Federal.

In 2019, *The Parliamentarian* is celebrating its 100th year of publishing and we will be publishing our centenary issue of the publication in early 2020 to mark 100 years since the first issue. If readers have any memories of the publication that they would like to share for an upcoming feature on the publication's centenary, then please contact the Editor.

We look forward to hearing your feedback and comments on this issue of *The Parliamentarian*, on the issues affecting Parliamentarians across the Commonwealth and to receiving your future contributions to this publication.

Jeffrey Hyland
 Editor, *The Parliamentarian*
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Above: Ahead of the one of the largest annual gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians at the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) hosted by the CPA Uganda Branch and the Parliament of Uganda from 22 to 29 September 2019 (inclusive of arrival and departure dates), the CPA Headquarters Secretariat are delighted to publish a supplementary magazine to this issue of *The Parliamentarian*. The Uganda supplement features articles by Members of Parliament in Uganda that examine many different areas of the political and cultural life of Uganda.



Left: The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has featured in a new book published by the History of Parliament Trust and St James's House Publishing celebrating the 70th anniversary of the 'modern' Commonwealth. The book covers the history of the Commonwealth as the 70th anniversary of the London Declaration in 1949 is marked as well as the role of the Westminster model in Parliaments and Legislatures around the modern-day Commonwealth.



THE CPA: ADDING POLITICAL VALUE TO GLOBAL AFFAIRS IN THE 21st CENTURY

View from the CPA Chairperson

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), now in its 108th year, is a network of over 180 national and sub-national Legislatures across the 53 nations of the Commonwealth representing a membership of around 17,000 Commonwealth Parliamentarians. We are committed to upholding Commonwealth political values, including the separation of powers, democracy and the rule of law, enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter, signed in 2013 by our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The CPA engages in standard setting, benchmarking for Parliaments and Parliamentarians, and provides an international platform for peer-to-peer learning and development. Through these activities and engagement with its Members, the CPA adds political value to global affairs in the 21st century.

CPA as an international organisation

For more than two decades, the CPA has explored ways and means in which it could change its legal status from that of a UK charity to an international body like the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and APF – *L'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*. Significant progress has been made on this change during my time as CPA Chairperson working with the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan.

The CPA General Assembly in 2016 asked the CPA Secretary-General to constitute a Working Group to look into the issue of status and this was established in 2017. After grappling with this constitutional issue for two decades, this Working Group comprising Members from the nine CPA Regions reached agreement that the organisation should be reconstituted as an international organisation. At the core of this thinking, was that the CPA wanted to ensure that it would retain its mandate which it has had since its founding in 1911 to represent Commonwealth Parliaments and Parliamentarians. In this regard, different models, such as *L'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*, were looked at as future models for the CPA.

The Working Group's report was unanimously endorsed by the 63rd General Assembly in November 2017 and the CPA Secretary-General and I opened discussions with Ministers at the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, immediately after the adoption of the report.

In 2018, the CPA was invited to submit a business case to the UK Government as to the grounds for reconstitution and this business case was approved by the CPA Executive Committee in November 2018 and then submitted to the UK Government in December 2018.

The UK Government is currently reviewing the business case and we are awaiting a response. The CPA Secretary-General has this year written to every Branch of the Association providing a briefing



**Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka,
MP, Chairperson of the CPA
Executive Committee and
Deputy Speaker of the National
Assembly of Cameroon**

on what I have set out so that everyone is informed on the reasons for the requested change and as CPA Chairperson, I am appealing to our respective Parliaments and Governments to get engaged in the process by appealing to the UK Government to deal with the matter as soon as possible.

Promoting gender equality in Parliaments

I would now like to turn to the valuable work done by the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) network. The CWP Chairperson is Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP from Malaysia and the CWP celebrates its 30th birthday this year, having been founded in 1989. The CWP emerged from recognising the need to increase women's representation in political institutions and the importance of providing greater support to women

in Parliaments. The CWP seeks to encourage women around the Commonwealth to stand for election by removing the barriers to their participation. It also seeks to ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout all of the CPA's activities.

One of the key instruments for this work is the CWP Regional Strengthening Funds. These funds provide each CPA Region with support to undertake activities that strengthen women's position in politics. I am proud to say that the CPA Africa Region is one of the most active CWP regions in the network, and many Parliamentarians have participated in CWP programmes and activities in the CWP Africa Region.

I recently visited and addressed the CPA Tanzania Branch and Parliament of Tanzania where I noted that in Tanzania, over a third of the Parliamentarians – 36.7% – elected to the House are women. This means that Tanzania is achieving a level of women's representation that is greater than 166 other Parliaments in the world. On behalf of the entire CPA family, I congratulate the Government and people of Tanzania for this political will, not forgetting the women who brave the odds to come forward as candidates.

This is just one example of the many successes across the Commonwealth where the CWP and women's equality organisations are having an impact and change is taking place.

CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures

In November 2018, I attended an event in London to launch the updated *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures*. These pioneering CPA Benchmarks are one of the CPA's most important pieces of parliamentary strengthening work. The updated version plays a crucial role as we seek to further strengthen Parliaments and Legislatures in line with the aspirations of the Commonwealth Charter, the Sustainable Development Goals and the changing demands of our citizens.



The CPA has embarked on a two-year project to conduct CPA Benchmarks assessments with a number of its member Parliaments and I am delighted that already many CPA Branches have agreed to take part in this CPA Benchmarking exercise.

CPA Small Branches

I recently visited the Parliament of Malta at the invitation of the CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta where I heard about the work of the CPA Small Branches network, the development of the Small Branches Steering Committee and the focus on climate change which greatly affects our CPA Small Branches.

The CPA's focus on the CPA Small Branches has taken place since 1981 and it is one of the only global forums which provides this opportunity. The smallest of the CPA's Legislatures seek to meet the same expectations as larger Legislatures and the CPA Small Branches network recognises the central role of Parliament in meeting the challenges of some of the Commonwealth's smallest states.

CPC: 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

From 22nd to 29th September 2019, the CPA Uganda Branch and Parliament of Uganda will host the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary

Conference (CPC) with the CPA Headquarters Secretariat. The CPC – our annual flagship event – will bring together over 500 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth for this unique conference and networking opportunity and I hope to see many Members at the conference. The CPC offers the prospect of the coming together of the CPA's global membership to address the critical issues facing today's Parliaments.

You will be able to find more information about the 64th CPC at www.cpc2019.org and on the CPA website www.cpahq.org/cpahq/cpc2019.

Conclusion

I hope you will see that the CPA has been extremely productive and busy under my tenure. In order to continue our important work, I invite all of us as Parliamentarians and Legislators to come on board and be committed. We should not forget that as Members of Parliament, we have the mandate of the sovereign people, we are the voice of the voiceless and represent the hope and aspiration for many. We should therefore not lose sight of this when we are voting laws. Our legislation should be people-centered and we should make sure that international conventions are not just ratified but that the instruments of implementation are put in place in due time.

I look forward to engaging with you all in making the CPA an inspiring platform for Commonwealth Parliamentarians worldwide.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Chairperson commends the work of the CPA Small Branches network during a visit to Malta

The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Executive Committee, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon has commended the work of the CPA Small Branches network during a visit to the Parliament of Malta from 13 to 16 May 2019. The CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta welcomed the CPA Chairperson to the Parliament of Malta.

The CPA Small Branches Chairperson briefed the CPA Chairperson on the various activities carried out by the CPA Small Branches network, the development of the Small Branches Steering Committee, the preparation of the climate change toolkit for CPA Small Branches and the outcomes of the CPA Small Branches Workshops. The CPA Small Branches Chairperson also referred to the establishment of the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC) and the updating of the *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures*, which he chaired. The Deputy Speaker of the Malta House of Representatives, Hon. Claudette Buttigieg, MP and Ray Scicluna, Clerk of the House, were also present.

The CPA Chairperson was received by the President of the Republic of Malta, His Excellency George Vella at The Palace, Valletta.

The CPA Chairperson also met with the Maltese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, Hon. Carmelo Abela, MP to discuss strategies to add value to communities through a more sustainable, prosperous, fair and safe future for the Commonwealth.

The Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee was accompanied by Marie Rose Ada Owona epse Nguini Effa, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Cultural, Social and Family Affairs of the National Assembly of Cameroon.



Images: Parliament of Malta / Malta Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Office of the President of Malta.

THE COMMONWEALTH: ADDING POLITICAL VALUE TO GLOBAL AFFAIRS IN THE 21st CENTURY

View from the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson

Introduction

The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the Commonwealth with 'A Connected Commonwealth' chosen as a theme.

According to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland, QC: *"In celebrating 70 years of the Commonwealth we recall with pride and satisfaction the impressive record of impact and achievement which have brought sustainable development to the people of our diverse family of nations, with ever more inclusive progress and prosperity. Programmes such as the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda on Trade and Investment, and the Commonwealth Blue Charter on ocean governance, are examples of the recent agreement by our 53 member nations to collaborate in new ways in response to the current needs of our countries and communities."*

As rising generations respond afresh and build together in the renowned Commonwealth spirit of goodwill, we can be assured that through the next 70 years and beyond this great family will rise to even greater levels of mutual support, conscious as always that independence and interdependence go hand in hand for the people and nations of a connected Commonwealth."

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 53 independent and equal sovereign states that span across Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and the Pacific. The earlier history of the 'modern' Commonwealth can be traced back to 26 April 1949 when the London Declaration was signed and which marks the point at which the legacy of the British Empire was replaced with a partnership of equal and diverse member countries that share a set of principles and values.

The Commonwealth started with eight countries in 1949 to 53 in 2019. The two most recent countries to join the Commonwealth – Rwanda (a former Belgian colony) and Mozambique (a former Portuguese colony) which have no historical ties to the British Empire joined in 1995 and 2009 respectively.

Therefore, the Commonwealth became more multi-racial and multi-cultural, reflecting the more profound change as the organisation grew towards the diversity in the culture as well as the geographical spread. Furthermore, all Commonwealth members have an equal say – regardless of size or economic stature. Therefore, it ensures even the smallest member countries have a voice in shaping the Commonwealth.

Country leaders met during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2018, a biennial summit meeting where discussion typically surrounds issues affecting the Commonwealth and the rest of the world.

The Commonwealth Charter is a document that set out the governance arrangements, roles of principal Commonwealth agents, rights and responsibilities of members in that organisation. This Charter (and the *Harare Declaration, 1991*) initially touches on world peace, economic development, the rule of law, a narrowing of the wealth gap, an end to racial discrimination,



Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) and Member of the Parliament of Malaysia.

liberty regardless of race or creed and the 'inalienable right to free democratic processes'. The current charter has sixteen prescribed core values and principles as follows: *Democracy; Human rights; International peace and security; Tolerance, respect and understanding; Freedom of Expression; Separation of Powers; Rule of Law; Good Governance; Sustainable Development; Protecting the Environment; Access to Health, Education, Food and Shelter; Gender Equality; Importance of Young People in the Commonwealth; Recognition of the Needs of Small States; Recognition of the Needs of Vulnerable States; The Role of Civil Society.*

Interestingly, the Commonwealth Charter, not only, limits participation from the Executive side but also from Parliamentarians as stated in the preamble: *'Welcoming the valuable contribution of the network of the many intergovernmental, parliamentary, professional and civil society bodies which support the Commonwealth and*

which subscribe and adhere to its values and principles.'

Using foreign policy as an example, it is seen as the prerogative of the Executive branch. Parliamentarians could use their influence among their peers via soft powers that they have under the 'second-track' diplomacy platforms. Hence, these efforts would lead to constructive and positive opinion building that would be beneficial to all.

The values in the Charter were considered as the Commonwealth Unique Selling Proposition (USP) that set aside the organisation from others. According to the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Mr Akbar Khan, these values could drive discussions on global issues and provide policy at a time *"when the world is becoming more polarised."* In addition, the CPA Secretary-General also added that the Commonwealth was able to operate with limited resources that resulted in 'incredible work' and achievement.

The inner workings of the Commonwealth is based on two significant pillars, which are democracy and development. Under these two major pillars, the Commonwealth Secretariat runs eight programmes which consist of *Good Offices for Peace, Democracy and Consensus-Building, Rule of Law, Human Rights, Public Sector Development, Economic Development, Environmentally Sustainable Development and Human Development.*

Adding political value to global affairs in the 21st century

The Commonwealth has already added values in today's global affairs in the 21st century through its Charter. The Commonwealth Charter itself provides the fundamental values, that can be applied and embedded in the most contexts such as politics, the economy and social life. Through goodwill, friendship and historical ties, the Commonwealth has become the platform for cooperation without binding formal obligations. This provides a conducive environment to start a discussion, especially in sensitive matters, that will lead toward an enriching engagement.

In addition, according to Peter Osborne¹, he added that the attraction of joining the Commonwealth is that you do not become part of a system of triumph states, like NATO, nor are you giving away sovereignty to a bureaucratic system, like the European Union (EU). The Commonwealth is



TABLE 1: Political Will Definition and Operationalisation.³

Definition Component	Operationalisation	Assessment Targets
Sufficient set of decision makers	Sets of actors capable of approving, implementing and enforcing public policies	Institutions and factions.
With a common understanding of a particular problem on the formal agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of similar frame and terminology; Status as 'problem' on formal agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonality and convergence in statements of decision makers with regard to problems; Importance & prominence of decision makers discussing problems; Volume of discussion.
Is committed to supporting	Distribution and strength of specific decision-maker preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives and disincentives for political actors (institutional, electoral, and others); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocation of analytical resources; Credibility and obligation of statements (based on reputational costs); Positions of key constituencies (domestic and international) and accountability relationships; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bargaining mechanisms; Cultural characteristics and constraints.
A commonly perceived, potentially effective policy solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of similar frame and terminology; Avoidance of known sources of ineffectiveness; Capacity for policy effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonality and convergence in statements of decision makers with regard to proposed solution; Non-use of short-term 'fixes', knowingly ineffective policies and diversionary tactics; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding commitment; Inclusion of potentially effective sanctions and enforcement mechanisms; Implementation resources and support of implementers.

power should simply outflank the brute force of hard power, sidestepping rude compulsion and raw coercion through the influence of a wider set of ideas, preferences and behaviours.⁵

Another paradigm shift that can be considered is that the Commonwealth should be given ample power, especially when it comes to enforcing international norms. Traditionally, the Commonwealth relies on constructive engagements in order to solve problems. These approaches may or may not work in some cases. This Executive authority may provide the Commonwealth with the influence that it should have.

This Executive authority, also, would confer the much awaited trade privileges and economic policy among Members. The given authority also would chart the multilateral based discussion and interactions between the Commonwealth and other superpowers and global organisations. For example, the countries of Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia link the Commonwealth to the ASEAN organisation.

Apart from Commonwealth

a curiously, gentle, civilised way of viewing the world. While there is no formal trade agreement, the Commonwealth enables Prime Ministers and Trade Ministers to meet informally, which provides positive side effects for trade.

Nevertheless, relying on values is not enough. To embrace the changes in the 21st century, the Commonwealth needs a paradigm shift, especially on political will in order to deal with issues of globalisation, digitalisation, the industrial revolution and more. The definition of 'political will' can be classified into four areas namely a sufficient set of decision makers; with a common understanding of a particular problem on the formal agenda; a commitment to supporting decisions; and a commonly perceived, potentially effective, policy solution.

By looking at into the operationalisation and assessment of political will, it provides substantial guidance to steer through the complexity of international relations. Political will hence must be part of the equation for the Commonwealth to deal with global affairs in the 21st century.

In addition, the Commonwealth should be more stern towards Members' country performance, especially when it comes to the violation of sixteen values prescribed in the charter. No countries should be given leeway or take advantage of the organisation leniency – especially in the context of gaining fig-leaf of legitimacy. Developing Members' countries are encouraged to raise their standard of democracy, rights and governance.

The role of CHOGMs should be enhanced in order to add political values. This setting provides many smaller countries with a starting point to lobby for bilateral and multilateral trade and agreements. Thus, by enhancing the roles of CHOGMs, the Commonwealth could provide more to Members' countries to influence the position of more significant powers.

The Commonwealth is the soft power network of the future.⁴ The essence of soft power lies in the ability of a given political entity — a state or non-state actor — to induce other actors and entities in the international system to desire similar goals and outcomes to the initiating actor. Based on the sheer attractiveness of its composition, whether political, economic or cultural, soft

Parliamentarians being involved in the so-called track-two diplomacy, sports people could also contribute to assisting in foreign diplomacy through their participation in the Commonwealth Games and other sports events. Positive sports diplomacy most commonly refers to bringing hostile states closer together, but it may also be used to deepen political alliances or foster friendship and cooperation between states that are not mutually hostile.⁶

Conclusion

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association, a globalised collective of independent nations who possess shared values and international purpose still regarded as relevant when it comes to global affairs in the 21st century. Few countries are applying to join the organisation showing that it is still relevant. Therefore, the Commonwealth still matters in global politics and bringing 53 diverse nations together is more than worthwhile. By combining the existing values, political will and soft power, the Commonwealth has the unique potential to address complex challenges where other international bodies may have failed. By continuing the efforts strategically, it will propel the organisation to become politically and economically relevant.

References:

- ¹ *What is the point of the Commonwealth today?* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zghstg8>
- ² Post, Lori Ann, Amber NW Raile, and Eric D. Raile. 'Defining political will.' *Politics & Policy* 38, no. 4 (2010): 653-676.
- ³ *Ibid*
- ⁴ Rt Hon Lord Howell of Guildford. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/commonwealth-the-soft-power-network-of-the-future>
- ⁵ Nye, J.S. (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
- ⁶ Kobierecki, Michał Marcin. 'Sports diplomacy of Norway.' *International Studies. Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal* 20, no. 1 (2017): 131-146.



'THE COMMONWEALTH EFFECT?'

View from the CPA Small Branches Chairperson

In my three-year tenure as Chairperson of Small Branches of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), I have had the honour to work on a strategic plan, which for the first time, was aimed at giving a voice to the smallest of jurisdictions pertaining to the Commonwealth family, the largest community spanning all over the world. As an Officer of the CPA, this has also given me the opportunity to experience the work of the CPA and its affiliates first-hand, moreover as a Member of the CPA Executive Committee, as well as a representative of the CPA in other international fora, where my perspective regarding the role of the CPA in the global scene has evolved in ways I never expected.

I cannot but consider this evolution to positively contribute to the work of the CPA, as the aims of the Commonwealth, and its parliamentary arm go well beyond the politics we discuss in our respective chambers which are too often limited to our country's domestic affairs and rarely considered in a wider regional or global context. The true value of politics boils down to understanding the needs and fulfilling the aspirations of our citizens, not least of the underprivileged who are often unrepresented. Our work within the Commonwealth and more specifically within the CPA can help to align our efforts throughout the Commonwealth.

My role as Chairperson of the CPA Small Branches for the past three years has deepened my understanding of this. Too often we observe that the work of international organisations is tailored to the circumstances of much larger jurisdictions whose experience and resources are much more vast than of those which are either much smaller or still developing.

“The future of the Commonwealth, and its role on the global scene, has been discussed in various fora in the past years, and in a post-Brexit scenario I believe that such debate will only intensify and become more relevant. Added to this, one also needs to consider the growth of other markets such as China, India and Africa.”



**Hon. Angelo Farrugia,
MP, Chairperson of the
CPA Small Branches and
Speaker of the House of
Representatives of the
Parliament of Malta.**

In my role I saw the possibility to address this anomaly at least within the CPA, i.e. by developing a strategy aimed specifically at the CPA Small Branches, who would otherwise risk being left behind. This has now started to shift in order to give the smallest the voice they have been striving for.

In my research I have come across a concept which tied the Commonwealth to global affairs, 'The Commonwealth Effect'. Albeit limited to the economic sphere, this is the first and most notable attempt to assemble a comprehensive data set on trade and investment relationships within the Commonwealth, made in the late 1990s by *Lundan and Jones (2001)*. In a paper entitled "The 'Commonwealth Effect' and the Process of Internationalisation", they set out to analyse the significance of a 'Commonwealth Effect' on trade and investment. They concluded that there is an overall tendency for high levels of intra-Commonwealth trade

and investment, even when factors such as regional trade agreements or geographical proximity are considered.

The future of the Commonwealth, and its role on the global scene, has been discussed in various fora in the past years, and in a post-Brexit scenario I believe that such debate will only intensify and become more relevant. Added to this, one also needs to consider the growth of other markets such as China, India and Africa.

When the 'modern' Commonwealth was born in 1949, the economic ties that linked Britain and its former colonies were strong. Indeed, while there may have been debate at the time about what sort of political association would befit the changing world order, the trade and investment links across the Commonwealth were taken for granted. Yet, during the 1950s and 1960s, economic links between Commonwealth countries began to weaken, not least because of the winding down of Commonwealth preference in British trade. The emergence of new engines of economic growth around the world and a new globalised regime of trade preferences followed soon after and the relative importance of the Commonwealth as a trading bloc began to fall away. In recent years, as Commonwealth countries such as India, Nigeria, South Africa, Malaysia and Trinidad and Tobago have developed rapidly, considerably overhauling their trading profiles, this trend has continued, securing economic growth in less developed areas.

Although its members were now independent states, the association provided an important vehicle to formalise and underpin the networks, commonalities and shared values that had blossomed in colonial times. In an era of relatively few international associations, the Commonwealth pioneered international cooperation at the political level, promoting democracy, human rights and sustainable development. Yet, since the late 1980s, changing geopolitical realities and the growth of



other multilateral political bodies have led some commentators to argue that the Commonwealth has lost some of its political salience.

Despite the changing face of global trade and an apparent decline in the Commonwealth's relevance as a trading bloc, there is considerable evidence that intra-Commonwealth economic links remain strong. The Commonwealth is a way of nations staying in touch without binding formal obligations, but rather through goodwill, friendship and historical ties. It is not a formal group like the European Union and allows instead for a relaxed and enriching meeting of minds and cultures. One must also keep in mind that although the economy is a good source of political value and is forward-looking, with the development of online cryptocurrency and the blockchain trend, the Commonwealth and the CPA must not disregard its roots and its starting point.

Although the economic trends and figures appear positive on paper, we should be mindful about our policies – ensuring that our citizens have a life of good quality; access to clean water and nutritious food, the eradication of poverty, safeguarding the environment and similar basic human rights should remain at the heart of our priorities. Economic progress should not come to the detriment of the citizens' quality of life. The Commonwealth must not seek to remain grounded and strive towards improving the citizens' lives in the direst of circumstances.

One should also put into practice the many initiatives put forward by the Commonwealth in order to follow through many pledges that member countries agree to on paper. One initiative which comes to mind is this year's Commonwealth Day theme 'A Connected Commonwealth' which encourages collaboration to protect natural resources and the environment. With the adoption in 2018 of the *Commonwealth Blue Charter*, of the ocean which connects so many member countries, and which we, as CPA Small Branches, were on point by organising a CPA Climate Change Workshop back in November 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya in collaboration with UNEP. If one simply reads the Strategic Plan of the Commonwealth Secretariat drafted in 2017, as an organisation it states that it is: *"A voluntary association of independent and equal sovereign states. Its special strength lies in the combination of its diversity and shared inheritance. Its members are bound together by respect for all states and peoples; by shared values and principles; and by concern for the vulnerable."*

This is a clear instruction which should keep our work grounded and where our roots are set – the needs of our peoples. Its values of democracy, development and diversity bind its members together, and provide a common ground to help each other. Although the Commonwealth can be considered a soft power, we should use it to influence the external environment and emerge as a global force for good, beyond economic ties and trade agreements.

I firmly believe that the community we are part of has a strong future. We are no longer in a world of warring empires. The world has become more inter-connected, where relationships, such as those promoted by the Commonwealth, really matter. I believe that the Commonwealth has evolved as an organisation which truly reflects the needs and aspirations of the 21st century citizens as it relies on friendship, a good sense of conscience and understanding.



Image: Commonwealth Secretariat.

The strength of the Commonwealth's commitment to its principles and values, including the promotion of human and political rights, has helped to give it a substantial and distinctive role in the international community. We welcome the fact that the Commonwealth continues to attract interest from potential new members and see advantages in greater diversity and an extended global reach for the Commonwealth. However, it is always crucial that the application process be rigorous and that any new members adhere to its principles and values.

History will show whether the Commonwealth will rise to the occasion and seize the opportunities to truly act as a global player beyond economic terms.



Image: Parliament of Malta.

The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Small Branches, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the Malta Parliament met with the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Dr AK Abdul Momen in Malta when they discussed a wide range of Commonwealth and CPA issues.



CELEBRATING THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS AND BUILDING RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: A COMMONWEALTH PERSPECTIVE

View from the 7th CPA Secretary-General

What is international humanitarian law?

International humanitarian law (IHL) is a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare. International humanitarian law is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict. International humanitarian law is part of international law, which is the body of rules governing relations between States.

A major part of IHL is contained in the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and nearly every State in the world has agreed to be bound by them. The domestic implementation of certain provisions of the Geneva Conventions and their 1977 First Additional Protocol is a legal obligation accepted by States.



Mr Akbar Khan
Secretary-General of
the Commonwealth
Parliamentary Association

becomes a party to international treaties and they can use parliamentary procedures to ask their government why the State has not yet signed and ratified or acceded to a treaty. If the State has signed but not ratified a treaty, Parliamentarians can initiate legislation to submit a Bill on the matter; Parliamentarians can lobby government to become a party to international instruments; and they can try to ensure that when the State does become a party to an international treaty, it does so without reservations or declarations that are contrary to the 'object and purpose' of the instrument. There is also a role for reviewing and narrowing, or removing previous reservations in previous international instruments.

In many Commonwealth jurisdictions which follow the 'dualist' notion of receiving international law¹, it is necessary for Parliament to adopt national legislation

to bring the treaty into force or to bring domestic law into line with the international obligations.

This is an area where Parliamentarians have a huge opportunity to improve the legislation and a responsibility to ensure the treaty

The role of Parliamentarians in effectively implementing national criminal sanctions

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an international community of around 180 Commonwealth Parliaments, Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff committed to deepening democratic governance through the promotion of Commonwealth values such as democracy, rule of law, human rights, international peace and security, good governance.

The CPA, for example, played a key role in the establishment of the Commonwealth Latimer House Principles on the separation of powers which highlights the importance of the separation of powers between the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary to ensure effective governance and democracy. The Commonwealth Latimer House Principles provide guidance on the role of the separation of powers in the Commonwealth, its effectiveness in providing democratic governance and the role of civil society.

All of these values are relevant to the role of IHL today. The implementation of IHL promotes and upholds a rules-based international system in which the proper implementation of and compliance with, IHL is an important part of that system. Therefore, the implementation of IHL goes directly to promoting the rule of law and good governance, and contributes to international peace and security.

In most jurisdictions, the Executive is primarily responsible for IHL matters which includes becoming party to international treaties, proposing related implementing legislation and giving effect to such laws. Nevertheless, the Legislature has an important role in many of these measures and the Executive must work together with Parliaments and Parliamentarians to help ensure that IHL is properly implemented to give effect to their State's international obligations.

What can Parliamentarians do?

Commonwealth Parliamentarians play an important role in whether a State

“Commonwealth Parliamentarians play an important role in whether a State becomes a party to international treaties and they can use parliamentary procedures to ask their government why the State has not yet signed and ratified or acceded to a treaty. If the State has signed but not ratified a treaty, Parliamentarians can initiate legislation to submit a Bill on the matter; Parliamentarians can lobby government to become a party to international instruments; and they can try to ensure that when the State does become a party to an international treaty, it does so without reservations or declarations that are contrary to the ‘object and purpose’ of the instrument.”



'Commonwealth Parliamentarians should play a key role in supporting international humanitarian law' says Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretary-General at Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Conference in Rwanda

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Mr Akbar Khan has stressed that Commonwealth Parliamentarians should play a key role in the implementation of international humanitarian law in a global context. The CPA Secretary-General said: "The CPA is a community of Commonwealth Parliaments, Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff committed to deepening democratic governance through the promotion of Commonwealth values such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights, international peace and security and good governance as enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter. The implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) promotes and upholds a rules-based international system, in which the proper implementation of and compliance with IHL is an important part of the system. The implementation of IHL goes directly to promoting the rule of law and good governance, and its role in contributing to international peace and security, and so Parliamentarians have a key role to play.

"In practice, Commonwealth Parliamentarians must ensure that national judicial authorities have the required legislative basis to investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators while ensuring adequate penalties and judicial guarantees are respected. In Commonwealth countries, such matters are frequently covered in Geneva Conventions Acts and/or in International Criminal Court Acts."

The CPA recognises the significant role of Parliamentarians in working with the Executive and others to promote IHL and to ensure its effective implementation. This requires Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to be well-informed and consequently, the CPA has been working with the British Red Cross to develop a number of joint projects for Commonwealth Parliamentarians – including a handbook on International Humanitarian Law for Commonwealth Parliamentarians and Parliaments.

The CPA Secretary-General was speaking at the 5th Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) held from 10 to 14 June 2019 at the Kigali Convention Centre in Rwanda. The conference was held on the theme of 'Celebrating the Geneva Conventions and



Images: ICRC Rwanda / CPA Headquarters Secretariat.

building respect for IHL: A Commonwealth Perspective' in the light of both the 70th anniversaries of the Geneva Conventions and of the 'modern' Commonwealth in 2019.

The conference partners included the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Rwanda Red Cross and the Commonwealth Secretariat. The CPA Secretary-General also chaired a working group in the margins of the conference on IHL engagement with Parliamentarians with the outcomes reported back to the main conference. The keynote address was given by Hon. Johnston Busingye, Minister for Justice of Rwanda and key topics discussed at the conference included: *Addressing serious violations of IHL: national and international measures; the role of National IHL Committees in upholding IHL; Engagement with the judiciary and with Parliamentarians on IHL.*

During his visit to Rwanda, the CPA Secretary-General also visited the Parliament of Rwanda and CPA Rwanda Branch where he met with the Chairperson of the CPA Rwanda Branch Executive Committee, Hon. Senator Nyaghura Margaret, MP and Hon. Mutesi Anitha, MP. Rwanda is due to host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2020.

is faithfully incorporated into national law and that national laws are compliant. There may be minor or significant changes to existing domestic law and Parliamentarians have a role to play in scrutiny Committees to ensure compliance. In practice, Parliamentarians must ensure that national judicial authorities have the required legislative basis to investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators while ensuring adequate penalties and judicial guarantees are respected. In Commonwealth jurisdictions, such matters are frequently covered in Geneva Conventions Acts and/or in International Criminal Court Acts.

Although the responsibility for adopting appropriate legislation

and regulations, where required, lies with the Executive Branch and the different Ministries concerned, Parliamentarians can request information from their governments on the status of adoption and implementation. Parliamentarians can also help to ensure that such legislation is kept up-to-date.

Practical Measures to Ensure Implementation

Parliamentarians may be asked to approve financial resources for a national action plan which might include costs for training the armed forces and security bodies or educating the wider public in schools and



VIEW FROM THE CPA SECRETARY-GENERAL

colleges. The courts also require resources to play their part and to help ensure that the rule of law is upheld in all circumstances.

States should spread knowledge of IHL as widely as possible and this will have a financial implication; dissemination must start in peacetime so that the principles are embedded. Parliamentarians can ask Ministries what has been done to comply with the dissemination obligations.

Encouraging National Implementation

Parliamentarians can request the establishment of a National IHL Committee to advise the government on disseminating and implementing IHL.

In the United Kingdom, the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law is an interdepartmental body with a mandate to consider implementation of IHL instruments and encourage dissemination. As in many jurisdictions, the national Red Cross Society is a member of the United Kingdom National IHL Committee. This is by virtue of its special auxiliary and IHL roles.

IHL Committees can also undertake useful initiatives. A good example is the undertaking of a study on the jurisdiction's implementation of IHL at a national level. Another useful action is to establish contacts with other national IHL Committees and share good practice and experiences. This can include sharing of legislative and other measures to address serious violations of IHL.

Conclusion

As the representative centre of any democracy, Parliament and Parliamentarians can play an essential role in advocating and legislating for IHL. Parliamentarians can support efforts to ensure IHL is faithfully implemented given their role as political leaders and representatives of the people.

Parliamentarians can establish All Party Parliamentary Groups to encourage strategies toward implementation. A very important and often unnoticed role that Parliamentarians can play is to uphold the neutral character of IHL. Parliamentarians can do this by working across parties and by approaching IHL issues on an all-party basis. This will help to avoid politicising IHL and contrasts with other areas of law.

Parliamentarians can support national laws that implement international instruments and also support the setting up of national IHL committees. They can encourage the appointment of a focal point in Ministries for national programmes to help build capacity and mainstream IHL and use parliamentary speaking privileges to highlight IHL at home or abroad.

Parliamentarians can use parliamentary oversight bodies such as Select Committees to hold government accountable for IHL, which might not be a priority for the Executive, and to seek relevant briefings from experts to provoke constructive debate. Social media tools can be utilised to raise awareness of IHL and the resources that are available.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) recognises the significant role of Parliamentarians in working with the Executive and others to promote IHL and to ensure its effective implementation. This requires Parliamentarians and their staff to be well-informed. The CPA Headquarters Secretariat is working with the British Red Cross to develop a *Handbook on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for Commonwealth Parliamentarians* which we hope will be published later this year.

Mr Akbar Khan
7th Secretary-General
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

This View article is based on a presentation made by the CPA Secretary-General to the 5th Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) held from 10 to 14 June 2019 at the Kigali Convention Centre in Rwanda.

References:

¹ Dualists emphasise the difference between national and international law, and require the translation of the latter into the former. Without this translation, international law does not exist as law. International law has to be national law as well, or it is no law at all. If a State accepts a treaty but does not adapt its national law in order to conform to the treaty or does not create a national law explicitly incorporating the treaty, then it violates international law. *Source: Wikipedia.*

Below: Visiting Parliamentary Clerks from the Parliaments of India; Israel; Ontario, Canada; and Western Cape, South Africa participated in a Professional Development Programme organised by the UK Parliament's Overseas Office and received their certificates from Dr John Benger, Clerk of the UK House of Commons.



Below: The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Mr Akbar Khan met with Mr Tahir Hussain, Secretary of the National Assembly of Pakistan and CPA Pakistan Branch Secretary and Mr Syed Shamooh Hashmi, Joint Secretary, International Relations and Public Relations at the Parliament of Pakistan and CPA Asia Regional Secretary during their visit to the United Kingdom to discuss the CPA's work across the Commonwealth and in the CPA Asia Region and parliamentary strengthening opportunities for the National Assembly with specific reference to the CPA Parliamentary Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures.



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association CPA Photo Gallery



Above: The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Mr Akbar Khan met with a parliamentary delegation from Pakistan headed by Hon. Rehana Laghari, Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh. The parliamentary delegation visited the CPA Headquarters Secretariat in London, UK during a visit to the United Kingdom Parliament. The delegation from Sindh included Members of the Provincial Assembly – Hon. Rana Ansar, MPA; Hon. Syeda Marvi Faseeh, MPA; Hon. Rabia Azfar Nizami, MPA; Hon. Naseem Rajper, MPA. The delegation was joined by a Member of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Hon. Ayesha Bano, MPA. The delegation discussed the work of the CPA in the Asia Region. The Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh established the Sindh Women's Parliamentary Caucus (SWPC) and so the delegation was also briefed on the work of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) in promoting gender equality in Parliaments and Legislatures.



Above: The CPA Falkland Islands Branch have benefited from a three-day programme of work, that included meetings, practical sessions and peer to peer discussions on the role of Public Accounts Committees (PAC). The PAC Workshop brought together experts from across the United Kingdom and the Crown Dependencies as well as various stakeholders across the Falkland Islands, including Government departments and the Legislative Assembly and was facilitated by the CPA UK Branch.



Left: The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with Hon. Alison Xamon, MLC from the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia at the CPA Headquarters Secretariat in London to discuss the Member's campaigns to raise awareness on mental health and suicide prevention and the role that Parliament and Parliamentarians can play in these important issues.



Right: Hon. Kate Doust, MLC, President of the Legislative Council of Western Australia and CPA Western Australia Branch President visited the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Headquarters Secretariat to meet with the CPA Director of Operations, Mr Jarvis Matiya to discuss the CPA's work in parliamentary strengthening for Australian State Parliaments and the CWP's work in gender equality.

Below: The CPA Vice-Chairperson, Hon. Alexandra Mendès, MP (Canada Federal) and the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan meet Commonwealth Parliamentarians at a Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) panel event in New York, hosted by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations. See page 201 for full report.

Below: The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan met with Members of the 64th CPC Organising Committee from the Parliament of Uganda during his visit to Rwanda for the 5th Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on International Humanitarian Law (IHL).



Preparations continue for 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Uganda

Preparations are well underway for one of largest annual gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians at the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) hosted by the CPA Uganda Branch and the Parliament of Uganda in September 2019. The annual flagship event will bring together over 500 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth for this unique conference and networking opportunity. The CPC offers the prospect of the coming together of the CPA's global membership to address the critical issues facing today's Parliaments.

Ahead of the 64th CPC due to be held in September this year, the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Mr Akbar Khan paid a visit to Uganda to see the Parliament of Uganda's preparations. The CPA Secretary-General met with the CPA Uganda Branch Representative for CPA Africa Region and also the Vice-Chairperson of the 64th CPC Organising Committee, Hon. Jalia Bintu as well as Hon. Paul Amoru, the Chairperson of the Media and Publicity Subcommittee, Members of the Parliament of Uganda and parliamentary staff.

The CPA President Designate (2018-2019), Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, Speaker of the Uganda Parliament hosted a special breakfast meeting for Commonwealth High Commissioners in Uganda to brief them on preparations for the 64th CPC and to call upon High Commissioners to strengthen collaborations with the Parliament of Uganda for a fruitful conference. The conference in



Kampala will be held on the theme of: *'Adaption, engagement, and evolution of Parliaments in a rapidly changing Commonwealth'*.

During the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, there will also be a number of additional conferences and meetings including: 37th CPA Small Branches Conference; 6th triennial Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference; 64th CPA General Assembly; meetings of the CPA Executive Committee; and the Society of Clerks at the Table (SOCATT) meetings.

Please visit the official conference website www.cpc2019.org and the CPA website www.cpahq.org/cpahq/cpc2019 for further information.

Commonwealth Foreign Ministers re-affirm commitment to Commonwealth Charter values and principles

The 70th anniversary of the Commonwealth was celebrated when Commonwealth Foreign Ministers representing the governments of its member countries met in London, United Kingdom on 10 July 2019 and reaffirmed their commitment to the 'core values and principles' of the Commonwealth Charter. The Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (CFAMM) was chaired by the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt, MP in his capacity as current Commonwealth Chair-in-office alongside the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland, QC.

Many Commonwealth Parliamentarians including Hon. Dr Richard Sezibera, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda; Hon. Carmelo Abela, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion of Malta; and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and UN attended the meeting.

The Commonwealth Foreign Ministers released an affirmation to mark the 70th anniversary of the Commonwealth following the meeting which draws upon declarations made by Commonwealth



leaders through seven decades and concludes: *"We commit with renewed confidence and determination to work towards deepening the impact that the connected Commonwealth brings to our world. In doing so, we affirm our core principles of consensus and common action, mutual respect, inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, legitimacy, and responsiveness. Working together with common purpose, our determination is to build a better and brighter world for the good of all our people."*



CPA's Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures highlighted as key tool in achieving SDG 16 at Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy panel event in New York

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* have been highlighted as an important tool in the pursuit of achieving 'peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development' outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 16 at a Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) panel event in New York, hosted by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations.

The CP4D panel event in New York gave attendees the opportunity to share their experiences of how Parliamentarians have contributed to SDG 16 and to identify the value of the CPA Benchmarks in measuring parliamentary performance and effectiveness. Effective Parliaments are one of the principal institutions of any functioning democracy and they are central to the attainment of SDG 16, the development agenda and all of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

The first of two moderated panel sessions on a *Parliamentarian's View of the CPA Benchmarks* was chaired by the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan who said: "The pioneering *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* is one of the CPA's most important pieces of parliamentary strengthening work as we seek to further strengthen Parliaments and Legislatures in line with the aspirations of the Commonwealth Charter, the SDGs and the changing demands of our communities. The focus on measuring impact and the need to demonstrate the effectiveness of Legislatures is critical at a time of increased scrutiny of Parliaments and of Parliamentarians and the CPA *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* provide a key tool in assisting Commonwealth Parliaments to demonstrate their performance, increase their self-awareness and prioritise areas for development in the light of SDG 16."

The panel event gave attendees the opportunity to share their experiences of how Parliamentarians have contributed to SDG 16 and to identify the value of the CPA Benchmarks in measuring parliamentary performance and effectiveness. Panellists included CPA Members from Belize, Canada, Malaysia and the United Kingdom:

- Hon. Laura Tucker-Longworth, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Belize who spoke about the experience of utilising the CPA Benchmarks and how the process has assisted with parliamentary reform in Belize. She said: "The CPA Benchmarks provided us with a structure by which we could evaluate our methods of working in Parliament."
- Hon. Alexandra Mendès, MP (Canada Federal), CPA Vice-Chairperson gave the Canadian experience of using the original CPA Benchmarks and the important work of the Public Accounts Committee in providing oversight. The CPA Vice-Chairperson said: "Servicing citizens' is the guiding mantra to carrying out all oversight work of Public Accounts Committees and Supreme Audit Institutions."
- Hon. Wong Chen, MP (Malaysia) outlined the current state of parliamentary reform in Malaysia and the role that self-



assessment against the CPA Benchmarks had assisted the reform process. He said: "It's not about knowledge or capacity, it's about political will and the separation of powers."

- Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods, MP (United Kingdom) explained how the updated CPA Benchmarks could be used in established Parliaments like the UK and outlined the role of the CPA Benchmarks in promoting gender and more inclusive Parliaments. She said: "It's very important that the CPA Benchmarks remain a 'live' document that is used by all our member Parliaments as there is always room for improvement."

The CPA *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* provide Parliaments across the Commonwealth with a set of democratic standards and many of the CPA's 180 Commonwealth Parliaments have undertaken self-assessments using the CPA Benchmarks or have incorporated the CPA Benchmarks into their own parliamentary standards. Covering a comprehensive range of recommendations, the CPA Benchmarks propose guidelines in areas such as elections and candidate eligibility; political parties; parliamentary staff; legislative procedures; financial and budget oversight; transparency and integrity; diversity and gender sensitivity; and freedom of information.

The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) panel event brought together Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Parliaments, Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff as well as senior academics and representatives of UN and other international bodies. The event was opened by Ambassador James Roscoe, Head of Open Societies and Partnerships at the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations and Mr Martin Chungong, Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The panel event was held in the margins of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), which held its annual meeting from 9 to 18 July 2019, ahead of the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly and SDG Summit from 24 to 25 September 2019 in New York.

44th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region discusses the impact of globalisation and nationalism on Commonwealth Parliaments



and innovate strategies to meet the challenges of the present and the future and we must, in the context of the climate of the 21st century, make use of available technology to communicate to the public what is being done and how it affects them. This is where the CPA finds its purpose, to advance parliamentary democracy and strengthen models of governance."

Hon. Dr Keith Rowley, MP, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago spoke about the importance of parliamentary oversight in the democratic process and in holding the government to account and said: "In a world of inequalities and uneven development, the Commonwealth distinguishes itself as a family of nations which is less preoccupied with structure and hierarchy, and more concerned about performance and connectivity. In this divided world, lies our Association whose membership, regardless of gender, race, religion or culture, is united by communal interest, respect for the rule of law and the pursuit of positive ideals of parliamentary democracy." To read the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago's full speech at the regional conference please visit www.opm.gov.tt.

The Trinidad and Tobago Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has successfully hosted the 44th CPA Regional Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic (CAA) Region on the theme of 'Globalisation and Nationalism: Quo Vadis – Impacts on Commonwealth Parliaments'. The CPA Regional Conference saw over 60 delegates from across the Caribbean participate in the week-long conference from 15 to 19 July 2019 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The CPA Caribbean Regional Conference also focused on the pressing issues facing the region such as de-globalisation, climate change and population growth. The regional conference was attended by Speakers, Members of Parliament and guest delegates from across the region and the wider CPA community.

Senator Hon. Christine Kangaloo, President of the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago and Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago hosted the regional conference and they were joined at the opening ceremony by Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes, ORTT, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; Hon. Dr Keith Rowley, MP, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago; and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan.

During their opening speeches, the Caribbean leaders underscored the challenges faced by developing states in the region and urged delegates to use the topics selected for discussion to take workable solutions and best practice back to their jurisdictions.

The President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes spoke about the key role of Parliamentarians in the national life of democracies in the region and how public distrust of Parliamentarians had increased, making it vital that Parliaments work to increase public trust and engagement. The President said: "As small sovereign developing states, our resources and capacities are limited. The challenges we face are manifold and best tackled together by countries with a shared heritage. We have to conceive, plan

Senator Hon. Christine Kangaloo, President of the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago said: "The Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago is thrilled to host Commonwealth Parliamentarians at this year's regional conference. This regional conference allows us to gather as Parliamentarians to undertake two critical exercises – the first to renew and review our relationships with each other as Parliamentarians and the second to re-address and redefine our relationship with the outside world, whom we serve."

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan said of the main topic of the regional conference: "Today we are witnessing the pervasive forces of nationalism, perhaps the most prevalent now globally than at any point in the post-war period. The most immediate impact on Commonwealth Parliaments from the tension between 'nationalism and globalisation' is the persistent feeding of citizen's political distrust in the institution of Parliament to their daily lives.

It is therefore vital for Parliament as an institution and Parliamentarians as elected representatives to sit up and consider how they are going to respond to the serious concerns posed by rising nationalism in opposition to globalisation. In fashioning their response, Parliamentarians of all political stripes need to listen carefully and constructively to each other and to citizen's concerns and to take them into account in policy making." To read the CPA Secretary-General's speech at the opening of the regional conference please visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/sgspeeches.

A large number of Caribbean nations and territories were represented at the regional conference, including Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, St Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, St Lucia, and Turks and Caicos. In addition, the regional conference also included observers from Wales and Suriname.

The 44th CPA Regional Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic Region saw several other important events take place alongside the main conference including



the Annual General Meeting for the Regional Executive Committee, the 12th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic Region and the 15th Caribbean Regional Youth Parliament Debate.

The 15th Caribbean Regional Youth Parliament in Trinidad and Tobago saw young people aged 18-29 years from across the region come together to debate and experience parliamentary democracy in action. Caribbean Youth Parliamentarians discussed the global topic of 'Securing our borders to mitigate the effects of crime whilst observing our humanitarian obligations'. The Youth Parliament aims to foster an appreciation and understanding of the rules and procedures of parliament among the youth of the region.

Please turn to page 248 for a report on the 12th CWP Caribbean Regional Conference.

Young people encouraged to play a positive role in democracy by Commonwealth Parliamentarians at CPA Roadshow for Young People in Trinidad and Tobago

While in Trinidad and Tobago for the 44th CPA Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic (CAA) Regional Conference, the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan highlighted the positive role of youth engagement in democracy and Parliament at a CPA Roadshow for over 120 young people and representatives of youth organisations at City Hall in Port of Spain. The CPA Secretary-General spoke about the importance of youth engagement in the political process and the sharing of Commonwealth political values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter, especially with the 60% of the 2.4 billion population of the Commonwealth who are aged under 30.

The CPA Secretary-General accompanied Members of Parliament to the CPA Roadshow who spoke about their parliamentary roles and encouraging youth involvement in local and international politics. Senator Nigel de Freitas, Vice-President of the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago spoke of the CPA's 'fruitful relationship' with the Commonwealth members of the Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic (CAA) Region and he encouraged the young people to view themselves as the future drivers of development and peace.

Hon. Shamfa Cudjoe, MP, Minister for Sport and Youth Affairs in Trinidad and Tobago, encouraged the attendees to become more involved in local politics and spoke of how, although she felt inexperienced when she became the youngest MP in Trinidad and Tobago in 2010, she has since learned that Parliament is not only for seasoned debaters. The advent of technology, social media and live streaming of Parliament on the local Parliament channel meant that young people have no excuse to not know what is happening in their Legislature.

Hon. Shirley Osborne, MP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Montserrat spoke about the CPA's role in promoting gender equality through the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) network and representation for all as she fielded questions



from youth participants about the best entry points into politics and LGBT+ rights in the Commonwealth. The final guest speaker at the CPA Roadshow was Hon. Dr W. McKeeva Bush, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Cayman Islands, who has held a hugely successful Youth Parliament in the Cayman Islands linked to the islands' Commonwealth Day youth programme and actively encourages youth participation in local politics.

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

For more information and resource materials about the CPA Roadshows for young people please visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/cparoadshows.

CPA Trinidad and Tobago Branch and CPA Ontario Branch sign historic twinning agreement

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Trinidad and Tobago Branch and Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago have signed a historic twinning agreement with the CPA Ontario Branch and Legislative Assembly of Ontario in Canada. The twinning agreement will promote collaboration, cooperation and understanding for the mutual benefit of both Parliaments. Under the terms of this Agreement, the two Commonwealth Parliaments will actively work towards further developing relations through:

- Exchange of information regarding the work of the two Parliaments and on matters of common interest
- Training activities between the Parliaments that promote parliamentary development
- Pursuing research collaborations between Parliaments, allowing for the exchange of new ideas and perspectives to develop and enhance knowledge
- Sharing best practices in the areas of quality assurance and management services
- Exchange visits between the two Parliaments as a means of fostering links between Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff
- Meetings between representatives of the Parliaments at conferences or seminars which they attend.

The Agreement was signed by the Presiding Officers of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago and Joint Presidents of the CPA Trinidad and Tobago Branch - the President of the Senate, Senator Hon. Christine Kangaloo and the Speaker of the House, Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, MP - and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Canada and CPA Ontario Branch President, Hon. Ted Arnott, MPP (Member of the Provincial Parliament), at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago on 20th May 2019.

Speaker Arnott noted that the initiative will be centred on the principles of "co-operation, collaboration and understanding" and that the relationship could be tailored, flexible and practical, given that both jurisdictions are unique. He continued that twinning agreements are ideal vehicles for capacity-building, skills training and the strengthening of parliamentary practice and democracy. He said that MPs face a steep learning curve and a demanding schedule, but often lack formal training for the job concluding "twinning agreements can provide forums to develop capabilities."

Speaker Annisette-George enumerated past linkages between Trinidad and Tobago and Ontario such as the many Trinidadians going to Canada to serve as teachers in the educational system; the twinning of the cities of St Catherine's and Port-of-Spain; and of the partnerships between Brock University and the University of the West Indies. The Speaker of Trinidad and Tobago pointed out that the two Parliaments recognise they are partners, not clones, and had differences to be respected and tolerated. She saw the relationship as a sharing of experiences, skills and expertise to benefit and advance each other. She added that a marriage often involves two imperfect people who refuse to give up on each other and said "I commit that the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago refuses to give up on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario."



Images: Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago.

Senate President Kangaloo said that two out of every three immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago to Canada chose to settle in the Province of Ontario, with many, if not most, choosing to live in the city of Toronto. In 2012, former Governor-General of Canada, David Johnston had noted that some 100,000 people from Trinidad and Tobago live in Canada.

Senate President Kangaloo said that thousands of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and Canadians come together to celebrate the Caribbean Festival of Caribana in Toronto. "The truth of the matter, therefore, is that Trinidad and Tobago and the Province of Ontario have, in many ways, long been twinned. Today's ceremony may mark the twinning of our Legislatures, but the lives and the destinies of our peoples have long been inextricably intertwined and inseparably linked," she said. "Our historical and cultural indicators assure us that, as we work and live together, this endeavor, like all those of the past, will surely be immensely successful, and will add another important dimension to our shared destinies," she added.

The twinning ceremony was also attended by the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Hon. Rick Nicholls, MPP; the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and CPA Ontario Branch Secretary, Todd Decker; the Vice-President of the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago, Senator Hon. Nigel de Freitas; the Deputy Speaker of the House at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, Hon. Esmond Forde, MP; and the Clerk of the House at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago and CPA Trinidad and Tobago Branch Secretary, Ms Jacqueline Sampson-Meiguel.

Additional reporting by Paras Ramoutar in Trinidad and Tobago.



Commonwealth Parliamentarians from the CPA Pacific and Australia Regions focus on enhancing parliamentary effectiveness at 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in Queensland

Commonwealth Parliamentarians from the Pacific and Australia Regions of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) have attended the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference (POCC) at the Parliament of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia from 8 to 10 July 2019.

Hon. Curtis Pitt, MP, Speaker of the Queensland Legislative Assembly said: *"It was a great honour for the Queensland Parliament to host the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference (POCC). Each year, POCC is the annual peak event for Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in the CPA Australia and CPA Pacific Regions. It is an event where officers of the various Parliaments learn from each other and we strengthen the bonds between our respective Parliaments. In Queensland, we greatly value our membership in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The Queensland Parliament has strong twinning arrangements with Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu which have both been recently renewed. We were more than happy to roll out the welcome mat for this great occasion to ensure the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association fulfils its purpose in the CPA Australia and CPA Pacific Regions."*

The annual conference is for Presiding Officers (Speakers) and Clerks from Parliaments from the CPA Pacific and CPA Australia Regions and is hosted by a different Parliament or Legislature each year with the Queensland Parliament taking up the honour in 2019. The conference also saw the continuation of the successful twinning programmes for Parliaments in the two Regions with meetings taking place between twinning partners.

The keynote address for the conference was given by Rt Hon. Sir

Lindsay Hoyle MP, Deputy Speaker of the United Kingdom House of Commons (*please turn to page 222 to read a summary of this keynote*). Key topics on the agenda for the delegates included the role

of a Speaker in determining an Opposition; impressions of a newly elected Speaker; reviewing and enhancing parliamentary effectiveness; and the administration of Parliaments. The delegates at the POCC also discussed the CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures and measuring Parliaments effectiveness against them.

Conference papers revolved around many different themes with presentations delivered by a wide range of speakers. Guest speakers at the conference included former Parliamentarian at the Victorian Legislative Assembly, Professor Ken Coghill who spoke about the CPA Codes of Conduct for MPs.

There was a diverse range of Parliaments and Legislatures represented at the conference, with Presiding Officers and Clerks from Australia (both the Federal Parliament and the State Legislatures), the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Micronesia, New Zealand, Niue, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.



Image: Parliament of Queensland

CPA Queensland Branch renews its twinning with Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea

The Speaker of the Queensland Parliament and CPA Queensland Branch President, Hon. Curtis Pitt, MP has renewed twinning partnership agreements with two Commonwealth Parliaments in the CPA Pacific Region. The CPA Australia and CPA Pacific Regions have a long tradition of twinning partnerships between the Australian State Legislatures and Parliaments in the Pacific. In 2007, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association established the CPA Australia-Pacific twinning programme to foster greater cooperation and support between Parliaments from the CPA Australia Region and CPA Pacific Region. Under this programme, in 2009, the Queensland Parliament and the National Parliament of Vanuatu entered into their first twinning arrangement which was recently renewed. The Speaker of the Queensland Parliament and the Speaker of the Parliament of Vanuatu, Hon. Esmon Saimon, MP met in Port Vila, Vanuatu to sign a new Parliamentary Partnership Agreement.

Under that agreement which had since lapsed, the Queensland and Vanuatu National Parliaments committed to work actively towards developing friendly relations between the two Parliaments and the respective CPA Branches. A cornerstone of the arrangement has been regular staff exchanges and training activities that promote parliamentary development. Since 2009, each Parliament has shared learnings about parliamentary procedure including Committee processes as well as administration relating to security, information technology, and communications.

The Speaker of the Queensland Parliament thanked the Vanuatu



Image: Parliament of Queensland

Parliamentary Service for their generous hospitality during his visit to Vanuatu and for the support of the Australian High Commissioner to Vanuatu, Her Excellency Jenny Da Rin as well as the attendance of Stephen Andrew, MP (Queensland) and Alickson Vira, MP (Vanuatu) at the signing ceremony and said: *"This twinning agreement provides benefits to both Parliaments and the peoples that we serve."*

The CPA Queensland Branch also formalised a twinning partnership with the Parliament of Papua New Guinea and CPA Papua New Guinea Branch that was signed in the margins of the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference for the CPA Australia and Pacific Regions, held in Queensland. The programme helps to foster greater cooperation and support between the Australian and Pacific Parliaments. The Speaker of the Queensland Parliament was joined by the CPA Queensland Branch Secretary and Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie and Deputy Clerk, Mr Michael Ries.



CPA Secretary-General highlights good governance in Parliament and the positive role of youth engagement in the Commonwealth on a visit to Belize

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan has highlighted the advances made in establishing good governance and parliamentary democracy by the National Assembly of Belize during a visit to the CPA Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region member from 4 to 9 May 2019.

The CPA Secretary-General was welcomed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belize, Hon. Laura Tucker-Longsworth; and President of the Senate, Senator Hon. Lee Mark Chang before attending a series of parliamentary meetings to discuss the CPA's programmes for the upskilling of Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff and new developments in parliamentary strengthening in the Caribbean Region and in the wider Commonwealth.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belize, Hon. Laura Tucker-Longsworth said: *"I am delighted to welcome the Secretary-General and his team from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to Belize. We are working together to focus on the need for the Parliament to modernise and evolve to suit these modern times. The support of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the benchmarking exercise against international standards, developed through the CPA, has been invaluable to us."*

The CPA Secretary-General was received by Rt Hon. Dean O. Barrow, Prime Minister of Belize; Hon. Wilfred Elrington, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Mrs Kim Simplis Barrow, Special Envoy for Women and Children. The CPA Secretary-General also met with Ms Cynthia Williams, Executive Director of the National Women's Commission in Belize to discuss the work of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) in promoting equality in Parliament.

The CPA Secretary-General highlighted the positive role of youth engagement in democracy and stressed the importance of gender equality in Parliament at a series of CPA Roadshows for young people aged 11 to 18 at four schools in the capital, Belize City - Anglican Cathedral College (ACC); Edward P. Yorke High School; St Catherine Academy; and Wesley College. The CPA Secretary-General was accompanied on the CPA Roadshows by the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belize, Hon. Laura Tucker-Longsworth and the Clerk of Parliament, Mr Eddie Webster who spoke to students about the work of the National Assembly of Belize.

The CPA Roadshows for Schools and Universities provide an opportunity for young people to learn about the political values of the Commonwealth such as diversity, development and parliamentary democracy; to discuss issues of concern about the society in which they live; and to find out about the work of the CPA through their questions at the sessions. The CPA Secretary-General spoke about the importance of youth engagement in the political process and the sharing of Commonwealth political values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter, especially with the 60% of the 2.4 billion population of the Commonwealth who are aged under 30. The CPA Secretary-General also highlighted the empowerment of all women and girls in the Commonwealth to achieve gender equality as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 5.



The CPA Secretary-General said: *"I am delighted to visit Belize to launch the CPA Roadshow for young people for the first time here and to engage with local students on the values that unite the Commonwealth. The CPA's public engagement work across the Commonwealth and engaging young people in the democratic process by discussing the importance of the Commonwealth are key objectives of the CPA and our visit to Belize has emphasised this."*

The National Assembly of Belize is also engaging with the CPA Headquarters Secretariat in undertaking a self-assessment against the updated CPA *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures*. The CPA is currently implementing activities to encourage Commonwealth Parliaments to strive and uphold a high standard of parliamentary performance and the utilization of the CPA Benchmarks as a tool to provide Parliaments across the Commonwealth with assistance to strengthen their capacity to adhere to good governance principles.

This is part of a wider project, the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D), which is being led by Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) working with partners including the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), the CPA UK Branch and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF). The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy was launched during the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London, UK and the programme will work with Commonwealth Parliaments including Belize.

During his visit to Belize, the CPA Secretary-General was also briefed on the National Referendum that was held in Belize on 8 May 2019 on the question of whether to refer the longstanding legal territorial dispute between Guatemala and Belize to the International Court of Justice for resolution.

For images of the CPA Secretary-General's visit to Belize please visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/flickr.



Parliamentarians in Bermuda aim to strengthen parliamentary democracy at Commonwealth Parliamentary Association seminar

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has helped strengthen parliamentary practice and procedure for Members of the Parliament of Bermuda with a CPA Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar from 1 to 2 May 2019. The CPA seminar in Hamilton, Bermuda was held to enable current and recently elected Parliamentarians to gain a broader understanding of the principles of parliamentary democracy across the Commonwealth and to strengthen their skillsets.

The Parliament of Bermuda is made up of thirty-six elected Members in the House of Assembly and eleven appointed Senators in the Senate. It is located on a small island archipelago with a population of around 64,000 people that is a self-governing British Overseas Territory. Bermuda last held transparent, free and fair elections in 2017 with a 73% voter turnout which demonstrated the island's commitment to the democratic ideals enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter.

The CPA Bermuda Branch is one of the smallest Legislatures in the CPA's membership of over 180 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures. The CPA is the only Commonwealth body that works to strengthen small territorial Legislatures in the British Overseas Territories like Bermuda as well as working with larger national, state and provincial Legislatures.

The CPA Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar gave Members of the Parliament of Bermuda an excellent opportunity to learn about parliamentary practice and procedure and to gain a better understanding of the parliamentary system and democratic processes in other Commonwealth jurisdictions. The seminar was opened by Hon. Dennis Lister, JP, MP, Speaker of the Bermuda House of Assembly; Hon. Senator Mrs Kathy Lynn Simmons, JP, Attorney-General and Minister of Legal Affairs of Bermuda; and the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan.

Hon. Dennis Lister, JP, MP, Speaker of the Bermuda House of Assembly and CPA Bermuda Branch President said at the opening of the seminar: *"This CPA Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar is an example of the many benefits that are available to Parliaments within the Commonwealth. It's the mandate of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to develop, promote and support Parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance. We must continue to evolve a modern democracy so when future Parliamentarians look back at this time, they can clearly see the improvements we are making today."*

The CPA Secretary-General said: *"The CPA is pleased to partner with the Parliament of Bermuda to support the strengthening of democratic governance in one of the smallest Legislatures in our Commonwealth. The CPA Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar demonstrates the CPA's commitment to the CPA Small Branches in the Overseas Territories and to the mutuality of learning among CPA Members. We must always seek opportunities to strengthen Parliament, nurture public trust in the institution and build the capacity of its Parliamentarians through programmes like this CPA Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar."* Please visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/sgspeeches to read the full text of the Secretary-General's opening address.

The CPA Secretary-General also highlighted the work of the Parliament of Bermuda in developing the original CPA



Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures in 2006 and the ongoing engagement of the Parliament in this vital parliamentary tool. The Members of the Parliament of Bermuda heard from experts from across the Commonwealth at the CPA Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar including: the CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta; Hon. Shirley Osborne, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Montserrat; Mrs Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel, Clerk of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago; and Mr Paul Belisle, former Clerk of the Senate of Canada; as well as local Members and officials from Bermuda.

Members attended workshop sessions on a wide variety of topics including: *the Separation of Power and the relationship between the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary; Administration and Financing of Parliament; Parliament, Democracy and Civil Society; the role of Members of Parliament, Senators and Backbenchers; Practice and Procedure in the House; Parliamentary Committees; Ethics and Accountability of Members of the Legislature; and Parliament and Social Media: Is it a menace or benefit for Democracy and Parliament?*

During his visit to Bermuda, the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan also met with the Governor of Bermuda, John Rankin CMG and Hon. E. David Burt, JP, MP, Premier of Bermuda to discuss CPA parliamentary strengthening programmes in the Commonwealth.

Parliamentarians examine the impact of 'fake news' and media freedom at 48th CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Guernsey

Over forty Parliamentarians from more than thirteen Commonwealth countries and territories met in Guernsey to discuss the impact of 'fake news' and the media challenges for Parliamentarians and democracy. The 48th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference, was hosted by the States of Guernsey and CPA Guernsey Branch from 19 to 22 May 2019 in St Peter Port. Parliamentarians discussed the impact 'fake news' and digital disinformation on media freedoms in the Commonwealth and the importance of quality journalism in the reporting of Parliamentary proceedings and elections.

The regional conference was opened by the Bailiff of Guernsey and President of the CPA Guernsey Branch, Sir Richard Collas, Presiding Officer of the States Assembly and Parliamentarians were welcomed to the regional conference by Deputy Lyndon Trott, Chair of the CPA Guernsey Branch. Deputy Trott said: "We are very excited to have so many high-quality speakers with us in Guernsey and we are also pleased that as well as delegates from the CPA BIM Region, we have a large number of observers from other parts of the Commonwealth. It's a very relevant topic and I think our Guernsey meeting will showcase what is best about the CPA."

Guest speakers at the regional conference included Dr Victoria Nash, Senior Policy Fellow and Deputy Director of the Oxford Internet Institute at Oxford University; Rita Payne, Journalist and President Emeritus, Commonwealth Journalists Association; Professor Dr Horst Risse, Secretary-General of the German Bundestag; Victoria Schofield, Historian and Contributor to *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*; and Doug Wills, Managing Editor of *The Evening Standard* and *The Independent*. Other topics discussed included 'No-platforming' which is the practice of preventing someone from discussing their ideas by refusing them a platform either physically at an event or online via a website or social media.

Delegates also heard presentations on the CPA Headquarters Secretariat's roll-out to CPA Branches of self-assessment against the updated *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* and the CPA UK Branch's work on Commonwealth Election Observations. They were also briefed by the CPA



Headquarters Secretariat on preparations for the upcoming 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) due to take place in Uganda in September 2019. The CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta also attended the regional conference.

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) British Islands and Mediterranean Region held a meeting of the regional Steering Committee in the margins of the CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Guernsey at which Hon. Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods, MP (United Kingdom) was elected as the new CWP Steering Committee BIM Member, before she reported back to the delegates on CWP activities for the region. The regional conference also incorporated the CPA BIM Region's Annual General Meeting and a reception at Government House, Guernsey.

For feature articles by guest speakers at the CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference please turn to pages 232-237.

CPA UK seminar brings together key actors in fight against modern slavery

A seminar for Commonwealth Parliamentarians and legislative drafters has taken place at the Parliament of the United Kingdom from 26-29 March 2019, hosted by the CPA UK Branch. Organised as part of the CPA UK Branch's Modern Slavery Project, the seminar drew together some of the leading lawyers and practitioners working to bring an end to modern slavery-related crimes. In attendance were Parliamentarians at the forefront of reviewing and amending legislation and raising awareness of these issues in their constituencies.

The Legislative Drafting Seminar aimed to deepen Parliamentarians' knowledge of international standards and new developments in modern slavery and human trafficking law. It also examined how the process of passing legislation can be used to ensure it is effective, drawing on lessons learnt from the UK Modern Slavery Act and other legislation from around the world. Parliamentarians also spoke about introducing anti-trafficking legislative amendments and Bills that address modern slavery-related crimes.

Uganda Member of Parliament, Hon. Herbert Ariko, who has recently introduced an anti-slavery Private Member's Bill, said: "The CPA UK Modern Slavery Project has helped mobilise, create awareness and support efforts to expose the vice of slavery in the Commonwealth. We are privileged and honoured to be a key partner in this effort."

Legislatures represented at the Legislative Drafting Seminar included Bangladesh, Canada, Ghana, Hong Kong, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Turks & Caicos Islands, Uganda and the UK.





Strengthening legislative practices and parliamentary procedures on the agenda at 57th CPA Canada Regional Conference in Nova Scotia

Over 60 Commonwealth Parliamentarians from across the Canada Region recommitted to increasing parliamentary strengthening at the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Canada Regional Conference, which took place in Halifax, Nova Scotia from 15 to 19 July 2019. Delegates were welcomed to the CPA Canada Regional Conference by Hon. Kevin Murphy, Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislature and CPA Nova Scotia Branch President.

The CPA Canada Regional Conference was attended by Commonwealth Parliamentarians from the federal, provincial and territorial Legislatures of the region as well as Parliamentary Clerks who attended workshop sessions on a wide range of topics including: *Legislating for Children in Care; Carbon Tax and Climate Change; Forestry Practices for the 21st century and beyond; Representation: Identities, Equalities and Pluralities; the Notwithstanding Clause and Canada's Rights; Cannabis Legislation and Administration; the Impact of Negative Campaigning; and Dress Codes in Parliament.*

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan attended the 57th CPA Canada Regional Conference and encouraged Canadian Parliamentarians to learn more about the work of the CPA and the CPA's programmes for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff and updated Members on preparations for the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) due to be held in Uganda in September 2019. The CPA Secretary-General spoke about the updated *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* and also thanked Canadian Parliamentarians who have recently represented the CPA Canada Region on the CPA International Executive Committee.

The CPA Canada Regional Conference was also attended by



the CPA International Vice-Chairperson, Hon. Alexandra Mendès, MP (Canada Federal); Hon. Geoff Regan, Speaker of the House of Commons at the Parliament of Canada; and Hon. Yasmin Ratansi, MP, Chair of the Canadian Federal Branch of the CPA.

Ahead of the CPA Canada Regional Conference, the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Canada Regional Conference took place from 12 to 15 July 2019 in Nova Scotia. *Turn to page 249 for a full report of the CWP Canada Regional Conference.*

CPA Rwanda Branch welcomes new Members

The CPA Rwanda Branch has held its General Assembly and has welcomed 25 new Members into the association and elected new Members to Officer positions. Hon. Valens Muhakwa, MP was elected the Vice-Chairperson of the Rwanda Branch and Hon. Pie Niyezimana, MP and Hon. Emma Furaha Rubagumya, MP were elected new members of the Branch's Executive Committee.

Speaking at the CPA meeting that took place in the Parliament of Rwanda, the CPA Rwanda Chairperson, Hon. Marguerite Nyagahura, MP said that since its admission to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 2011, the Parliament of Rwanda and CPA Rwanda Branch has been very active and played an important role in CPA activities. She said that CPA Rwanda has been represented in many different meetings, seminars and conferences, and has contributed to sharing Rwanda's experiences and furnishing new Members of Parliament with information on the Commonwealth in general and the processes, procedures and practices of the CPA, in particular. She reiterated Rwanda's preparedness for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) scheduled to take place in Kigali on 2020.

In her remarks while opening the conference, the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies at the Parliament of Rwanda and CPA Rwanda Branch President, Rt Hon. Mukabalisa Donatille said that under such meetings, Members are able to think together and

forge the best way to promote the CPA's fundamental values which include human rights, international peace, rule of law, alleviation of



poverty, equal rights and representation for all citizens. She said: *"Our country remains full committed to implementing all those fundamental principles of CPA. Our government also ensures good governance through transparency and accountability. Since the Parliament of Rwanda joined the CPA, Members of Parliament have played a vital role in terms of parliamentary diplomacy and closer political cooperation through different regional, continental and global conferences, seminars and workshops."*

Under the CPA meetings in Rwanda, different presentations and discussions were made, all revolving around the functions and practices of the body and the Rwanda's objectives in joining the Association. Made up of Parliamentarians in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of Rwanda, the CPA Rwanda Branch is one of the CPA Africa Region's members.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association workshop for the Parliament of Zambia focuses on Parliaments' role in the scrutiny of international treaties and agreements

Parliamentarians from the Parliament of Zambia have benefited from a successful two-day workshop on the role of Parliament in ratifying international treaties and agreements, hosted by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Zambia Branch from 19 to 20 June 2019, and part-funded by the CPA Headquarters Secretariat through its Technical Assistance Programme.

The substance of the CPA workshop revolved around the new oversight duty that the Parliament of Zambia was given in the new Constitution of Zambia in 2016: to *approve international agreements and treaties before they are acceded to or ratified*. Many Parliaments around the world play different roles when it comes to the ratification of international treaties and there are several examples of Commonwealth Parliaments who have this oversight role including the United Kingdom and Australia.

In Zambia, Parliamentarians were welcomed to the Workshop on the Role of Parliaments in Ratifying International Treaties and Agreements by the First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia, Hon. Catherine Namugala, MP and the Clerk of the National Assembly of Zambia, Mrs Cecilia Mbewe.

The First Deputy Speaker said that the attendance of Members of the Zambia National Assembly at the workshop demonstrated their commitment to the values of the Commonwealth and thanked the CPA Headquarters Secretariat for its financial support for the workshop. The First Deputy Speaker also said that the workshop gives Members an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of Parliament's role in ratifying international treaties and agreements, and demonstrates the significant role that Parliaments and Parliamentarians play in national decision-making, especially where the distinction between national and international decision-making is slowly fading, with many public matters being settled by means of international law and practice.

In response, the CPA Headquarters Director of Operations, Mr Jarvis Matiya, delivering the remarks of the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan, said: *"The CPA firmly believes in the benefits of 'peer to peer' learning to maximise the development of Parliamentarians and the broader parliamentary community. It is in this spirit of mutual learning and partnership that this workshop takes place with the support and presence of the highly experienced and dedicated resource persons sourced by the Parliament of Zambia. We at the CPA understand that democracy is a continuously developing concept that requires nurturing. We recognise that no single country or Parliament can provide a source of best practice in all areas of governance but believe that all Parliaments can be sources of vital transformation and influence regardless of how young, old, big or small they are."*

Also attending the CPA workshop were: the Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the CPA Africa Region, Hon. Mwansa



Mbulakulima, MP; CPA International Executive Committee Member for Central Africa Sub-Region, Hon. Lazarous Chungu Bwalya, MP; together with Cabinet and Provincial Ministers and Members of the Executive Committee of the CPA Zambia Branch.

Members at the workshop heard from Apolat Esther Freda, Senior Legal Counsel at the Parliament of Uganda who also attended the workshop to demonstrate how international treaties and agreements are reviewed and approved in the Uganda Parliament. The workshop also heard from experts at the University of Zambia School of Law and the Zambia Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Justice.

The CPA Workshop on the Role of Parliaments in Ratifying International Treaties and Agreements was delivered as part of a CPA Technical Assistance Programme for the Parliament of Zambia and the programme follows the delivery of a successful CPA Post Election Seminar for the Parliament of Zambia in November 2016.

The CPA Technical Assistance Programmes offer a wide range of different support and expertise to the CPA's Member Parliaments including self-assessment against the CPA's Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures; and training and support for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff in many different aspects of Parliament.

For further information about the funding, assistance and workshops available through the CPA Technical Assistance Programme, please contact the CPA Headquarters Secretariat hq.sec@cpahq.org.



5th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Asia Regional Conference highlights Parliaments' role in envisaging a diverse and developed South Asia



The CPA Pakistan Branch and the National Assembly of Pakistan have successfully hosted the 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference on the theme of 'Envisioning Parliamentary Paths towards a Diverse and Developed South Asia'. The CPA Asia Regional Conference saw delegates from the CPA Pakistan Branch and from the Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan as well as from Sri Lanka, Cameroon, Uganda, Malaysia and the United Kingdom participate in the regional conference from 29 July to 2 August 2019 in Islamabad.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr Arif Alvi, opened the 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference and was received by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan and CPA Pakistan Branch President, Hon. Asad Qaiser; the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Hon. Qasim Khan Suri; and Hon. Dr Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister of Pakistan and CPA Asia Regional Representative on the CPA International Executive Committee.

The Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan said: "It is indeed a matter of great honour for me to have distinguished guests and colleagues from the Commonwealth fraternity in our midst at the 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference. I would like to thank Parliamentary delegations from Sri Lanka, guests from the UK, Malaysia, Cameroon and Uganda and all participating CPA Branches from the Provincial Legislatures of Pakistan for coming together for this regional conference and reaffirming our commitment to the strengthening of democracy. Pakistan deeply values the common bond which binds us together – the bond of the Commonwealth – and it is with utmost conviction that I express the hope of continuing collaborative synergy between the National Legislature of Pakistan and the CPA Asia Region Branches. Pakistan strongly believes in the promise of multilateralism. States can achieve more together than they can individually. The more we cooperate the more the space for unilateral action is reduced."

The regional conference was attended by the CPA President Designate, Rt Hon. Rebecca A. Kadaga, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda; the Chairperson of CPA International Executive Committee, Hon. Emilia Lifaka, MP, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon; and the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson, Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP, (Malaysia). The CPA Chairperson, Hon. Emilia Lifaka highlighted the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a key priority for all Commonwealth Parliamentarians at the opening of the regional conference: "We can achieve our common goals by prioritising the betterment of our respective societies and by using the Sustainable Development Goals as a blueprint. The SDGs address the global challenges that we face including those facing poverty, inequality, climate change, prosperity, peace and justice. These goals

interconnect and in order to leave no-one behind it is important that we achieve each goal and target by joint priorities."

Members also discussed a wide range of topics including: *The Challenges for Poverty Eradication in South Asia; The Sustainable Development Agenda and priorities of the States in the Region; Parliamentary Oversight and Sustainable Development Agenda.*

A seminar for the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians held at the regional conference discussed the challenges and impediments against women in politics in the region. The Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan and the CPA Chairperson joined delegates led by Munaza Hassan, MNA, Secretary of the Pakistan Women's Parliamentary Caucus to discuss a wide range of issues including the male dominant party structures; general seats versus reserved seats for women; and prioritising women's issues as national issues. *Please turn to page 251 for a report of the CWP Asia Regional Seminar.*

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan, attended the CPA Asia Regional Conference and chaired a youth roundtable event with young MPs and youth delegates from the Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) of the National Assembly of Pakistan. The youth roundtable focused on the topic of 'Making Democracy Relevant; Why is it Important to Recognize Young Voices?' and discussed a wide range of issues affecting young people, including the role of youth in inclusive democracy; youth movements and platforms as a stepping stone to Parliament; opening up politics and Parliament to young people; young Parliamentarians' strategies to advance common peace and prosperity. The CPA has long championed the inclusion of young people in the democratic process and in promoting Commonwealth values through its CPA Roadshows and the Commonwealth Youth Parliament.

In the sidelines of the regional conference, the CPA Secretary-General held meetings with both the Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Hon. Asad Qaiser; and Hon. Dr Fehmida Mirza, CPA Asia Regional Representative on the CPA International Executive Committee, to discuss matters of the CPA Pakistan Branch.

Delegation heads at the CPA Asia Regional Conference included: Hon. J. M. Ananda Kumarasiri, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka; Hon. Parvez Elahi, Speaker of the Punjab Assembly; Hon. Mushtaq Ahmed Ghani, Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly; Hon. Sardar Barbar Khan Musakhel, Deputy Speaker of the Baluchistan Assembly; Hon. Ms Rehana Laghari, Deputy Speaker of the Sindh Assembly; and Lord Jeremy Purvis, Member of the UK House of Lords, representing the CPA UK Branch. The 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference also saw a meeting of the CPA Asia Regional Executive Committee and a meeting of the CPA Asia Region Branch Secretaries that took place in the margins of the main conference.

Holyrood 20th anniversary: The Queen speaks of the Scottish Parliament engaging people in democracy

To mark its 20th anniversary in 2019, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, accompanied by HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, visited the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh on 29 June 2019. The Queen was received by Rt Hon. Kenneth Mackintosh, MSP, Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament and CPA Scotland Branch President and by Rt Hon. Nicola Sturgeon, MSP, First Minister of Scotland.

The Queen addressed Members of the Scottish Parliament and said: *"Twenty years on, this chamber continues to be at the centre of Scottish public life, as an important forum to engage and unite diverse communities and also a home for passionate debate and discussion. Through new initiatives you continue to strive to be responsive and accountable to the people you serve, and to engage and involve those who might not otherwise participate in political debate."*

Also listening in the chamber were young people who were born on the day the Scottish Parliament was convened on 1 July 1999, who are now aged twenty.

The Presiding Officer welcomed Her Majesty and His Royal Highness and addressed the young people in the chamber: *"And I want to say a special welcome to our young guests. Your families are watching on – beaming with pride and pleasure at who you are, what you have already achieved and the promise of what is yet to come. I want to let you know that you carry with you all our dreams, all our ambitions and all our hopes for the future. You have grown in self-confidence over the past two decades, just as this place has grown into a self-confident institution. And just as your families have been there for you, so I hope this Parliament is now here to help you along the way."*

Scotland's First Minister said that Members of the Scottish Parliament were *"united by our desire to do our best for the people"* while the Scottish Conservatives Leader, Ruth Davidson, MSP said that Holyrood was *"knitted into the fabric of our society"*, adding that *"there is consensus that as a process, devolution has made our country stronger."*

The Queen was preceded into the chamber by the mace and the Crown of Scotland, while a fanfare was played by the brass ensemble from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. As the Queen departed, the Scottish Parliament's Piper and CPA Executive Committee Member, Stuart McMillan, MSP played traditional music including 'A Man's a Man for a' That by Robert Burns.

The 'modern' Scottish Parliament was established two years after Scotland voted for devolution in a referendum in



Images: copyright The Scottish Parliament.

1997. It initially sat at the General Assembly in Edinburgh before moving to its purpose-built home at Holyrood in 2004. The Queen was last in the landmark building in July 2016, marking the opening of the fifth session of the Scottish Parliament.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Scottish Parliament, Rt Hon. Ken Macintosh, MSP, the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament and CPA Scotland Branch President, reflected on democracy and political participation in Scotland as the Parliament reached this milestone anniversary in *The Parliamentarian 2019: Issue Two*. To access this issue of *The Parliamentarian* please visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/parliamentarian and click on 'archived issues'.

REFLECTING ON DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AS THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Rt Hon. Ken Macintosh, MSP
Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament

As the Scottish Parliament celebrates its 20th anniversary, it is a fitting time to reflect on the role of the Parliament in Scotland's political life. The Parliament has been a central institution in the development of Scotland's political system since its establishment in 1999. It has provided a forum for debate and decision-making on a wide range of issues, and has played a key role in the development of Scotland's political institutions.

The Parliament has also been a key player in the development of Scotland's political culture. It has provided a platform for the expression of diverse views and has helped to build a sense of shared purpose and commitment among its members and the people of Scotland. It has also been a key player in the development of Scotland's political institutions, and has played a key role in the development of Scotland's political system.









Erskine May: 'Bible' of parliamentary procedure made freely available to all in historic first

The 25th edition of Erskine May, the authoritative text on parliamentary law and practice, has been published online, becoming the first edition to be publicly available and free to use, with a navigable, searchable and accessible version hosted on the UK Parliament website. Previous editions have only been available for purchase as a hard copy book.

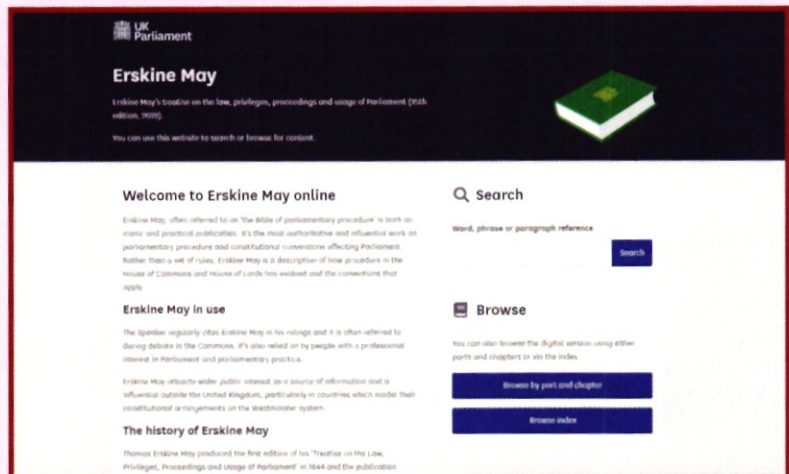
The publication of Erskine May online is part of a range of efforts by the UK Parliament to make parliamentary proceedings more accessible and open. In recent months, the UK House of Commons has launched an innovative *Guide to Procedure* and set-up a ground-breaking Centre of Excellence for Procedural Practice.

The online version of Erskine May will be textually identical to the print version in the first instance, although periodic updates may be made to the online text. These updates will be done as transparently as possible so that users can tell where and when changes have been made.

Rather than being a set of rules, Erskine May is a description of how procedure in the UK House of Commons and House of Lords has evolved and the conventions that apply. The book is widely used by Commonwealth Parliaments across the world and many Legislatures that are based on the 'Westminster' model.

The latest edition of Erskine May includes details of the many changes that have occurred since the 24th edition was published in 2011. In addition to being made available online, the hard-copy version of Erskine May will still be published on behalf of the *Erskine May Memorial Trust* by LexisNexis, who will also publish a digital version in their online library.

The Speaker of the UK House of Commons, Rt Hon. John Bercow, MP commented: *"Parliamentary practice and procedure does not exist in a vacuum. It is in fact the lifeblood of the day to day work of Members, as recent months have starkly brought in to focus. All too often parliamentary rules are seen as a Byzantine mystery, only understood by a select few. Therefore I am delighted that Erskine May, the venerable 'bible' of parliamentary procedures, is to be made freely available to all, to help people develop a wider understanding of how their elected representatives work."*



The Clerk of the UK House of Commons, Dr John Benger added: *"Erskine May is the most authoritative and influential work on parliamentary procedure and constitutional conventions affecting Parliament. Its reach stretches beyond the confines of the Parliamentary Estate and attracts wide public interest as a source of information and is also influential in many other countries. The digital version will maintain the iconic status of Erskine May whilst opening up parliamentary practice to a wider audience, something that is all the more important at this time of such great constitutional and procedural turbulence. I would like to pay tribute to all staff of the House, past and present, as well as all those at LexisNexis who have worked so hard to make this possible"*.

The first edition of Erskine May was published in 1844, with new editions published approximately every six or seven years. Its full title is 'A treatise on the law, privileges, proceedings and usage of Parliament', but it is referred to as Erskine May after its original author Sir Thomas Erskine May, who was a Clerk of the House of Commons between 1871 and 1886.

To access Erskine May online please visit <https://erskinemay.parliament.uk>.

Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from CPA Sri Lanka Branch benefit from Committee Strengthening Programme at Westminster through CP4D project

As part of the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D), the CPA UK Branch and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy welcomed a delegation from the CPA Sri Lanka Branch and the Parliament of Sri Lanka to the UK Parliament for a work programme for Members and Clerks to provide support for Parliamentary Committees in the public aspects of Committee work including Committee effectiveness, outreach and communications. The Sri Lanka delegation heard from a number of UK Parliamentarians including Tom Tugendhat, MP, Chair of the UK Foreign Affairs Select Committee; David Hanson, MP; Baroness Barker; Kerry McCarthy, MP; and Baroness Anelay, Chair of the UK House of Lords International Relations Select Committee.





FIT-FOR-PURPOSE PARLIAMENT: REVIEWING AND ENHANCING PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS

A case study of the Parliament of New Zealand.



Rt Hon. Trevor Mallard, MP is the Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives (52nd Parliament) and the CPA New Zealand Branch President. He was first elected as an MP in 1984, more recently as a list MP and previously as an electorate MP for the Hutt South, Pencarrow and Hamilton West electorates. He was an Assistant Speaker in the 51st Parliament (2014 to 2017) and the Shadow Leader of the House (2013 to 2014).

The strength and vitality of the institution of Parliament is the responsibility of every person in this room. Every Presiding Officer must uphold the important traditions that underpin the Parliament's enduring independence and constitutional standing, while also ensuring that Parliament remains relevant, effective, and fit-for-purpose. Each Clerk advises the Presiding Officer both about the important traditions and about the need for change. This paper champions the process through which Parliament reviews and improves its own effectiveness, and urges you to ensure such a process occurs in your jurisdiction.

I will start by discussing the balance between tradition and innovation, and the need for regular review and reform. In doing so, I will advocate for the importance of the Standing Orders as constitutional rules that should be amended only with broad support. I will talk about what it means to review the Standing Orders so that Parliament is more effective, and will explain how the process works in New Zealand. Finally, I will give a sense of the issues I will raise, following limited preliminary consultation, when we undertake our next review of the Standing Orders later this year.

Retain the traditions that matter... but stay relevant

When the New Zealand Parliament is opened after each general election, the first action of the Speaker-elect is to seek confirmation in the role from

the Governor-General, and to lay claim to the privileges of the House. I expect that a similar ceremony takes place in many of your Parliaments too. The claim of the Speaker's right to attend on the Sovereign, and to expect the '*most favourable construction*' on the House's proceedings, is a custom that appears to go back as far as the reign of Henry IV, at the beginning of the 1400s, and firm records show it occurring in 1523. So, Speakers have been claiming the House's privileges for at least 600 years, probably longer. In particular, the claim of free speech was the focus of ongoing tension between the Crown and Parliament over many years, culminating in 1641, when King Charles I entered the UK House of Commons with an armed escort and attempted to arrest five members for treason. This gives rise to the strong parliamentary convention that neither the Sovereign nor their representative enters the Chamber of the House.

These venerable traditions might seem quaint, but they go to the heart of the House's constitutional status as an autonomous, representative institution. They have been retained so as to convey the important historical basis of Parliament, which underpins the House's day-to-day operations. There are many more traditions of this sort, from the symbolism of the Mace, to the role of the Leader of the Opposition, to the deliberative discipline of debating a Bill and testing the House's support for it three times over.

But we don't cling onto traditions that have lost their relevance. While in claiming the privileges of the House we continue a tradition that can be traced to the time of Henry IV, other less helpful practices from that era dropped away long ago. Parliament hasn't recently deposed a monarch, rotten boroughs are a thing of the past, and we even allow people to watch debates in the House if they want.

For many public viewers, Parliament can seem anachronistic, and few would argue that this institution sits at the cutting edge of society. Yet the choice is there for each House to decide whether it will proactively review and update its procedures, or whether it will wait to be dragged reluctantly into the present for fear of becoming completely irrelevant. If the institution of Parliament loses its relevance and its responsiveness to the people, it starts to squander its legitimacy too.

Regular cycle of review

In New Zealand, we fortunately have developed the practice of reviewing the Standing Orders during each term of Parliament. This wasn't always the case: for large swathes of the 20th century, the Standing Orders stayed pretty static. However, in 1985, the Labour Government included parliamentary reform along with its broader sweep of constitutional change that responded to the Executive-dominated years under Sir Robert Muldoon. These reforms gave us



the *Constitution Act, 1986*; the *State Sector Act, 1988*; the *Public Finance Act, 1989*; and the *New Zealand Bill of Rights Act, 1990*, and commenced the process of electoral reform that resulted in the shift to MMP (Mixed Member Proportional).

As well as promoting a new *Parliamentary Service Act* to reduce Executive control over the administration of parliamentary resources, the New Zealand Government instigated a review of the Standing Orders that resulted in radical changes, such as the current structure of multi-functional Select Committees that can initiate their own inquiries, and the curtailment of the Government's ability to throw the House into urgent sittings lasting through the night.

Regular reviews of the Standing Orders followed, at the instigation of successive Governments, but it wasn't until 2003 that the Standing Orders Committee was itself mentioned in the Standing Orders. Now the cycle of regular review is well embedded. Like Australia, we have a three-yearly electoral cycle, which is very short by international standards, and so the effect is that the review of Standing Orders in each parliamentary term occurs quite frequently.

In terms of the timing of the review, it usually takes place in the latter half of the parliamentary term, with any resulting amendments to the Standing Orders being adopted with effect from the opening of the next Parliament. This timing helps to moderate the process: parties will not benefit immediately from the proposed rule changes, and are wary of shifting the balance too much, in case they wind up on the other side of the House as a result of the election.

Overwhelming cross-party support

This short review cycle is a good thing, because it counter balances



Image: Parliament of New Zealand

the tendency for the review of Standing Orders to be quite a conservative process. We treat the Standing Orders as constitutional rules, as they fundamentally influence the exercise of legislative power. This attitude has given rise to the convention that the Standing Orders Committee is chaired by the Speaker, and that it does not impose parliamentary changes by a bare majority.

The Committee tends not to decide matters by a vote in the normal sense; instead the Committee seeks to find a package of recommended amendments that enjoys the support of an overwhelming majority of Members across the House. Parties might not like some changes, but still accept them if they are balanced by others.

That's the key: the review of Standing Orders generally involves the process of changing and updating the rules while properly balancing the interests of Government, Opposition, and non-aligned parties - and ensuring the interests of Parliament itself are protected. Moreover, the House has imposed requirements on

motions to suspend the Standing Orders, so the Government is deterred from shifting the goal-posts to progress particular business. Accordingly, decisions to suspend Standing Orders to adjust how the House deals with particular business are usually taken only by unanimous agreement, and motions to do so by majority are rare.

This aversion to taking a majoritarian approach to the House's rules goes back a long way. For many years after the House was established in 1854, a quorum of two-thirds of all Members was needed to amend the Standing Orders, but this meant there was hardly any meaningful change as Members could block disagreeable proposals by walking out the door. Through this means, they clung onto archaic debating rules that meant it was easy to filibuster legislation into a dysfunctional gridlock. In 1894, by sheer force of personality, Premier Richard Seddon pushed the House into removing the need for a two-thirds quorum, so that he could promote Standing Orders amendments

to limit the 'prolix speech' of Members. But Members were still conscious that change should not be imposed arbitrarily by the majority, and maintained a bipartisan approach. The last time a major procedural change was made against strong opposition was in 1931, when Prime Minister George Forbes engineered the adoption of a closure motion procedure to curtail debate, but even then this was only after a deal that had been carefully brokered in the Standing Orders Committee fell over. As an interesting twist, in 1985 when changes to the Standing Orders were sought to address Muldoon-style Executive domination of the House, Rob Muldoon himself was the leading Opposition Member on the Standing Orders Committee. In his speech to the House on the proposals, he wholeheartedly endorsed the amendments.

So, the regular cycle of review means that the constitutional importance of the Standing Orders is recognised by adopting a consensus-based approach, but important changes still occur



FIT-FOR-PURPOSE PARLIAMENT: REVIEWING AND ENHANCING PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS

over time. While it is sometimes possible to achieve major changes at the first attempt, they can also come about by socialising ideas and innovations over time. For example, the Clerk of the House proposed the introduction of online parliamentary petitions in 2011, and eventually convinced the House to adopt rules to enable them, on a trial basis, in 2018. Now e-petitions are a well-used and prominent feature of the Parliament website, and they are certain to be written permanently into the Standing Orders next year. This use of temporary rules to try out new things is a great way to get members on board with new initiatives.

CPA Benchmarks recommend regular reviews to enhance parliamentary rules

This conference is a great opportunity to promote the importance of regularly reviewing parliamentary rules, and it is also excellent that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) recently adopted this as one of its indicators of good parliamentary practice, as set out in the *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures*. These benchmarks set a minimum standard for how a Parliament should be constituted and how it should function. All Parliaments and Legislatures of the CPA should be aware of the benchmarks and consider their application and implementation within their jurisdictions.

When the CPA held a conference to revise the benchmarks in 2018, the New Zealand delegation promoted the inclusion of what is now benchmark 2.1.3, which recommends that: *The Legislature's rules, procedures and practice shall be reviewed regularly to enhance parliamentary effectiveness and relevance.*

A cycle of regular review allows for incremental updates to the way the House operates and

over time can result in significant shifts to procedure. Adopting a cycle of this sort is a far more effective approach to managing parliamentary rules, rather than reactive ad hoc updates, or the suspension of rules when they become inconvenient or unworkable.

The CPA benchmarks themselves provide a helpful toolkit for testing the parliamentary warrant of fitness. While some of the CPA benchmarks might not be readily applicable to every parliamentary context, they still provide some prompts for questioning the adequacy of current procedures. From the New Zealand perspective, not every benchmark is relevant, but others give real food for thought.

Updating parliamentary language

For example, a benchmark that is related to the one I mentioned above, and which I think our Parliament could improve on, is benchmark 2.1.6. This reads as follows: *The Legislature's rules, procedures and practice shall be accessible to Members and to the public.*

While our Standing Orders are publicly available and searchable via the New Zealand Parliament website, accessibility is not just about availability. Non-experts should be able to locate, read and understand the rules and how they apply. Currently some of the language used in our Standing Orders is opaque. New Members can find it a steep learning curve to get their heads around the Standing Orders and parliamentary jargon.

During the next review, I would like to look at ways to make some of the more mysterious parliamentary terms more accessible. An example is the term 'Supplementary Order Paper', which means a published set of amendments. The term is impenetrable for most people, and

is outdated because these sets of amendments have not been published as 'supplements' to the Order Paper for several decades. It would be much more accessible simply to refer instead to an 'amendment paper'.

Reducing such jargon was considered but not pursued in our 2017 review. Members have an understandable respect for parliamentary terms, and can be reluctant to change them. This is one of those areas where it is indeed important to consider the basis underpinning traditional ways of doing things, so we understand the significance of change. But we should not be afraid to examine closely any jargon that acts as a barrier to people engaging with Parliament. I am looking forward to engaging in that process afresh when the next review gets under way.

Drivers of change

It is really important, though, to make sure reviews of procedure aren't just about adjusting the words. There are numerous factors that drive changes to Parliament's ways and methods. Legislative, societal and political changes, technological developments and evolving practices can all prompt changes to the Standing Orders. The typical process of a review of Standing Orders resembles that for a Select Committee inquiry, including an open call for public submissions. This provides a unique opportunity for Members, non-government organisations and the general public to have a say on any aspects of parliamentary practice. It means that the public can put forward ideas for making Parliament better.

One person who always makes a submission is the Clerk of the House. The Clerk tends to make an extensive submission, suggesting improvements that arise from the experience of the Clerk and his or her staff as advisers, close observers and

participants in parliamentary processes. This submission is heard in public, for the sake of transparency, after which the Clerk takes up the role of principal policy adviser to the Standing Orders Committee.

While the Clerk's submission to the Standing Orders Committee often contains imaginative ideas for improving the House's practice, on a less exciting level the Clerk also draws the Committee's attention to legislative changes that require incorporation into the Standing Orders. For example, there is currently a Legislation Bill before the House that will, if passed, require some consequential amendments to the Standing Orders, because the Bill amends provisions in the law that give legal effect to some of the House's decisions.

Principally this relates to the House's ability to disallow regulations. The whole basis for publishing and bringing regulations into effect is being reformed, so that they generally will take effect only when published and made accessible to the public. Besides which, the terminology for regulations is being simplified: we will no longer be lumbered with such terms as '*legislative instruments*', '*disallowable instruments*' and - get this - '*disallowable instruments that are not legislative instruments*'. All of these forms of law will simply be referred to as '*secondary legislation*'. This is much simpler, but it does have implications for the way the House deals with such law in its rules. The Clerk noted these changes in his submission on the Legislation Bill, and once the Bill passes, the Bill's provisions will be reflected in his submission to the committee on the review of Standing Orders.

Technology and new opportunities

A driver of change that feels more energising is the need to stay relevant, to promote accessibility



Image: Parliament of New Zealand.



A Select Committee meets at the Parliament of New Zealand.

and transparency of parliamentary processes, and to engage the public with the work of Parliament. To this end, we need to be open to exploring new technologies and their application in the parliamentary context. However, the adoption of technological innovations has a flow-on effect, requiring the examination of parliamentary rules to ensure they reflect the new ways of doing things.

In 2013, the New Zealand Parliament launched a successful pilot to webcast Select Committee hearings. The Standing Orders Committee observed in 2014 that the pilot had increased the accessibility and transparency of parliamentary processes, and that a full roll-out should occur. The Office of the Clerk was unsuccessful, however, in its Budget bid for the financial provision necessary for full implementation of webcasting, and the trial ended in 2015. However, in 2017, the availability of more affordable technologies enabled the Office of the Clerk to implement a phased roll-out of livestreaming of public Select Committee hearings. Livestreaming has quickly become an expectation of

Members and the public - when a livestream is not working or a Committee has decided not to stream a hearing (say, for individual privacy reasons), it is interesting how promptly the Office of the Clerk will receive complaints about the absence of a service that was not available at all until a couple of years ago.

This practice has been implemented without requiring immediate changes to the Standing Orders. However, rules around broadcasting, records and Select Committee procedures will need to be reviewed in 2020 to ensure that this development is reflected in the practices and procedures of the House. As the most cost-effective means for livestreaming was through *Facebook Live*, each Select Committee now has a separate *Facebook* identity. This has resulted in comments being posted by the public on these *Facebook* pages, including comments about hearings as they are taking place. Aside from the moderation required for these comments, the question arises about their status, and whether the comments themselves form part of proceedings. There may

also be new opportunities to obtain information and feedback from the public, aside from the normal submissions process. On the other hand, improvements could be made so it is easier to access footage on-demand than is currently the case when using the *Facebook* platform. The House needs to be flexible enough to make the most of these engagement opportunities.

Small changes, big difference

While reviews can sometimes lead to significant reform, small and gradual changes can make a big difference too. During the most recent review, during the last term of Parliament, there was a focus on the involvement of responsible Ministers in the Committee of the Whole House debate, answering questions raised by Members often on the technical detail or drafting of the Bill. As Assistant Speaker at time, I was keen to encourage such engagement across the Table about the detail and meaning of legislation. Ministers, who participated actively and constructively in this way, almost always found the legislation proceeded more smoothly as a result. However,

the Chamber's layout and rules about access to the floor of the House meant that advisers present to assist the Minister on policy, technical and legal matters could be inside the Chamber but could not step down onto the floor of the House to speak to the Minister seated at the Table. This resulted in the awkward situation of advisers leaning perilously over to pass notes to the Minister, or the Minister having to lean haphazardly back to confer (the Minister in charge of a Bill should remain at the Table when the Bill is being considered, or otherwise should leave the Chamber). The Clerk brought this matter to the attention of the Standing Orders Committee in 2017, and proposed that the rules governing admission to the Chamber be reviewed to provide for easier communication between the Member in charge of a Bill and advisers.

On becoming Speaker at the start of this parliamentary term, I was pleased to rewrite the Chamber rules so advisers can step onto the floor to provide advice to the Minister at the Table. This small and simple change has made a huge difference as advisers are now better able to fulfil their roles in the Committee of the Whole House stage, so advice can be provided to Ministers who wish to engage in debate on the provisions of Bills.

Another small but significant change this parliamentary term has been the granting of access to the Chamber lobbies to the caregivers of Members' children. In the New Zealand Parliament, infants of Members are not regarded as 'strangers' in the House, and Members can feed, hold and comfort babies in the Chamber. However, the issue arose about how to 'deliver' an infant to a Member without the Member having to leave the Chamber. Non-member caregivers were not able to enter the Chamber or even the Chamber lobbies to meet



FIT-FOR-PURPOSE PARLIAMENT: REVIEWING AND ENHANCING PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS

Image: Parliament of New Zealand



Left: The Speaker of the Parliament of New Zealand (back row), together with Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff, visit a school in Dunedin in the South Island as part of Parliament's Outreach Programmes.

Members wishing to hold or hand over their infants for care. I have now provided that caregivers can come into the lobbies and go to the door of the Chamber for this purpose. Again, this is a minor change, though it has made a significant difference for MPs juggling their demanding roles both as Members and as parents.

Evolving procedures

Members are also drivers of change: they are well placed to identify when procedures are not working well and can feed these into the review process through various avenues. Sometimes these proposed changes might seek to address concerns Members have about procedural tactics in the House. For example, in 2009 when the then Government sought to push through a controversial Bill to completely reconfigure the governance of the Auckland region, and to do so under urgency and without Select Committee scrutiny, the then Opposition undertook a determined and innovative filibuster to frustrate its progress. As many as 30,000 amendments were tabled, and the Government

responded with its own tactics, such as a last-minute change to the Bill's title to short-circuit the multitudinous Opposition amendments to *clause 1*.

Long after the dust had receded, and Members took stock of events during the subsequent review of Standing Orders, in 2011, it was agreed that such procedural battles were not ideal. New procedures were introduced to allow the Presiding Officer to group and select amendments, so Members are encouraged to promote serious alternative proposals. Presiding Officers also are more proactive in urging Members to focus on debating issues, and thus extend the debate by drawing on relevant fresh material, rather than to seek to delay Bills simply by bringing about endless votes on amendments. The Standing Orders Committee also recommended the introduction of extended sittings, which enable the Government to access additional House time with safeguards against the truncation of proper process that can occur when urgency is taken. It is really important to ensure the Opposition can filibuster when it considers this necessary to constrain the

Government's ability to impose controversial reforms, while still enabling the Government to implement its popular mandate through legislation.

Parliamentary effectiveness, and what it means

Which brings us to the concept of parliamentary effectiveness. The overall point of reviewing the Standing Orders of the House is not just to tidy the words of the rule book, or to make the House easier to administer and more compliant with statutes. The purpose of the exercise is to improve the effectiveness with which Parliament as an institution operates, in the public interest.

The effectiveness of the institution depends on your perspective: for the Government, the efficiency of the legislative process in converting policy into law is most important; for the Opposition, it is the ability to examine legislative proposals, challenge the Government's policies, and test alternatives; and hopefully for all participants the aim is for the country to be regulated by quality and up-to-date laws. In terms of financial scrutiny, the Government requires

the appropriation of public money to run the State and implement its priorities, the Opposition needs good information and the ability to hold the Government to account, and all involved would profess a desire for good governance and improved prosperity. When it comes to representation, Parliament is effective when Members can raise issues of concern and interest to their constituents - freedom of speech is fundamental. But it is balanced by the need to exercise that freedom responsibly, and the House restrains Members from debating matters that are before the court or suppressed by a court order, and generally seeks to impose a level of decorum on debate so as to maintain the dignity of the institution.

I could go on. The point is that parliamentary effectiveness is served when all of the different perspectives and interests can be advanced while remaining in balance. And that balance is to be found by the Members themselves, exercising their political judgement and working together to find solutions that can obtain overwhelming support.

Chairing the Standing Orders Committee

As I mentioned earlier, the role of Chairperson of the Standing Orders Committee is invariably filled by the Speaker. I have served as a Member of the Committee in previous Parliaments and I look forward to chairing the next review, which starts later this year. Membership of the Committee usually also includes the Leader of the House and Shadow Leader of the House, along with the senior



whips or spokespeople of other parties. To find a consensus, there is necessarily a process of give and take by Members around the table to find a balanced package of proposals.

The role of the Chairperson is key to all this. For the process to be successful, the Committee needs a reasonable programme so there is time to consider proposals thoughtfully and weigh the various interests. Dialogue should be encouraged between Members to arrive at an overall package that Members will support and advocate for in caucus meetings. It is important that serious proposals are not dismissed out of hand at the hint of an objection, but rather an opportunity is provided to talk through the issues so agreement can be reached. When there is disagreement, the Chairperson can work with Members to identify the particular concerns and problems, with a view to identify possible ways forward. Of course, this is part and parcel of good chairing anyhow, but it is crucial when it comes to getting meaningful outcomes from a consensus-based process in the partisan world of Parliament.

Ideas for upcoming review of Standing Orders

As a Member of the Committee, I also have the opportunity to put forward ideas. With the next review approaching, I am keen to explore a number of proposals with the Committee.

Promote family-friendly initiatives

As you all know parliamentary life poses unique challenges, particularly for Members' families, with long hours, extended periods away from home and increased public profile placing pressure on family life. While some of these challenges, like the increased profile that comes with public office, are outside our control, there are a number of things we can do to make Parliament more family-friendly.

In the 2017 review, the Standing Orders Committee considered how we might find a better balance of work and family life in the parliamentary setting, including promotion of more effective and predictable use of House time and provision of support for Members needing to care for young children or other dependants. It was agreed that the Clerk of the House, in collaboration with the General Manager of the Parliamentary Service, would consult Members on how to better accommodate family needs in parliamentary life. The ideas and information shared by Members' in this consultation will feed into the upcoming Standing Orders review in 2020, as well as other reviews that are being carried of the provision of services to Members and parties.

As the diversity of our Parliament increases, we have more Members with young families and, in particular in the current Parliament, Members with infant children. Since 2014, the

Standing Orders have included a provision for the Speaker to grant Members permission to be absent without affecting the proxy vote limit for parties. This has been an extremely positive development, allowing Members to take periods of absence akin to parental leave. During the current parliamentary term, a number of Members have welcomed new children into their families and, as far as I am aware, all have taken some parental leave, both mothers and fathers.

An example of this was the well-publicised six-week leave period taken by the New Zealand Prime Minister, Rt Hon. Jacinda Ardern, for the birth of her daughter Neve in 2018. The ready provision of leave for Members on the arrival of a child is a significant step, though there is much still to do to make the juggle of family and political life easier.

Ultimately, there is a case for considering changes to electoral law, to provide for a more flexible approach while ensuring continuity of representation. Under the *Electoral Act, 1993*, there is no ability for membership of the House to be paused and then resumed for any purpose, such as to enable a period of parental leave. While such an idea seems odd for a person used to the Westminster style of representation, it has already been implemented in some European Parliaments, such as Denmark, where there is provision for substitute MPs to be appointed. And Parliaments of a similar tradition to our own have begun to take up this idea: only last month (June 2019), the Canadian House of Commons has unanimously adopted rules for Members to be eligible for 12 months of parental leave on full pay.

In New Zealand, while there may be interest in such solutions, any statutory changes would be beyond the remit of the review of Standing Orders. However, our MMP electoral system potentially could equip us to make temporary

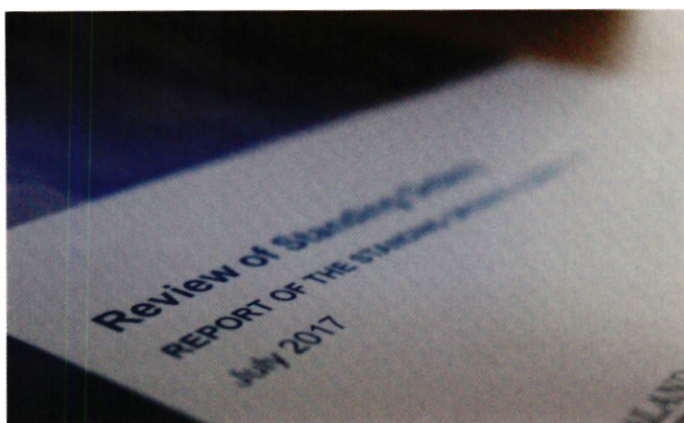
appointments from party lists as they stood at the most recent general election (which is the method used for filling list-seat vacancies). While the Standing Orders Committee could not effect such a change through the House's rules, it could bring this matter to the House's attention in the form of a recommendation addressed to the Government.

In terms of Parliament's internal arrangements, it will be interesting to see what emerges from the consultation with Members, so we can consider a package of family-focused changes that will make a significant difference.

One option is to consider adjusting the House's sitting hours. The New Zealand Parliament currently sits approximately 30 weeks per year, with the majority of Members travelling from outside the Wellington region to attend. The House sits on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2pm to 10pm (with a 1.5 hour dinner-break from 6pm) and on Thursdays from 2pm to 6pm.

Evening sittings are not family-friendly - or friendly in any sense - for Members or for the staff who support the House. However, any ideas adjust House hours would not be straightforward. While reducing evening sittings might be helpful for the few Wellington-based Members, it might have an adverse effect on those from outside Wellington if the alternative were longer or more frequent sitting weeks.

An idea to consider could be for the House to start earlier in the day and sit, say, from 9.30am to 1.00pm, allowing for an earlier finish. Care would need to be taken so that business in the House did not clash with meetings of the Select Committees that had considered that business. If the hours were adjusted in this way, extended sittings would take place in the evening, rather than in the morning as is currently





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Image: Parliament of New Zealand



the case, but provision could be made for votes to be deferred until the start of the next sitting day so Members could leave the precincts. Consideration could be given to enabling Select Committees to meet in the evening, but with a finish time no later than 9pm.

Alternatively, the dinner break could be shortened or dispensed with altogether. Any such option would need careful consideration of how it would impact on other aspects of parliamentary life, such as attendance at dinner-time events. But it would be worth working these issues through so as to avoid the current late-night finish, and potentially to enable members who live outside the Wellington area (particularly those in more remote localities) to return home sooner to their families and constituencies. Other options include relaxing proxy-vote limits at certain times, so more Members can leave the parliamentary precincts sooner; providing more meaningful opportunities for family members to travel to be together; or providing additional support to reduce workload. There are many more ideas that are emerging, and I look forward to exploring them with the Committee.

By making Parliament more family-friendly we can create the best environment for Members to participate in proceedings and fulfil their representative functions. Family-friendly initiatives can also act to promote diversity of our

elected Members, as people who might otherwise have been put off standing for election, because of what the role entailed, might now consider it an option.

Rewards for good pre-introductory legislative process

In the last review of Standing Orders, it was agreed that it would be helpful to find ways for the House to reward the use of inclusive and robust pre-legislative processes by the Government. The aim would be to reverse the incentives, driven by the short electoral cycle, for Governments to hasten policy processes so Bills can be introduced with enough time to be passed before the next election comes around. The Clerk of the House also indicated his intention to collaborate with relevant central agencies to identify ways that pre-introductory policy and consultation processes by Government agencies could align more closely with the House's consideration. This work would inform the development of proposals for rewarding good pre-legislative policymaking.

I believe that a policy development process that includes good cross-party consultation can only lead to better legislative outcomes, greater support for proposals, and smoother progress of Bills through the House. Comprehensive pre-legislative processes that include public consultation arguably result in greater legitimacy of legislation. In

turn, this could be recognised and rewarded by House procedures, for example, the provision of additional sitting time without the usual ban on simultaneous Select Committee meetings. I would like to explore this and other ideas for promoting inclusive policy processes.

Limits on use of urgency

A Minister can move, without notice, a motion to accord urgency to certain business. There is no amendment or debate on the question, but the Minister must inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the claim for urgency. Urgency can be used to progress legislation through multiple legislative stages, including bypassing Select Committee scrutiny altogether.

While I acknowledge there are some circumstances that could require urgent legislative action to be taken, the Government should be restrained from using urgency. I believe that rushing Bills through under urgency increases the risk of poor legislative outcomes, including inadequate policymaking and scrutiny, lack of public input, drafting errors, and flawed understanding by Members of the legislation they are considering.

During the last review, I proposed that urgency be accorded only when a minimum of 75% of Members vote for the motion, and that the same majority be applied to other decisions under urgency, including amendments to Bills. The proposal was not accepted at the time, but I would like to discuss it further during the coming review. Curbing the use of urgency in this way would mean it could be resorted to only when there was general agreement that the circumstances warranted it. Special allowance could be made for urgency to pass Budget legislation, either as an automatic right for the Government or if the Speaker agreed that the

legislation, by its nature, needed to be passed quickly after the Budget was delivered (for example, to implement a change to excise tax with immediate effect). A further option could be to allow for urgency to be taken within the first 100 days after the opening of Parliament, for the Government to fulfil particular election promises.

As part of this proposal, I also want to focus on a mechanism to discourage the bypassing of the Select Committee process under urgency. I believe that even a truncated Select Committee process is better than no Select Committee scrutiny at all. The Government could still utilise extended sittings for additional hours to progress legislation and extraordinary urgency would still be available at the discretion of the Speaker.

Availability of Bills for debate

A further idea is to shorten the stand-down time for Bills before they are available for debate, following their introduction and the presentation of Select Committee reports. The current automatic delay dates back to 1995, when the Standing Orders Committee recommended that a Bill not be available for debate until the third sitting-day after the Bill's initial release or Select Committee report. At the time, the Committee felt there should be a notice period to allow Members to study and consider the policy and principles of the Bill, or the changes recommended by the Select Committee, prior to debating and voting on the Bill at its next stage (*1995 report, 1.18A, p 55*). But back in those days it took a while for copies of Bills to be circulated around the country by the Government Printing Office. Now that copies of Bills become instantaneously available online, it may be time to consider whether the three-day stand-down period is still apposite.



Better debate

I am interested in relaxing some of the rules for debate in the House, so that Members are engaging with each other rather than reciting speeches. This could involve softening the tradition that Members address the House through the Chair and avoid the use of the second person. Another option could be to encourage greater use of 'yielding', to promote constructive exchanges across the floor - while this technically is permissible already, it hardly ever occurs.

It is really important for Members to have opportunities to debate the big issues, aside from those that arrive in the House through the passage of legislation and financial cycles. An idea is to have regular structured debates on topics such as foreign affairs, or longer-term issues like climate change. The Business Committee already can arrange such debates, but it does not do so often; it would be good to develop an expectation that debates of this sort should take place at least once every month or sitting period.

Select Committee effectiveness

For most Parliaments, the effectiveness of the Committee system is key to the overall performance of the legislature. There are always improvements that can be made to enable Committees to deal more effectively and robustly with the business in front of them, and to engage better with the public. Along with other Members, I am concerned that Select Committee scrutiny is not always satisfactory. Some Committees are too large, which means that Members generally are not given sufficient time each to follow sustained lines of questioning. This means that hearings of evidence, and particularly the examination of Ministers and State sector chief executives, can be overly superficial. Moreover, Members

may feel less compunction to prepare and engage when their contribution is diluted by a large Committee membership. Large Committees also mean Members may tend to be on more than one Committee, thus increasing their workload, and there are more logistical difficulties in deploying Members to cover absences and substitutions for particular items of business.

Ideas that I would like to discuss with the Standing Orders Committee include:

- Reducing Select Committee membership, for instance to 5 Members, with additional non-voting membership as of right, with 2 non-voting Members for parties of 25 or more Members, and 1 non-voting Member for parties with fewer than 25 Members.
- Enabling Select Committees to meet outside Wellington, as a matter of course. Committees currently require permission from the Business Committee to meet in other the country on sitting days. I consider that the practice of holding Select Committee meetings outside Wellington improves the reach and relevance of Parliament, and should be facilitated.
- Resurrecting the former Public Accounts Committee or a similar Committee to conduct technical scrutiny of public expenditure, separate to the broader policy interest of the Finance and Expenditure Committee.
- Allocating the roles of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of Select Committees on a proportional basis, with Opposition Chairpersons guaranteed for the Finance and Expenditure Committee (or Public Accounts Committee) and for the Governance and Administration Committee.

Conclusion

Some of these ideas are revolutionary - in the New Zealand context, at least - while others are more incremental. It is important to take stock and provide an opportunity for fresh thinking. Parliament as an institution should engage in critical self-review and continuous improvement, just as we expect from the public agencies that the House scrutinises.

My motive in presenting this paper is to establish the regular review of parliamentary rules and procedures as a good practice, and to embed it in our culture so that it, too, becomes a tradition of long-standing. I would like to leave you with these key messages:

- The rules of Parliament are constitutional in nature, and should not be amended through a majoritarian approach; consensus or overwhelming support should be sought for any changes.
- A regular cycle of review mitigates the potential conservatism that arises from the need for broad agreement.
- The need for cross-party agreement means the role of the presiding officer is critical to the success of the process: providing a context that welcomes the exchange of ideas, working with parties to identify concerns, facilitating constructive negotiations to address them, mediating where there is disagreement, and bringing all parties together to settle on an overall package that is agreeable.
- The aim for the review should be to enhance the effectiveness of Parliament, balancing the different perspectives of the Government, the Opposition and other non-Government parties, participants in parliamentary processes, and the public (though it is in everybody's interests for the legislative process to result in good law!).

As Speaker of the New Zealand Parliament, I want to champion the process to improve Parliament, and to ensure it is an institution that is responsive, resilient and relevant long into the future.

This article is based on a paper given by the author to Commonwealth Parliamentarians from the CPA Pacific and CPA Australia Regions at the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference (POCC) at the Parliament of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia in July 2019. Please turn to page 205 for a report of the conference.

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EMERGING SECURITY ISSUES FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS AND THE IMPACT ON DEMOCRACY

The Deputy Speaker of the UK House of Commons examines increasing security issues in Parliament.



Rt Hon. Sir Lindsay Hoyle, MP is the Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons in the UK Parliament. He was first elected as a Member of Parliament in 1997 for the constituency of Chorley. He held a number of Select Committee roles before being elected as the Chairman of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker in 2010.

This article highlights how security issues for Parliamentarians impact on their lives as well as on the practicalities of administering Parliament and the democratic process itself.

As the Deputy Speaker of the UK House of Commons, I am responsible for maintaining order in the Chamber but outside the Chamber, I am passionate about improving security for my colleagues and staff in the House of Commons – on and off the Estate. As Chair of the Consultative Panel on Parliamentary Security for the UK Parliament, I lead a Committee composed of senior MPs and Peers which works closely with security professionals to provide advice, make recommendations and add political support to security policy in Parliament.

The context – UK threat levels

The UK threat level from international terrorism has been 'severe' (i.e. 'highly likely') since 2014, and twice in 2017 went to 'critical'. Attacks in the UK have included the attack on Westminster itself, the Manchester Arena, London Bridge, Finsbury Park mosque and Parsons Green tube bomb. Of course, many more plots have been disrupted during that period and since by police and security services.

This 'severe' threat level applies to everyone in the country, and former heads of our Security Services have said publicly that it is likely to continue at this level for another 5-10 years at least. In other words, the threat is not going away any time soon.

When the Director of Security for the UK Parliament talks to

new Members of Parliament and staff about this threat level, he says that it means they should 'be alert, not alarmed'. However, for Parliamentarians, international terrorism is not the major threat they face. Instead, for MPs there are other threats which are far more prevalent, likely to cause them harm and increase their fear - domestic terrorism, fixated individuals, individuals with mental health issues or those with extremist views.

Threats to Members of Parliament

UK Members tell me that abuse towards them and their staff is reaching unprecedented levels. This is unacceptable. Many UK MPs are regularly threatened and abused through interactions on social media or in supermarkets in their constituencies and recently there have been vocal protesters outside the UK Parliament intimidating them daily. Threats to UK MPs, their staff and families include threats to kill or rape, physical assaults, anti-semitic, homophobic, misogynistic and racist abuse and harassment. Women and ethnic minority colleagues tend to be targeted more.

MPs are particularly at risk because they debate and vote on divisive issues (for example, abortion, fox hunting and of course, 'Brexit'); they are public figures who need to be accessible and recognisable; they are dealing with and trying to help people in vulnerable and desperate circumstances and are often the last port of call; they want to use social media to connect with constituents; and are regularly subject to media scrutiny and coverage which can inflame public opinion.

There are not many jobs where

complete strangers will have such open access to somebody, whether at events, at surgeries, at their constituency offices or even online. For many MPs, this creates a dilemma – how can democratic access to an elected representative be maintained whilst also ensuring that measures are in place to keep them safe?

The threat manifests itself wherever the Member is but is particularly acute in the local constituencies. The murder of Jo Cox, MP in June 2016 was shocking and tragic, but it was not the first time a UK MP has been attacked working in their constituency.

Member of Parliament, Stephen Timms was attacked with a knife at a surgery in 2010 and in 2000, Nigel Jones, MP was attacked with a samurai sword by a constituent with a mental health issue. Nigel's Political Assistant, Andrew Pennington, was murdered helping him. Most recently is the story of Rosie Cooper, MP who was the subject of a murder plot by a white supremacist which thankfully never took place. The interesting thing about Rosie's story is that she is not an outspoken MP within the UK Parliament. She is very unassuming with a low profile. This demonstrated to me that all MPs are at risk and should be protected.

Although such physical attacks are rare, in the last couple of years sadly there has also been a big increase in the intimidation of MPs beyond Westminster – office windows smashed in, leaflets burnt in letterboxes, MPs being followed and approached late at night, phone calls or tweets saying somebody wants to 'do a Jo Cox' to a Member.



The mitigations

The UK Parliament was already in the process of reviewing how security for Members both on the estate, off the estate and online could be improved in late 2015 but the murder of Jo Cox gave us a much bigger driver to develop plans much quicker.

The UK Parliament cannot get rid of the threats, but it can help protect against them. We adopt a holistic approach which combines layers of security – perimeter, personnel, access control, measures in homes and constituency offices, cyber, social media, personal security. However, we recognised the need to establish a dedicated team, called the Members Security Support Service, focused solely on the security of UK Parliamentarians, their staff and families. In addition, we established a contract with a national security firm which can recommend and install security measures at relevant properties.

One key way to mitigate against threats is to encourage Members of Parliament not to accept such threats as merely 'part of their job'. Many Members now have a high tolerance level for behaviour which should not be tolerated. Politicians need to speak to each other, peer to peer, to encourage each other to be safe and report each incident to help authorities build up a picture of the level and type of threats received and respond accordingly.

Parliament's unique context as both a workplace, heritage site, and natural focus for protests creates competing needs and demands. Protestors, many of whom are peaceful, want to demonstrate in locations where their protest will have best impact, close to the seat of democracy. Members and staff want to ensure democratic functions are unhindered and they can enter and leave the estate in safety and without fear of intimidation. We are therefore considering whether, in the current climate



of increased threats against Members and those on the estate, the UK Parliament now requires different arrangements to those already set out in legislation to allow lawful protests in its vicinity but ensure unimpeded access for those who work there.

The current law applicable to the area is based on the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, 2011* and the *Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014*. Some Parliamentarians have called for the reintroduction of Sessional Orders to ensure MPs can freely access the parliamentary estate. Reinstating sessional orders may not be the answer as they do not have any legal standing and the police cannot act on them. In my opinion, it would be more effective to push for a review of the current laws applying to protests, perhaps through delegated legislation. The laws could capture what has been lost from Sessional Orders - that the police and other authorities have a special obligation to ensure that Members of both Houses must have free access to Parliament when in session to ensure business is not disrupted.

The threat to democracy

We are now finding that the fear of threats alone is enough to have an impact on MPs, their staff and families, even if a specific threat has not been made or an incident has not occurred. The 'drip drip drip' effect of constant abuse and online attacks is eroding the confidence of MPs. It is having a big impact on their mental health, their resilience and their ability to function in their roles. Quite simply, they, their families and their staff are scared. In order to protect themselves we know that MPs are changing their behaviour in the way they work and hold surgeries and possibly even in the way they vote or what they say in the Chamber. I also know that several MPs are considering not standing at the next election, worn down by the constant barrage of abuse and threats. If MPs are reluctant to engage with their constituents for fear of attack, if they are reluctant to appear at public events for fear of threats, or if they are reluctant to speak out on issues for fear of malicious communications then how can they be informed about the issues or truly represent their constituents and fulfil their roles?

Ensuring the safety and security of MPs is therefore a much bigger

issue than ensuring the safety of individuals. It is also about ensuring the stability of national democracy. This is something which the UK Government is now keenly aware of. It has established a cross departmental initiative called '*Defending Democracy*' to examine how measures can be put in place to ensure candidates and elected representatives and the electorate can participate in democracy without fear or intimidation.

The need to work together

The evolving threat towards elected representatives, their staff and families require a constantly evolving approach and it is more important than ever that Parliamentarians across the Commonwealth talk to each other honestly about our security issues, share best practice and build new friendships.

This article is based on the keynote address given by the author to Commonwealth Parliamentarians from the CPA Pacific and CPA Australia Regions at the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference (POCC) at the Parliament of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia in July 2019. Please turn to page 205 for a report of the conference.



WORKING TOGETHER AND PLAYING TO OUR STRENGTHS: JERSEY AND THE COMMONWEALTH

Jersey's Minister for International Development reports on an innovative project linking Jersey and Rwanda.



Deputy Carolyn Labey is Jersey's Minister for International Development and Chair of the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission. She also serves as Assistant Chief Minister (International) and Chair of the Executive Committee of the Jersey Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Carolyn has served the Parish of Grouville as a Member of the States of Jersey (the Island's Parliament) since 2002. Carolyn was educated in Jersey and Paris, and before entering politics she worked in the Finance Industry.

In Rwanda, a female Jersey, or Jersey-cross, calf will be born every hour for the next three years, thanks to a pioneering project run by Jersey Overseas Aid, the Government of Rwanda, *Send a Cow* and the Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society. The impact on poor families is huge: milk yields can treble or quadruple, providing both a sustainable livelihood and an excellent source of nutrition for a family. The project also facilitates Rwanda's ground-breaking *Girinka* programme, whereby the transfer of heifers between poor families promotes cohesion and reconciliation as well as poverty reduction and food security.

Jersey cows and crosses are proving particularly suitable for smallholder farmers where resources are scarce. With their fatter, more nutritious milk, higher feed conversion rate and tolerance of heat, drought and disease, Jerseys make much more sense for low-input systems than other exotics. And it's a matter of considerable pride in Jersey that our beloved brown cows are playing such a role in the amazing progress being made by Rwanda, perhaps the more so that we are also two countries united not only in our love of dairy cows, but in the bonds created by the Commonwealth.

The cooperation between Jersey and Rwanda is worth examining for a moment, because it shows what two countries can do when they work together as equals. Actually, Rwanda's

economy is at least 50% bigger than Jersey's – and growing much more quickly – and we have fewer people and less land. But we meet as fellow participants in the brotherhood of the Commonwealth, and we have more to talk about than just cows! Our mutual interests include gorilla conservation, tourism, financial services and parliamentary democracy – and Rwanda can teach us all a thing or two about ensuring women are properly represented in politics.

This kind of relationship shows the Commonwealth at its best, and it's one which Jersey tries to emulate in all its partnerships. We're a little rock off the coast of Normandy, by accident of history proudly British, delighted to be able to share knowledge (and sometimes a little of our wealth) with other like-minded countries, to our mutual benefit. Another good example of this is in the field of conservation and environmental protection.

Protecting threatened ecosystems and species is of concern to us all. And like dairy and finance, it is another of Jersey's strengths, and therefore another key pillar of our international relationships. Ever since Gerald Durrell established his Wildlife Conservation Trust on the Island, we have been working with Commonwealth countries to help preserve our shared natural heritage. And in addition to funding some of Durrell's international work, Jersey Overseas Aid works with

numerous other organisations in Africa to ensure that the world we pass to our children is as pristine as possible.

The central thesis of our conservation livelihoods work is that you can only really preserve threatened habitats if you give their human inhabitants an economic stake in them. So often we find that human development and environmental protection are at odds with each other, but we know that with careful help it is possible to build virtuous circles instead of vicious ones. For example, you can protect natural resources by helping people start enterprises which

“The cooperation between Jersey and Rwanda is worth examining for a moment, because it shows what two countries can do when they work together as equals.”

“This kind of relationship shows the Commonwealth at its best, and it's one which Jersey tries to emulate in all its partnerships.”



depend on them, like honey, medicinal plants and tourism. You can also help people reduce the inputs required for agriculture and livestock, increasing their profitability while reducing the size of their footprint. Crucially, though, organisations and countries need to work together on this, pooling knowledge and expertise and agreeing on shared goals.

A good example of this kind of work is the construction of sand dams in seasonal riverbeds, which capture water for people to use for drinking and agriculture, and also encourages trees to grow again by the sides of the rivers, preventing future flooding and soil run-off. Jersey has funded scores of such projects through a UK NGO called *Excellent Development*, and is now rolling them out for the first time in Malawi. This pioneering project is being implemented by a Malawian charity, which in turn is being advised by an NGO from Mozambique on its own recent experiences of constructing sand dams, all under the technical guidance of a Kenyan organisation which specialises in this methodology.



Images: courtesy of Jersey Ministry for International Development.

Here we have five Commonwealth countries sharing knowledge and working together on something which will ultimately benefit all of us. Jersey is honoured to be facilitating this cooperation, which in turn is strengthened by the close links already forged by the Commonwealth family.

Jersey tries to add value to global affairs in ways that play to its unique strengths – hence the focus of our international development programme on three of the things we do best: dairy, financial inclusion and conservation livelihoods. The Commonwealth, meanwhile, adds value by strengthening our

relationships with the countries we work with, and ensuring that we all interact in the true spirit of brotherhood and equality which characterises the organisation.

In June this year, the Rwandan Minister of Agriculture, Dr Gerardine Mukeshimana, opened a conference which focused on the benefits of the Jersey cow in development. As I replied in my speech of thanks, I was truly humbled to see so many nations represented there in Kigali, sharing their experiences of such issues as genetic improvement, milk pricing, cheese marketing and artificial insemination. Perhaps unsurprisingly, over two-thirds of the 19 countries represented were members or prospective members of the Commonwealth. And as Kiwis chatted to Kenyans about why Jersey cows had a lower carbon footprint, or Tanzanians and Malawians discussed the merits of sexed semen, I reflected again on the unparalleled value of international dialogue and collaboration among those with shared interests. Together, we are more than the sum of our parts.





COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES SHOW LEADERSHIP IN DEFENDING MEDIA FREEDOM



Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt, MP was appointed as the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from July 2018 to July 2019. He was elected Conservative MP for South West Surrey in May 2005. He served as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and became Secretary of State for Health in 2012. In 2010, he became Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport. He was formerly Shadow Culture Secretary and Shadow Minister for Disabled People. Before his election as an MP, he ran his own educational publishing business, *Hotcourses*. He also set up a charity to help AIDS orphans in Africa in which he continues to play an active role.

Freedom of expression and a free and responsible media are enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter, which brings together the values and aspirations that unite the Commonwealth's member states, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and its vast and rich network of organisations.

On 10 and 11 July 2019, two Commonwealth countries, the UK and Canada, hosted the Global Conference for Media Freedom at the Printworks in London. Over 100 countries were represented by members of governments, civil society and the media. This was the first ever Ministerial gathering of its kind, and included twenty-four Ministers from the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth added its own distinctive voice to the debate. On the second day of the conference, Hon. Julie Bishop, AO, the former Foreign Minister of Australia, chaired a panel discussion on strengthening media freedom across the Commonwealth. She was joined by

a panel of three Commonwealth Ministers: Hon. Kamina Johnson-Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica; Hon. Richard Sezibera, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Rwanda; Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah, Ghana's Minister of Information; as well as Desmond Browne, QC of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association and Zoe Titus, Strategic Coordinator of the Namibia Media Trust. The panelists showcased to an audience including a number of Commonwealth Ministers and the Commonwealth Secretary-General, shared best practice in protecting and promoting media freedom, and discussed further practical actions the Commonwealth can take, including the development of Commonwealth principles on freedom of expression and the role of the media in good governance.

All of the Commonwealth's component parts have an important role to play working together to advance the values of the

Commonwealth Charter, which were at the heart of the UK Foreign Secretary's keynote speech, delivered on the first day of the Global Media Freedom Conference.

Plenary speech by Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt, MP, UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs:

Just two months ago, on 16 May 2019, a 28-year-old Mexican reporter called Francisco Romero Diaz got a call before dawn about an incident at a nightclub in Playa del Carmen. Romero specialised in exposing organised crime. He responded as any good journalist should by getting to the scene as quickly as possible. In fact, he was probably walking into a trap. As he arrived, Romero was ambushed and shot dead.

He would have known the risks he was taking. In the previous two months, he'd been detained by the police – allegedly for refusing to pay a bribe – and abducted by armed men. He'd been called anonymously by





Commonwealth Parliamentarians highlight restrictions on media freedom at global conference in London

Commonwealth Parliamentarians gathered in London, UK for the first Global Conference for Media Freedom from 10 to 11 July 2019. The conference was co-hosted by Hon. Chrystia Freeland, MP, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt, MP, the UK Foreign Secretary and is part of an international campaign to shine a global spotlight on media freedom and increase the cost to those that are attempting to restrict it.

The conference was structured around four themes: protection and prosecution, including impunity; national frameworks and legislation; building trust in media and countering disinformation; and media sustainability. According to the conference website, the main purpose of the conference was:

'A free and independent media plays a vital role in protecting human rights and holding the powerful to account. Media freedom is the lifeblood of democracy and can be the foundation for economic prosperity and social development. It means that society can be free, fair and open. Journalistic scrutiny is an essential part of a vibrant and healthy democracy.'

The world is becoming a more hostile place for journalists. Reporters Without Borders called 2018 the deadliest year on record for journalists. UNESCO confirms that at least 99 journalists were killed, a further 348 imprisoned and 60 held hostage. Freedom of expression is being stifled and barriers are preventing the functioning of an independent media. We must address this and the dangers it presents.'

Keynote speakers included: Amal Clooney, International lawyer and the UK Foreign Office's Special Envoy on Media Freedom; David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression;



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Audrey Azoulay, Director-General, UNESCO; and Lord Tony Hall, Director General, BBC.

Global leaders, representatives from the media industry, journalists, civil society and academia attended two days of interactive panel discussions. The first day focused on defining the challenges, the second on framing solutions. The conference also coincided with the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers meetings held in London where media freedoms were also discussed.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/global-conference-for-media-freedom-london-2019>.

someone threatening to throw him off a bridge and claiming to know where his son went to school. And yet despite every act of intimidation and harassment, Romero pressed on with reporting for the newspaper *Quintana Roo Hoy* and running a website focused on organised crime.

He was the sixth journalist to be shot in Mexico this year. Then just one month ago, a seventh, Norma Sarabia, was shot dead in Tabasco State.

Across the world, 99 journalists were killed last year – more than twice as many as a decade earlier – and another 348 were locked up by governments. Few perpetrators

of these crimes are ever held to account. Indeed, even after 11 years, of the 46 journalists who suffered violent deaths in 2008, only 8 cases have been resolved.

Media Freedom: a universal cause

Which is why our conference and this global campaign are so important. Our challenge is to honour the memory of Francisco Romero Diaz – and others like him – by protecting journalists and championing their work as a vital pillar of a free society.

My friend Chrystia (Canada's Foreign Minister), as she said herself a former journalist, and

I are the first Foreign Ministers ever to convene an international conference on this subject and as Chrystia said, we want this to become an annual event around the globe.

Amid the bleak news, today we are joined by delegations from over 100 countries, including 60 ministers, and more than 1,500 journalists, academics and campaigners. Never before have so many countries come together in this cause. And today we send a resounding message that media freedom is not a Western but a universal value. At its best, a free media both protects society from the abuse

of power and helps release the full potential of a nation.

In 1887, the historian and politician Lord Acton wrote his famous words: *'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.'*

The strongest safeguard against the dark side of power is accountability and scrutiny – and few institutions fulfil that role more effectively than a free media.

Real accountability doesn't emerge from the selective and theatrical 'crackdowns' on corruption mounted by authoritarian states, which mysteriously eliminate political opponents whilst leaving the



COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES SHOW LEADERSHIP IN DEFENDING MEDIA FREEDOM

biggest offenders untouched. Real accountability comes from the risk of exposure by a media that cannot be controlled or suborned.

And the evidence is very clear. Of the 10 cleanest countries in the world, as ranked by Transparency International,¹ seven are also in the top ten of the World Press Freedom Index.² Meanwhile, of the ten most corrupt countries, four are in the bottom ten for media freedom.

Powerful people value their reputations, so the sunlight of transparency is the greatest deterrent to wrongdoing. I am a politician, and, like many members of my profession, I don't always enjoy reading what the media says about me. Indeed, a politician who stands up for journalists might occasionally feel like a turkey voting for Christmas. And of course, I need to say, it may be my only chance, newspapers also

“Those of us who are sometimes on the receiving end of criticism we should also reflect on the wisdom of Nelson Mandela, who said: ‘The media are a mirror through which we see ourselves as others perceive us, warts, blemishes and all... Such criticism can only help us to grow, by calling attention to those of our actions and omissions which do not measure up to our people’s expectations.’ ”



Images copyright Global Conference for Media Freedom / FCO Photographer Marcial Grabowski.

make mistakes. Journalists are not immune from the temptations of hyperbole or excess.

But those of us who are sometimes on the receiving end of criticism we should also reflect on the wisdom of Nelson Mandela, who said: *“The media are a mirror through which we see ourselves as others perceive us, warts, blemishes and all... Such criticism can only help us to grow, by calling attention to those of our actions and omissions which do not measure up to our people’s expectations.”*

So, if we are wise, we politicians will treat the media as a critical friend. Our officials might tell us what we want to hear; the media tell us what we need to hear, providing unvarnished reality whether we wish it or not.

How a free media helps society

But a free media does more than just criticise failure and deter wrongdoing; it also nurtures and nourishes the progress of ideas. Throughout history, humanity has achieved its swiftest progress whenever we have allowed ideas to be freely debated, tested and challenged.

No discovery was ever achieved, and no invention

perfected by the suffocating tools of suppression or censorship. The open exchange of ideas through a free media allows the genius of a society to breathe, releasing the originality and creativity of the entire population.

As the great thinker, John Stuart Mill wrote: *“The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is that it is robbing the human race... if the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if it’s wrong, they lose what is almost as great a benefit: the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth produced by its collision with error.”*

Societies which embrace free debate make a disproportionate contribution to the advance of human knowledge. The ten nations with the freest media in the world have produced 120 Nobel Laureates between them – 3 times as many as Russia and China combined.

Norway, with only 5 million people, has won 13 Nobel Prizes. With great respect to my Norwegian friends, Norwegians are no more pioneering or inventive than anyone else. They have flourished because their open society and free media –

ranked the freest in the world – have created the very best setting for their talents to thrive.

The challenges faced by journalists

In other countries life is tougher – but journalists are succeeding against the odds. In Venezuela, we just heard from Luz Mely Reyes, who has defied the Maduro regime by co-founding an independent news website, *Efecto Cocuyo*.

In Kazakhstan, Gulnara Bazhkenova runs the website *Holanews*, which exposed how fish stocks in the Ural river had been devastated by poisoning.

In Peru, Gustavo Gorriti of *IDL Reporteros* has brought to light a series of corruption scandals involving business, the government and the judiciary.

But sadly, in many countries the situation continues to deteriorate. In China, automated censorship and the Great Firewall block access to thousands of news websites, with millions of people employed to censor content, fake social media posts and manipulate online debate.

The first person to establish a website in China focused on human rights was an activist called Huang Qi. He was jailed



in 2016 and nothing has been heard from him since a secret trial in January, though he is in poor health. We have raised his case with the Chinese authorities, and I urge them again to disclose Huang Qi's fate and provide any medical care he may need.

In Vietnam, Tran Thi Nga produced video evidence of police brutality, only to get a 9-year prison sentence in 2017. So today I call on the Vietnamese authorities to release her.

Defending media freedom

In a world where a *Washington Post* columnist, Jamal Khashoggi, was murdered inside a Saudi diplomatic property – and a talented young journalist, Lyra McKee, was shot dead by dissident republicans in Northern Ireland – it would be easy to succumb to fatalism.

But we must resist that. Because if we act together, we can shine a spotlight on abuses and impose a diplomatic price on those who would harm journalists or lock them up for doing their jobs.

So today, I want to announce five practical steps the British government will take alongside our partners.

Firstly, we will join other governments to establish a new Global Media Defence Fund, to be administered by UNESCO. This will take forward the UN Plan of Action

on the Safety of Journalists.³ Among the aims will be to help fund legal advice for journalists and safety training for those venturing into conflict zones. Britain will provide £3 million to the Fund over the next 5 years – and we invite others to contribute.

Secondly, we will establish an international task force to help governments to deliver their commitments on media freedom, including by developing national action plans. Every year at the UN General Assembly, we will meet to review progress of the task force, commending those countries where media freedom is getting better and agreeing what should be done where it is not.

Thirdly, my special envoy, Amal Clooney, has convened a panel of experts to advise countries on how to strengthen the legal protection of journalists. I would encourage all governments to draw on the advice of the panel and respond to its recommendations.

For our part, the British government will ensure that whenever we propose or amend a law, we will consider the potential impact on press freedom. Earlier today, my colleague, UK Foreign Minister, Rt Hon. Harriett Baldwin, announced that our Department for International Development will spend up to £15 million on new programmes to promote media freedom across the world.⁴



Fourthly, Chrystia Freeland and I will bring together a contact group of likeminded countries to lobby in unison when media freedom comes under attack. Our aim is for this to be a rapid response mechanism, helping Foreign Ministers and ambassadors to react as one when abuses take place.

Finally, I invite every country represented here to sign the Global Pledge on media freedom, resolving that we will work together as a coalition to promote this cause and meet again next year.

Conclusion

Colleagues, the struggle for media freedom is being waged day after day, not in conference centres like this, but by independent journalists in authoritarian states; by vigilant bloggers who expose corruption;

and by courageous activists who publish the evidence of human rights abuses. There is no place for neutrality in this struggle.

We are on the side of those who seek to report the truth and bring the facts to light. We stand against those who suppress or censor or exact revenge.

After the killing of Francisco Romero Diaz, his newspaper carried the headline: '*Pain, Fear and Impotence*', and declared: '*The voice of a journalist has been silenced*.' In the end we all face a choice.

Ignore the threats and we tolerate the stifling of independent voices and the dangers of unaccountable power. But defend our values and nations will flourish from the free exchange of ideas. By coming to this conference, each and every one of the 1,000 people here has made that choice.

We have pledged to do what it takes – and no less – to ensure that instead of being silenced, the plural and varied voices of a free media are nurtured and encouraged as the most important contribution to the open societies that are the foundation of human progress.

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- ¹ <https://www.transparency.org/>
- ² <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>
<https://en.unesco.org/un-plan-action-safety-journalists>
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DEFENDING MEDIA FREEDOM IN THE COMMONWEALTH



Hon. Chrystia Freeland, MP

is the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs. From 2015 to 2017, she served as Canada's Minister of International Trade, overseeing the successful negotiation of Canada's free trade agreement with the European Union, CETA. She was first elected as a Member of Parliament in July 2013. An esteemed journalist and author, she was educated at Harvard University before continuing her studies on a Rhodes Scholarship at the University of Oxford. She worked for the *Financial Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Economist*, before serving as Deputy Editor of *The Globe and Mail* and then joining Canadian-owned Thomson Reuters.

This is the address by Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Global Conference for Media Freedom in London.

Thank you very much, Jeremy [Hunt, the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs], for that extremely kind introduction. I do want to thank you, Jeremy, for having the very important idea of hosting this conference.

I think all of us, as Amal Clooney was honest enough to admit, faced some skepticism in doing this. But it is incredibly important and I'm so grateful to you for having the idea and for following through, for inviting Canada to work with you, and I do want to thank the magnificent British team of public servants who have done a fantastic job in bringing this to life. You guys are a terrific model of public service.

I do also want to thank Amal for her great comments and her great work. In every newsroom I worked in as a reporter, an adage was that *"the better the journalist was, even better the lawyer needed to be."*

This autumn we will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. For those of us who lived through that time as I did - my kids can't believe I'm that old - it was a euphoric moment and one where it was tempting to imagine that liberal democracy was both inevitable and eternal. That was such a seductive idea, but it has proven to be an illusory one.

Instead, it is clear today that liberal democracy and the rules-based international order are under greater threat than at any time since the Second World War. As Robert Kagan argues in his recent book, *The Jungle Grows Back*, *"If the liberal order is like a garden, artificial and forever threatened by*

the forces of nature, preserving it requires a persistent unending struggle against the vines and weeds that are constantly working to undermine it from within and overwhelm it from without. Today there are signs all around us that the jungle is growing back."

I agree with that so profoundly. There is no part of our liberal democratic garden that is more threatened by the jungle's resurgence than the free press. The danger is often specific and physical.

Many of you have probably seen on the floor above us, the poignant wall of remembrance that bears the names of the many journalists who have lost their lives in recent years. Let us take a moment to remember them and salute their courage.

The troubling reality, as we have been hearing yesterday and today, is that journalists and other members of the media are increasingly the target of abuse and attack. This must stop.

Journalists must be able to do their work safely and without fear of reprisal. I'd like to pause and address the elephant in the room, the seeming paradox of elected politicians coming together to support a free press. We politicians may seem to be surprising champions for the media and that's because of the inherent structural conflict between the press and the government.

The job of journalists, after all, is to hold our feet to the fire—and as someone who is regularly on the receiving end of that treatment, I can assure you it is not a very pleasant experience. I'm sure all the politicians in this room are nodding in hearty agreement. But it would be a terrible mistake for any politician, smarting perhaps from that discomfort, to

conclude that journalists are the enemy; quite the contrary.

A free and independent media in all of its disputatious, cantankerous glory is one of the cornerstones of liberal democracy. Reminding ourselves and each other of that fundamental reality is why it is so useful for us to come together today. The truth, to be sure, is that it is harder to be a politician, to be a government, in a country with a free and independent media.

But that's the point. By holding us - their governments - accountable, journalists make us better than we would otherwise be. Facts matter. Truth matters. Competence and

"A free and independent media in all of its disputatious, cantankerous glory is one of the cornerstones of liberal democracy. Reminding ourselves and each other of that fundamental reality is why it is so useful for us to come together today. The truth, to be sure, is that it is harder to be a politician, to be a government, in a country with a free and independent media."



honesty among elected leaders and in our public services matter.

These assertions may seem so obvious as to be trite. But the objective of the world's rising authoritarianism is to undermine the very idea of objective facts, of objective truth. We need to fight back.

As Mariana Katzarova so memorably and movingly said yesterday, quoting her dear friend, the assassinated Russian journalist, Anna Politkovskaya, what matters is the information and not what you think about it. Anna's tragic death reminds us that Russia is one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists to work today. That, by the way, is not an accident. It's quite deliberate.

Anna's wonderful defence of the truth echoed a great line, one of my favourites about journalism, from *[Manchester] Guardian* Editor, C.P. Scott. Nearly a century ago, he said "*comment is free but facts are sacred.*" These are lofty words and important ones.

One of the things Jeremy and I hope to do with this conference is to buttress these essential and important ideas with some specific collective and practical steps.

The first is the Global Pledge for Media Freedom. We must seek accountability for crimes against journalists. That is why Canada has used sanctions as a tool to

address abuses of media freedom. Following the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi, Canada imposed sanctions on 17 people. As an extension of the pledge, we are also launching a Media Freedom Coalition that will connect governments with civil society organizations and members of the press to save journalists and media workers at risk.

This Coalition and the Media Freedom Contact Group are cousins to the rapid response mechanism launched during Canada's G7 presidency last year to address malign disinformation.

On World Press Freedom Day this year, Canada announced C\$12 million for the organization Journalists for Human Rights. Today, I am announcing another C\$10 million annually to promote and protect democracy.

This funding will focus on supporting electoral processes, reinforcing democratic practices by combatting disinformation and strengthening civic engagement. An initial one million dollars will go to the new Global Media Defence

Fund housed at UNESCO.

Of course, as Amal has just described, we are launching the independent panel of legal experts to support and advance media freedom worldwide.

Canada is very excited by this work and we are delighted that our own Irwin Cotler, a distinguished Canadian human rights lawyer and former Minister of Justice (and I would say my personal conscience - if he feels we are lagging on the human rights front, Irwin is very quick to phone or email me) will serve on the panel.

I outline these actions, not as an exhaustive list, but as examples of some first concrete steps we can take together. Canada has been delighted to co-host this year's

Media Freedom Conference with the UK and we are honoured to serve as next year's host and look forward to you being with us in Canada, Jeremy.

Listening to the testimony of the brave and brilliant journalists gathered here, it was easy for me yesterday to be scared or frankly to get depressed, but let's choose instead to be inspired.

Let's be inspired by Anas Anas from Ghana who spoke to us yesterday from behind a curtain of beads because he would be in danger if he exposed his face.

Let's be inspired by Luz Mely Reyes of Venezuela who, together with her colleagues, decided - as she so eloquently put it - not to wait for her own funeral but instead to create some fireflies to help light up the darkness of the Maduro dictatorship.

We all need to defend our independent press - even, and perhaps especially, when it criticizes us - as a central institution of democracy.

We need to fight for the open society against the closed one.

We need to fight for the complexity of democratic truth rather than the beguiling simplicity of authoritarian rhetoric.

Then and only then will we have weeded our democratic garden, and will we have kept the jungle from growing back.



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POLICY RESPONSES TO DISINFORMATION: A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH



Professor Victoria Nash is Associate Professor, Deputy Director and Senior Policy Fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford. In the latter role, she is responsible for leading the department's engagement in digital policy matters. Her research focuses on broad issues of Internet governance and regulation.

Disinformation is defined as "false, inaccurate or misleading information designed, presented and promoted to intentionally cause public harm or for profit."

At the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford, we conduct field-leading research into the societal implications of digital technologies. The Institute focuses on many topics with urgent policy relevance and we aim to bring evidence and intellectual rigour to bear on live policy issues that relate to the Internet. The Institute conducts a series of long-standing projects on the effects of digital technologies on government and democracy, including a major research programme investigating the role of computational propaganda on elections.

Like many others, we are thus very interested in the discussions that took place at the 48th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference held in Guernsey in May 2019. I note from continuing media coverage that the term 'fake news' is still popular, but we choose not to use this term and recommend much more careful use of terminology in this area.

This is because:

- Fake news doesn't cover the full spectrum of content and behaviour that is concerning (e.g. false and true information can be blended together, whilst we are also interested in phenomena such as astroturfing, bot networks, misleading memes and opaque political adverts).
- In the future, we will also see more use of deep fakes,

chatbots, and AI (Artificial Intelligence) manipulation.

- In surveys focusing on this area, such as that conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, we see that citizens associate the term 'fake news' just with poor journalism.
- Perhaps most importantly, the term 'fake news' has been used to dismiss unfavourable coverage by politicians such as US President Donald Trump.

Instead it is useful to refer to the problem of 'disinformation'. Disinformation is of course not new; the most exaggerated forms of political propaganda can be found as far back as Ancient Rome, with Julius Caesar using his accounts of the barbarity of his opponents in the Gallic Wars to underline the relative benefits of Roman rule.

One of my favourite historical examples of calculated 'fake news' campaigns, was identified by *The Economist*. The *New York Sun* newspaper claimed in 1835 that giant bat men and temples made of sapphire had been observed on the moon by John Herschel through his new telescope. This made use of the fact that actual reports of observations from the telescope would take months to make their way back from South Africa to the US, and in the meanwhile, enabled the *New York Sun* to dramatically increase its readership, making the paper briefly the most widely read in the world.²

These examples should be sufficient to remind us that the Internet doesn't cause disinformation, and that a desire to manipulate or mislead is a

long-observed, albeit nefarious, human motivation that we could expect to see played out in every new communication technology as they have developed over the centuries.

Digital technologies thus don't cause disinformation, but they may well facilitate its spread.

New manifestations of disinformation have rapidly developed in the past ten years. The potential to spark and spread 'digital wildfires' has been around since the earliest days of the Internet. We can recount a variety of harms resulting from this, such as panic-mongering during the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in the US or the terrorist attacks in Nice; as well as longer-running conspiracy theories

"New manifestations of disinformation have rapidly developed in the past ten years. The potential to spark and spread 'digital wildfires' has been around since the earliest days of the Internet. We can recount a variety of harms resulting from this, such as panic-mongering during the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in the US or the terrorist attacks in Nice."



such as Pizzagate³ and now the rising tide of measles epidemics in the face of concerted anti-vaccination campaigns. There are several features of the Internet that enable such wildfires, for example the decentralised, unmediated nature of content creation and sharing, the capacity for anonymity, and the role of personal networks in sharing 'trusted' information.

Before we leap in to say that 'something must be done', it is worth noting that these new forms of information campaign may look alarming, but that evidence of their effects is hard to come by. For example, we can observe the use and scale of automated social media accounts (bots⁴) spreading disinformation in election campaigns, but we don't yet know who, if anyone, voted differently as a result. It is methodologically challenging to produce rigorous evidence of effect, but unfortunately, it's all too easy to blame online 'fake news' for unexpected political outcomes such as the United Kingdom 'Brexit' referendum result or the election of US President Donald Trump.

There is some evidence that suggests disinformation effects may not be as significant as we think. For example, research suggests that at least in the United States, more people still get their news from TV; and looking at the United States election, supporters of Hillary Clinton were far more likely than supporters of Donald Trump to be on *Reddit* or *Twitter*.⁵ In order to produce a clear evidence base for the effects of online disinformation we would need to understand what contribution small aspects of our daily media experience make to particular users, in different contexts, a research process that would be very challenging to deliver.

Despite the current gaps in our understanding of effect, governments around the world are concerned by the growth of online



disinformation, and particularly by concerted campaigns to shift public opinion by state and non-state actors. There is a huge variety in the approaches that governments are adopting to tackle these problems.

Colleagues at the Oxford Internet Institute recently produced an inventory of government responses to malicious uses of social media (which goes beyond just disinformation), providing insights into tools employed by 43 different countries since 2016⁶ For example, the inventory report identified:

- measures targeting social media companies (e.g. Brazil, Germany and South Korea have established laws requiring firms to take down illegal content).
- measures targeting offenders (e.g. Egypt, Indonesia and Kuwait can legally prosecute offenders, and there are Bills in Ireland to prosecute not only those who create content but who circulate it).
- measures targeting government capacity (e.g. the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada have held parliamentary and congressional hearings or inquiries to review the need for political action).

- measures targeting citizens and civil society (e.g. Croatia and France have introduced new media literacy campaigns and the regulation of journalism via accreditation has been established in the United States and Tanzania).

Within this inventory, we can observe some very different approaches: in Singapore, government actors will be responsible for deciding what content is factual, whilst the approach in the United Kingdom recognises the need for government to set frameworks such as fact-checking organisations.

It is worth noting that these strategies for tackling disinformation do face some challenges. In the long history of content regulation (*which dates back at least to the publication of the Catholic Church's Index Librorum Prohibitorum in 1559*), we have gathered a number of well-tested tools – for example, censorship, licensing, prosecution for holding or creating certain content, and more recently, filtering out the 'bad' or asking companies to take it down. However, online disinformation content may not easily suit such strategies because:

- it may be untrue but need

not contain banned or illegal content;

- it may be a mix of truth and lies;
- it may be opinion or be presented as humour;

In addition, it is not even clear that banning or flagging disinformation will be effective. Indeed, it may even make the problem worse either by drawing more attention to the content (known as the 'Streisand effect'⁷) or enabling distributors of such content to claim that their views are persecuted or censored, adding fuel to claims of conspiracy.

Even more crucially, issues of human rights arise. *If content is not in itself illegal, should it be removed or even down rated in our social media feeds and searches? How do we balance and protect the full range of human rights at stake in tackling disinformation?* This would include not just the right to freedom of expression but also the right to information, the right to participation and rights to protection from harm; these need to be considered and balanced in the construction of any proportionate regulatory framework.

Personally, I have been impressed by the outlook of the European Union's High-Level



“Ultimately, we should be thinking far more about how we support a healthy information ecosystem, rather than just how we get rid of ‘fake news’. This would entail a much more ambitious policy framework that goes far beyond simply tasking social media platforms with better moderating of their content.”



Working Group (HLWG) on Fake News and Online Disinformation.⁸ The EU HLWG have not rushed to recommend top-down regulation but to look at interventions across the whole social and technical system that makes disinformation possible. The EU HLWG are just as interested in how you can disrupt the political economy that underpins the market for disinformation as they are in stopping the spread of obviously fake content. The EU HLWG propose five pillars of action:

- To enhance the transparency of the digital information ecosystem;
- To promote and enhance media and information literacy approaches;
- To develop tools that can empower users and journalists to engage in a fast-moving information environment;
- To safeguard the diversity and sustainability of the news media;
- To evaluate success through continuous research in collaboration with platforms.

To me, this starts to sound like a public health approach. A public health approach is system-wide, recognising that no single interventions will be enough to address a problem with deep-seated social, political and economic roots.

Ultimately, we should be thinking far more about how we support a healthy information ecosystem, rather than just how we get rid of ‘fake news’. This would entail a much more ambitious policy framework that goes far beyond simply tasking social media platforms with better moderating of their content. Given that disinformation seems unlikely to go away any time soon, the only question is whether states will ultimately have the appetite for such a broad scale of potentially costly measures.

For further information about the Oxford Internet Institute please visit www.oii.ox.ac.uk.

This article is based on a presentation by the author at the 48th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Guernsey from 19 to 22 May 2019 which discussed the impact of ‘fake news’ and digital disinformation on media freedoms in the Commonwealth.

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- ² ‘Bat men on the moon’, from the *New York Sun*, 1835. Cited in Standage, T. (2017) *The True History of Fake News*, *The Economist*.
- ³ Pizzagate is a widely discredited conspiracy theory that went viral during the 2016 United States Presidential election that contained false claims linking high-ranking officials of the Democratic Party with an alleged human trafficking and child sex ring involving a pizza restaurant chain.

⁴ Bots are automated scripts that generate and replicate social media content.

⁵ Pew Research: *The Modern News Consumer*, July 2016.

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⁷ ‘The Streisand effect’ is a phenomenon whereby an attempt to hide, remove, or censor a piece of information has the unintended consequence of publicizing the information more widely, usually facilitated by the Internet. It is named after American singer Barbra Streisand, whose attempt to suppress photographs of her residence in California inadvertently drew further public attention to it.

⁸ European Union’s High-Level Working Group (HLWG) on Fake News and Online Disinformation – report is available at <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/final-report-high-level-expert-group-fake-news-and-online-disinformation>.



FAKE NEWS AND THE PHENOMENON OF 'NO PLATFORMING'

Introduction

The topic of the presentation was 'Fake News and No platforming'. This article will illustrate how the increasing trend of 'no platforming' speakers can lead to a form of fake news: if certain subjects or viewpoints are circumscribed, the information people are getting is fake. A particular area of concern in the current discussion is 'no platforming' on university campuses.

'No platforming' on university campuses is happening at a time in students' lives when, as young people, they should be eagerly listening to alternative viewpoints. All of us who are slightly older will agree that this is a new variation of censorship. If people can't listen to alternative viewpoints, their thought process is essentially being censored. The same is true with the 'safe space' movement which is prevalent in the United States of America. The demand for 'safe space' is also a form of 'no platforming', often by young people whose minds should be rather more robust than they apparently are as they grow to adulthood.

When I was at university in the 1970s, we eagerly joined clubs and societies to listen to a wide range of opinion to educate ourselves; we wanted to try to understand fully about the complex issues of the day – Palestine, the civil war in Lebanon, civil rights in the United States, apartheid in South Africa, communism in the Soviet Union – all topics about which we thought we knew something, but, when we heard another side of the argument, we realised that our knowledge

was limited and that there may not just be one 'truth'.

Today, students are liable to take a dislike to the views of a person even before they have heard them speak. In her book, 'Why we get the wrong politicians', the writer, Isabel Hardman, puts the general trend to abuse politicians for their political views in this broader context: 'It coincides with a general struggle in Britain to debate respectfully and fully, with even university students retreating into 'safe spaces' and 'no platform' policies simply so they do not have to encounter ideas they find uncomfortable. Arguing and disagreeing is too much effort: much better to hate, resent and, in extreme cases, abuse and attack.'¹

When UK Member of Parliament, Jacob Rees-Mogg, MP went to address students at Bristol University, he was heckled and pushed about by those who did not want him to speak. One may not agree with Jacob Rees-Mogg's views, but that does not mean that those who did want to listen to him, should have been prevented from hearing him speak by those who did not. As it happened, he literally battled through the crowd of protesters and was able to give his speech.

In 2015, the writer, Germaine Greer was 'no platformed' by the University of Cardiff because her 'misgendering trans women and denying the existence of transphobia views on feminism' did not suit the extreme feminists. But, as was pointed out by journalist, Claire Lehmann, the fact that she was prevented from speaking (she withdrew because of all the complaints) deprived students at Cardiff from the opportunity to

hear one of the most significant female intellectuals of the last century. "The 'no-platforming' campaign against Germaine Greer reflects a deeper sickness afflicting Western universities. While the stated aim is to reduce harm, the end result is enforced ignorance," wrote Lehmann.²

Speakers who 'no platform' other speakers are part of the same phenomenon. Some years ago, the former British Parliamentarian, broadcaster and writer, George Galloway 'no platformed' his Israeli counterpart, when he walked out of an Israel-Palestine debate held at Christ Church College, Oxford. What is significant is that he was

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FAKE NEWS AND THE PHENOMENON OF 'NO PLATFORMING'



“Even the Oxford Union – founded in 1823 and where all manner of topics have been debated – has had to reinforce its identity as the ‘bastion of free speech’. So concerned was Genevieve Athis, the President of the Oxford Union in Trinity Term 2019, that she and her fellow officers and standing committee believed that a clause should be inserted in the Oxford Union Rules indicating that free speech was one of the Oxford Union’s objectives.”

applauded for doing so, with comments on *YouTube* like: ‘Well done George, Don’t debate with devils.’ But, as illustrated by another commentator, this cannot be considered a healthy approach to dialogue: ‘I think this is wrong. He may not agree with the state of Israel, but how will you ever make progress without debate?’

Even the Oxford Union – founded in 1823 and where all manner of topics have been debated – has had to reinforce its identity as the ‘bastion of free speech’. So concerned was Genevieve Athis, the President of the Oxford Union in Trinity Term 2019, that she and her fellow officers and standing committee believed that a clause should be inserted in the Oxford Union Rules indicating that free speech was one of the Oxford Union’s objectives. What is noteworthy is not so much that such a clause was not in the rules before – probably because upholding the principle of free speech was taken for granted – but that, in the current climate, the President believed that it had to be spelt out

in black and white, lest anyone question the Union’s liberal approach towards debating.

Yet, despite the Oxford Union’s longstanding reputation for free speech, there are those who still wish to circumscribe who is given a platform. In 2018, there was an attempt to prevent the American Media Executive, political figure, strategist and co-founder of *Cambridge Analytica*, Steve Bannon, from entering the Union. Again, one may not agree with his views (economic nationalism, reduction of immigration, restricting free trade with China) but it is important for students to understand that people with such views exist, otherwise they are living in an echo chamber of their own opinions and in a world of censored and hence ‘fake’ news. I should also add that one of the prerequisites of inviting guests to speak at the Oxford Union is that they have to agree to being questioned and to have their views challenged. Any speaker who wants a prepared list of questions submitted to him or her in advance, or who will not take

questions, does not get invited.

The other driving force behind no platforming is our political correctness. In January 2019, the Russian comedian, Konstantin Kris, was invited to speak at a charity event at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London but, when confronted with the ‘behavioural agreement form’ he had been requested to sign, giving his agreement to a ‘no tolerance policy with regards to racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, xenophobia, Islamophobia or anti-religion or anti-atheism’ he felt compelled to withdraw from the programme. Of course, it is important that peoples’ sensibilities should be respected but it can sometimes be at the cost of freedom of speech.

There is also the challenge of platforms narrowing because of the times in which we live. The UK Government’s PREVENT strategy³ has the necessary objective of preventing young people from becoming radicalised: in terms of challenging any



ideology which supports terrorism, protecting those who might become susceptible to radicalisation and supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation. If too broadly interpreted, the effect can be detrimental.

Take the case, again, of the Oxford Union whose officers - students in their late teens, early twenties - have the right to invite whoever they wish to speak. Since the Oxford Union has charitable status, it is answerable to the UK Charities Commission which is conscious of upholding the PREVENT strategy, and so a new procedure has had to be instituted whereby there is a memorandum of understanding between the OUS and OLDUT - the Oxford Literary Debating Union Trust which owns the buildings - which each new President has to sign, confirming that he or she will inform OLDUT of any 'controversial' speakers (i.e. those who would incite people to break the law), that he or she may want to invite.

But, while being answerable to the UK Charities Commission, the Trustees have to be careful not to prevent the OUS from inviting the broader category of 'controversial speakers', for example, the French politician and President of the

French National Front, Marine Le Pen, who may have extreme right wing views but is nonetheless an elected politician, or one of the co-leaders of the AFD - Alternative for Germany. Yet again, even if one does not agree with their views, the belief of the Trustees is that the students have the right to listen to them and be in a position to make up their own minds, which is all part of the educative process.

In the present digital age, the dangers of the echo chamber are becoming exacerbated by several factors: through for example, social media platform, *Twitter*. There is the tendency to 'follow' people whose viewpoints one agrees with in preference to those one might disagree with. This means alternative opinions are absent from the narrative, which provides a fake image of what other people are thinking. There is also a herd mentality: if friends are 'following' certain people, then there is the tendency to follow suit and avoid the possibility of being publicly ridiculed for following people with an alternative viewpoint. The same applies to *Snapchat* and *Instagram*. In relation to *Facebook*, one is 'friends' with people of like-minded viewpoints and so

not exposed to the opposing arguments others might have. If someone suddenly expresses a view one doesn't like, he or she can be 'unfriended'. This is another form of 'no platforming', which, can have a devastating impact for young people, engendering feelings of rejection and exclusion.

The World Wide Web has had tremendous advantages in disseminating information. But the trouble is everything on offer is optional. A vast amount of information is available but only the links that one clicks on are going to be informative, and so nuanced information can easily be missed. When I worked in the BBC World Service on a programme called *Outlook*, the format provided for four voices - one voice giving one point of view, another view giving an opposing point of view, and a third voice providing something in the middle with one's own voice wrapping up and bringing the feature together, as well as highlighting any viewpoint that had been missed - and I remember the prospect of being shamed by the Editor, for producing an unbalanced package, as an experience one wanted to avoid.

In conclusion, it is my belief

that 'no platforming' sets us on the path to living in a world of fake news. The digital world in which we live has made it easier. We must realise that students who receive their education on campuses where mobs of 'no platformers' dictate the agenda of what others listen to, can be expected to bring those same anti-liberal, anti-progressive values into the workplace, and, if they become politicians, into government.

As Claire Lehmann has noted: *'While the stated aim of this approach is to reduce harm, the end result is enforced ignorance. No-platforming does not change people's hearts and minds, it intimidates people into silence. It is an anti-Enlightenment movement.'*

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IN DEFENCE OF MULTILATERALISM: A VIEW FROM THE UK



Helen Goodman, MP is the UK Shadow Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and a Member of the UK Parliament. Before her election, Helen worked in the office of the Czechoslovak Prime Minister between 1990-91. She has represented the Bishop Auckland constituency in County Durham since 2005, winning three consecutive elections. In the last Labour Government, Helen served as Deputy Leader of the House and as a Minister at the Department of Work and Pensions.

'Brexit' is an attempt to tackle domestic problems by altering our relationship with our European neighbours. Some feel that this is doomed to fail because our economy and security is so integrated with our neighbours and we should therefore concentrate on avoiding it or getting the least-worst option while tackling with renewed vigour the discontents – about housing, unstable jobs and incomes, and rapid cultural change which brought this populist wave. Others believe that through the projection of a 'Global Britain' we can rebuild our prestige and renew our international relationships. But what if the domestic discontents are part of the unfolding of international developments?

After all, Britain is not the only European country facing tough economic competition from the Far East; or large-scale immigration; or the pressure on its youth from an apparently ungovernable internet and social media. And if this is the case, what does it mean for the way we conduct our foreign policy?

This essay aims to look at three things: the nature of the modern world, what we want to achieve in it and thirdly at the levers we can pull and the resources we can bring to bear to achieve our aims.

The Modern World

Interconnectedness beyond national boundaries is not a new phenomenon. Once England was part of the Roman Empire, then we were ruled from Scandinavia; even as the Kingdom united and grew we were part of the Roman Catholic Church. Later we became a phenomenally

successful trading nation with an Empire which stretched across the globe bringing cultural as well as financial exchange.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the proportion of our economy which is traded remained constant between 1900 and 2000. In 1900, exports constituted 24.9% of the economy and in 2000, it was back at 24.9%. But the degree of interconnectedness today seems far more immediate and intense – at the click of a button we can be in touch with people thousands of miles away; huge movements of people flow – some motivated by economic opportunities, others forced by war, desperation and climate change.

We, in the UK, are fortunate for the last 75 years to have lived in a largely peaceful and prosperous environment. This is frequently attributed to the very successful institution-building in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War (WWII), in which we played a significant part: the United Nations (UN), the UN Declaration of Human Rights, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the economic institutions – the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (to which we had recourse ourselves in 1976), the World Bank, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which developed into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) – and, of course, the European Union (EU).

One of the high points in this period came on 9th November 1989. I can remember watching the TV coverage of the crowds breaking the Berlin Wall and writing in my diary – *"this is the most important day of my life."* Those were heady days, to be young

was very heaven. It felt like the completion of the liberation of May 1945. The bipolar world and the threat of nuclear war, which that had meant, was lifted. We were certain we could be safer, and some of us on the Left looked forward optimistically to the development of new economic models, negotiating a path that would take seriously the Eastern European commitment to equality and the West's enterprise and openness. Russia was invited to the G7 meetings in London. We discussed the possibility of using co-ops and the Yugoslav model.

However, Yugoslavia was the first country in the 1990s to collapse in a bloody and violent war; refugees from its horrors began arriving in London and we were shaken from our optimism.

The political right claimed victory – market liberalism was declared to be both the cause and the destination of this new world – the alpha and the omega – even in China, Deng Xiaoping was following its tenets.

Again, of course, their confidence was overblown. The rise of religious fundamentalism – of Islam as a political force in the Middle East and Christian Evangelicals in the US – pushed back against the idea or possibility of one totalising ideology.

The advent of climate change and the collapse of the markets in 2008 show both that we have not achieved a secure and sustainable way of life and that developments across the globe affect our day to day lives. Badly regulated US mortgage markets means queues outside *Northern Rock* (a bank in the UK); the destruction of the Amazon rainforest brings floods in Cumbria, in the north of England.



Following the 'Brexit' vote, there has been a lot of soul searching about the failures of domestic policy – why were those outside the major cities feeling particularly disempowered? Why were some of those with the most to lose from rupturing economic relationships with Europe amongst some of the most inclined to vote Leave? But not so much attention has been paid to international policy.

The fact is that the world in 2019 is not as it was in 1945 – or indeed 1913 or 1989. Yes, we are not in a bipolar world, but nor are we in a world which can be dominated by the Americans.

The biggest international story is the rise of China. Forty years ago, China was a struggling middle-sized power with a poor, inefficient and stagnant economy. Since the implementation of major economic reforms in 1979, it has experienced a staggering economic transformation. According to the World Bank, China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has averaged nearly 10% a year – the fastest sustained expansion by a major economy in history.¹ It is now the world's second largest economy as measured by nominal GDP

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and has established itself as a geopolitical superpower.

The other big story is the emergence of the other BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). First conceived of in 2001 by Goldman Sachs during an economic forecasting exercise, the BRICS together contain three billion people – over one third of the world's population – and account for between 25-30% of global GDP.² The grouping has evolved from a popular concept to a formal grouping – holding their first summit in 2009 – and present a direct challenge to the hegemony of the G7 nations.

Progress on human well-being paints a mixed picture. On the one hand, we have seen a discernible improvement in people's lives over the past three decades. According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) data, between 1990 and 2017 nearly every country in the world (with a few notable exceptions, such as Syria and Yemen) has seen a net increase in their Human Development Index (HDI) scores and life expectancy.³ World Bank Data also indicates a continued (albeit slowing) decrease in poverty levels, with the percentage of people living in extreme poverty globally falling to a new low of 10% in 2015.⁴

On the other hand, there is plenty to overshadow this progress. According to the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, the number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million in 2018.⁵ This is the highest level that UNHCR has seen in its almost 70 years. There is also still plenty to be done on human rights and democracy. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights turned 70 in 2018, yet in the past two years alone, we have seen nearly 700,000 Rohingya Muslims forced to flee state oppression in Myanmar, over one million Uighur Muslims detained in re-education camps in Xinjiang and over 300 human rights defenders have been murdered.⁶ According to Freedom House, 37% of the world's population live

in countries categorised as 'not free', and out of a possible score of 100, two thirds of countries scored less than 50 on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI).⁷

Britain may have the fifth largest economy today, but the inexorable rise of the emerging economies with larger populations could see us drop down to 10th in 2050, behind Indonesia and Mexico.⁸ This is simply not under our control. This is not to say we cannot adopt both domestic and foreign policy stances which are positive and constructive – we can. But as the psychotherapists say: the art of growing up is coming to terms with the world as it is, not as we would like it to be.

These big prospective changes also explain why countries beyond the victors of the Second World War are discontent with the governance arrangements of the existing institutions – why, for example, China set up the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to rival the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD – part of the World Bank Group) and why there are calls to expand the UN Security Council.

But it's not just a question of whether the right people are sitting at the table. An even bigger question is whether we have the right institutions tackling the right problems.

The Bretton Woods Institutions⁹ were far sighted and strong, but they were established to tackle the world's problems in 1945 and as we have seen, these are changing. Let me give some examples: the internet; climate change; the impact transnational corporations have on human rights; drugs; migration and the rights of refugees.

We are often enjoined to defend the rules-based international order and explain its benefits and virtues. This is usually in response to a populist attack from US President Donald Trump. President Trump is particularly irritating, because he is good at identifying actual weaknesses – Chinese theft of intellectual property or European countries' failure to pay a fair share

of NATO costs – which no one can deny, while at the same time proposing solutions which are totally counterproductive: a trade war or US disengagement from a shared defence alliance.

So it is true that the UN has been much stronger than the League of Nations in providing a forum for resolving disputes peacefully and that the WTO has, up until now, prevented the 'beggar thy neighbour' policies which dogged economies in the 1930s, but it's also true that big issues like how to govern the internet and tackle climate change effectively have not been cracked. And that, especially post-2008, a sense of insecurity has brought to the fore strong men – Trump, Putin and Ji and right-wing populists – Matteo Salvini and Viktor Orban whose proposals are to build up walls, whether physical, legal or metaphorical, against outsiders.

'Brexit' is our own special national brand of populism in the UK. This then is the hostile environment in which we are seeking to tackle our problems.

What do we want to achieve in UK Foreign Policy?

Citizens regard the first duty of government as being to provide security and stability. This does not of course mean that foreign policy needs to be an exercise in crude nationalism such as 'America First' There is a huge appetite for policies which bring security and stability but are also socially responsible.

Two points are worth making here. Firstly, security and social responsibility are not necessarily in conflict. We can afford to spend 2% of our national income on defence and 0.7% on overseas aid; we can share our intelligence resources with our NATO allies and run a BBC World Service which broadcasts truthful fact-based news into closed countries like North Korea. We can do both.

Secondly – and it flows from this socially responsible policy framework – promoting



IN DEFENCE OF MULTILATERALISM: A VIEW FROM THE UK

development and tackling climate change effectively will increase our security, because they will increase the security of others and promote a shared worldview.

Rt Hon. Emily Thornberry, MP, the UK Shadow Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs spoke at length about this to the Institute for Government recently: “[We should] champion certain values as well as commercial interests” and “by putting values back at the heart of our diplomacy [we will] help to transform what Britain is seen to stand for as a country.”

The UK Leader of the Opposition, Rt Hon. Jeremy Corbyn, MP has said “Labour will speak for democratic values and human rights” and “will be driven by progressive values and international solidarity.”¹⁰

Whatever the rights or wrongs of the misadventure of Iraq – it clearly did not make the British people more secure. So, we want to pursue security, stability and social responsibility.

The prime security alliance the UK enjoys is through NATO – itself based on shared interests and values. Key to this for us has been the US-UK ‘special relationship’, and this has been put under considerable pressure lately. Firstly by revulsion among the public at the aftermath of the Iraq War; then by the election of Trump who seems to embody most of what the British Left dislikes about the US, and little of what it does like, and finally by ‘Brexit’ – which potentially means that when the US want to contact Europe the first phone they ring is no longer going to be the one in King Charles Street (at the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

What this tells us is not that we no longer share objective interests with the US or that our strong cultural and historic ties are worthless – but that, perhaps like a marriage that’s gone through a bad patch, the relationship needs a bit of work. It’s not going to be

what it was, so we need to find a new balance. An interesting study recently published by the UN Association¹¹, looking at international perceptions of the UK, found that a relationship in which the two countries are seen as too close *reduces* our prestige. If we merely follow the US – there’s no point in anyone asking for our help in influencing them.

The UK Labour Party is committed to NATO membership and the two per cent¹² and this essay is not about defence policy but refashioning the relationship so it is positive without being subservient on trade (e.g. chlorinated chicken from the USA) or culture (our children shouldn’t be exposed to ‘bad’ cartoons. Britain has much higher standards for children’s television than the US, with less violence and more rounded and diverse characters. The US film moguls would like to swamp our TV stations). This is not about ‘Brexit’, but it is worth noting that the current government as part of its ‘Brexit’ preparations has increased the number of diplomatic positions in European countries by 50.

This, of course, is part of a more general re-focussing which will be required if the UK leaves the EU. An assessment and review of the impact and significance of the change means working that bit harder to be heard elsewhere. Individual bilateral relationships matter. But I hope just two examples will illustrate that alone they cannot deliver our aims.

China is a global power and as we have noted, it is growing rapidly. But the truth is we are conflicted. We want and need the trading opportunities offered. This will help our economic stability, but this is tempered by our concerns over Chinese political culture and human rights record. We look for opportunities to co-operate – like climate change – but sometimes the conflicts become sharp – as when we look at developments in Hong Kong or investment from *Huawei*. These bring into relief, as it

were, the dilemma. Could we hope to persuade the Chinese that if they are to move from global power to global leadership, they need to adopt more liberal global norms?

Simply to pose the questions is to invite a negative answer. Britain is no longer big enough to effect major change through a series of bilateral relationships. This may even be true with small and middle-sized countries like say Vietnam. Relatively speaking, we may have more leverage, but they too are tied in to regional organisations and power structures – Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, in the case of Vietnam.

In other words, given the UK’s place in the world the way to make Britain safer and more stable is to contribute to the development of a safer and more secure international environment through the introduction of new norms, better international legal frameworks and institutions which do tackle at source underlying causes of power imbalances.

Furthermore, this is not just a question of relations between nation states: it is also about preventing a big beast jungle where private actors – banks, new technology firms, extractive industries – ride roughshod¹³ over countries and their citizens. It is important to have a positive and proactive stance in order to avoid foreign policy descending into endlessly reactive crisis management.

What are the levers we can pull and the resources we can bring to bear to achieve our aims?

The UK has significant resources – it is the fifth largest economy in the world. Our ranking is projected to fall to 10th in 2050, but we’ll still be a wealthy country in the top quartile.

We have considerable military strength. The UK has the largest military budget in the EU, has a navy bigger than the French, Italian and German Navies combined – and possesses the fifth largest military stockpile of nuclear

warheads.¹⁴ There is an argument to be had about whether we devote too much or too little resource to our military and what the balance should be between conventional, nuclear and cyber resources. For the purposes of this analysis I am going to assume a steady state.

The UK’s soft power is remarkable, and our history has given us positional power in key institutions: permanent member of the UN Security Council; executive directorships in the IMF and IBRD; a key role for the Governor of the Bank of England in the Bank for International Settlements.

We also have strong alliances through NATO and the Anglosphere. The Joint Intelligence Committee (on which I served in humble capacity as a junior civil servant during the 1983 Iran-Iraq War) still relies on shared intelligence with the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the UK.

Perhaps the most important is the English language – spoken by approximately 20% of the world’s population.¹⁵ World class universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and the London universities attract international students from across the world. The UK has renowned cultural resources and media influence through the *BBC World Service*.

Under the UK Labour Party, some sources of soft power were enhanced significantly and consequently, we are well respected for our overseas aid programme, our debt forgiveness initiative and climate change leadership. We have a large and highly regarded diplomatic service, the power of connectivity and the network of Commonwealth nations.

But our history is also a liability. Almost every former colony has resentments as well as warm memories. The tension between this chequered colonial past and how we move beyond it is played out in an unusual context: The Commonwealth.

For some, the Commonwealth



will never be able to shake off its colonial roots and is therefore dismissed as a relic that is not fit for modern times. Others see such criticism as unfair and argue that the Commonwealth is a very different institution to what it was in the 1970s. The Commonwealth gives us an opportunity to express what Lord Ricketts called 'convening power'.¹⁶

The Commonwealth consists of 53 countries and contains 2.4 billion people¹⁷ – one third of the earth's population – of which more than 60% are under the age of 29. As of 2017, the combined GDP of the Commonwealth was US\$10.4 trillion and bilateral intra-Commonwealth trading costs are on average 19% less than those between non-member countries.¹⁸ The Commonwealth boasts five G20 economies (Australia, Canada, India, South Africa and the UK) and four out of five of the *Five Eyes* intelligence alliance are Commonwealth Members (Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK). And of course, members of the Commonwealth club also populate the other major international institutions, such as the UN General Assembly.

The Commonwealth Charter lists human rights, international peace and security, democracy, sustainable development and gender equality as among its core values. While it certainly has its limitations and baggage, if approached as an equal and voluntary association of states rather than a post-colonial toy, the Commonwealth's vast network and sheer size can act an important network within which we can build progressive alliances and networks.

Conclusion

In this environment, the idea of 'Global Britain' – a Britain reaching out across the world to influence events seems to be a throwback to the 1950s – an idea constructed on the fantasy of England as a seafaring nation

almost entirely for the backward-looking domestic audience whose support the Government fears losing to Nigel Farage (the Leader of the Brexit Party).

Instead I think we should start a grown-up discussion about the modernisation of international institutions to tackle 21st century problems. These are inherently shared and they are not amenable to national solutions. The current framework is biased towards protecting free trade and financial investments at the expense of people and the environment.

These are the items I would put at the top of the agenda:

- Strengthening the legal obligations on nation states to meet the climate change objective of temperature rise limited to two degrees celsius and – critically – making trade obligations in the WTO subservient to this, rather than as at present having a 'trade override'.
- Introducing a clear international legal framework for internet governance. Currently the free for all resembles the 16th century law of the sea as pirates abound – there are no shared controls on terrorism, child protection, IP or tax and as more and more economic activity moves to the web more and more human activity takes place in an anarchic value free vacuum.
- Tackling financial crime; money laundering; tax evasion; bribery and corruption needs more than the current voluntary approach as exemplified by the OECD codes.
- Strengthening the enforcement mechanisms of the ILO and the Human Rights Council and introducing new norms for the protection of migrants.
- Introducing a UN Binding Treaty of Human Rights and Transnational Corporations.

This would go further than the UK Prime Minister's – very welcome – initiative on modern slavery and protect the rights of indigenous people whose land is stolen and exploited, with recourse to an international tribunal. This could also provide for environmental protection.

Building international institutions takes time and it is a shared enterprise. But we should be inspired by the example of those who went to Bretton Woods in 1944 before WWII was over. It is never too soon to begin. Let us not leave it until it's too late.

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⁹ The Bretton Woods Institutions are the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They were set up at a meeting of 43 countries in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in July 1944. Their aims were to help rebuild the shattered post-war economy and to promote international economic cooperation.

¹⁰ BBC Politics, Jeremy Corbyn: Labour leader's speech, BBC, September 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-politics-45653499>

¹¹ Jess Gifkins, Samuel Jarvis and Jason Ralph, 'Global Britain in the United Nations' (United Nations Association-UK, 2019)

¹² At their summit in Wales in 2014, NATO leaders agreed to a guideline of spending no less than 2% of national GDP on defence, of which at least 20% should go on major equipment, including research and development. At the time only three countries met the 2% target; all the rest pledged to "move towards" it by 2024. *The Economist*, 14 March 2019.

¹³ If you say that someone is riding roughshod over a person or their views, you disapprove of them because they are using their power or authority to do what they want, completely ignoring that person's wishes.

¹⁴ Hans M. Kristensen and Matt Korda, *Status of World Nuclear Forces, Federation of American scientists*, May 2019, <https://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>

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PUTTING ROAD SAFETY ON THE COMMONWEALTH AGENDA



Jim Fitzpatrick, MP is the United Kingdom Member of Parliament for Poplar and Limehouse in east London and he serves as the Chair of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for Transport Safety and as Parliamentary Advisor to the Commonwealth Road Safety Initiative.

Every day 3,700 people are killed in road crashes around the world. Tragically road traffic injuries are now the leading cause of death for children and young people aged 5-29 years.¹ This is a major challenge for the Commonwealth as over 60% of its combined population is under 30.

Promoting safety for young people is therefore a major focus of the recently launched Commonwealth Road Safety Initiative (CRSI) which, under the patronage of HRH Prince Michael of Kent, is developing a framework for joint action on road injury prevention aiming to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

The 53 countries of the Commonwealth record over 212,000 traffic deaths every year but according to World Health Organisation estimates, the number of fatalities exceeds 500,000 when adjusted for under reporting.² Across the Commonwealth levels of road injury differ enormously. Fatality rates in road crashes range from 3 per 100,000 population in the best performing countries to above 30 in the worst. However, in nearly all Commonwealth countries fatality and injury rates are rising rather than falling.

This is very disappointing given that road safety is now included in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals for both health and cities (SDGs 3.6 & 11.2). The Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) meeting in London last year *'reiterated their commitment to achieving the health-related goals of Agenda 2030, particularly Goal 3'*, so stronger efforts to tackle the growing scourge of road injury especially among young people is now an urgent necessity.

Parliamentarians across the

Commonwealth have a key role to play to reduce the epidemic of road deaths that cause so much avoidable human misery and unnecessary economic losses. We can help to formulate effective national road safety policies and legislation; we can support adequate levels of funding for road injury prevention; we can ensure accountability of governments and public authorities to meet road safety targets; and we can engage with the community to help make roads safe for all those we were elected to serve.

The challenge in many Commonwealth countries today is to apply basic road safety laws; for example, to wear seat belts, use motorcycle helmets, to prevent drink driving, and to enforce them effectively. Minimum safety standards are also required for both used and new vehicles. Better road design and management must also prioritise the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. This is especially important as vulnerable road users including motorcyclists now account for over half of global road traffic deaths.

To encourage a new level of Commonwealth commitment to effective road injury prevention the CRSI has brought together a distinguished panel of road safety experts to set out an agenda for action aiming to halve deaths and serious injuries from road crashes

by 2030. The CRSI's report to be released in December 2019 will strongly endorse the World Health Organization's 'Save LIVES: road safety technical package' an evidence-based inventory of priority interventions with a focus on speed management, leadership, infrastructure design and improvement, vehicle safety standards, enforcement of traffic laws and post-crash survival.³ Experience shows that if countries take decisive action to implement the WHO's Save LIVES recommendations significant injury reduction will follow.

In February 2020, the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety will be held in Stockholm, Sweden⁴ to assess current progress in road safety and set new priorities for 2030. This will be followed by a UN special General Assembly debate on road safety that will adopt a resolution based on the outcome of the Stockholm conference.⁵ These important events next year will provide a new mandate for global road safety. But they also give Commonwealth countries an opportunity to reassess their own road injury prevention priorities and take on a global leadership role.

The Commonwealth has a justified reputation in promoting effective collaboration as was highlighted at the 2018 CHOGM



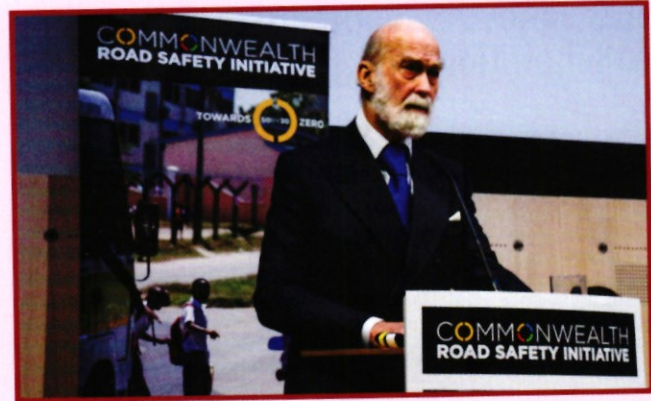


New Commonwealth Road Safety Initiative launches to halve road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030

Every year over 210,000 people are killed in road crashes and millions more are seriously injured in Commonwealth countries. Today road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young people aged 5-29 years. This is a major challenge for Commonwealth countries as over 60% of their populations are under 30. Improved road safety must become a major priority for Commonwealth countries concerned to protect the wellbeing and health of their children and young people.

Road safety in the 53 countries of the Commonwealth is very diverse. Fatality rates in road crashes range from 3 to 35 per 100,000 population. However, in nearly all Commonwealth countries fatality and injury rates are rising rather than falling. In 2015, Commonwealth countries strongly supported the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which include commitments to road safety. Urgent action is now required to ensure that road deaths and serious injuries across the Commonwealth are halved by 2030.

The new Commonwealth Road Safety Initiative (CRSI), hosted by the *Towards Zero Foundation* (a UK registered charity), under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent (pictured right), was launched in May 2019 in London, UK and will address the action needed to prevent a decade of predictable and preventable death and serious injury on the roads of Commonwealth countries. The CRSI has brought together a distinguished panel of road safety experts to prepare a report of recommendations for Commonwealth countries. Building on established Commonwealth commitments to youth, health, and the SDGs, the CRSI will highlight the importance of:



- setting a Commonwealth target to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030;
- prioritising road safety as a key focus issue for child and adolescent health;
- adopting the Safe System Approach to road injury prevention in high, middle, & low-income Commonwealth countries;
- action to promote safer roads, safer vehicles, and safer road users;
- promoting good governance and road safety;
- promoting workplace road safety;
- building multi-sector Commonwealth partnerships for road safety;
- integrating road safety within the Sustainable Development Goals.

The CRSI will also be hosting a High-Level Side Event at the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference in Sweden for Ministers and delegations from Commonwealth countries and are also planning to organise a side event at the Rwanda CHOGM in June 2020.

For more information visit www.commonwealthrsi.org.

when the leaders 'further affirmed the Commonwealth's convening power as an enabler of experience sharing'. Among Commonwealth countries there is considerable road safety expertise and greater scope than ever before to encourage implementation of the policy measures recommended by the CRSI and the WHO. To encourage Commonwealth collaboration on road safety it will be necessary, however, to obtain recognition of the issue by the Commonwealth itself. This will be best secured by including the subject on the agenda of the next CHOGM to be held in June 2020 in Kigali, Rwanda.

At last year's CHOGM in London, the Commonwealth adopted a target to halve incidence of malaria by 2023 and to accelerate global efforts to achieve a 90% reduction by 2030. This, of course, is a welcome and important public health

commitment. As a former UK Road Safety Minister, I know well how effective setting targets for casualty reduction can be. That is why I very much hope that at the next CHOGM 2020 in Kigali as the leaders review progress on their commitments to SDG 3, they consider this time setting a Commonwealth target to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

Political leadership in Government and in Parliament is a vital ingredient to successful road safety policies. And this is best achieved when there is a wide basis of parliamentary support across different political parties. One way to encourage this consensual approach is to establish All Party Friends Groups. These are typically not official legislative Committees but serve as a focal point to raise awareness of an issue on a non-party basis. A number of such

groups dedicated to road safety have been set up, such as the Australian Parliamentary Friends of Road Safety and the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on Transport Safety, which I have the honour to serve as Chairman.

I believe it would surely be an excellent role for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to encourage the growth of similar cross-party initiatives to promote road safety and the exchange of legislative good practice. That could be a timely and strong CPA contribution to the aim to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

I know that many Parliamentarians see for ourselves the tragic loss of life of our constituents in road crashes and the suffering caused to bereaved relatives. Trying to prevent these sad experiences should give us

all the incentive we need to call on Governments to make a road injury prevention a priority issue on the agenda of the next CHOGM 2020. And beyond that I hope that in the decade ahead we can count on Parliamentarians across the Commonwealth to demonstrate the leadership needed to make all our roads safe.

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BUILDING A 'FUTURE-READY' PARLIAMENTARY WORKFORCE

Professional Development Programme for Parliamentary Staff with McGill University in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association



Ms Inna Popova-Roche is the Director of the Career and Professional Development (Non-Credit Programs) at McGill University's School of Continuing Studies in Canada.

Over the last decade, the world has witnessed a rise in a significant number of ordeals pertaining to civil wars, acts of terrorism, the rise of populism and the exploitation of power in which democratic institutions and beliefs have come under attack. These experiences have greatly impacted and transformed the work of Parliaments across the world.

It is said that it is only by strengthening democracy at home and standing together in its defence that democracies can protect their values and preserve their ability to expand freedom globally.¹ Now, more than ever in the Commonwealth, Members of Parliament play an important role in ensuring that Commonwealth values of democracy and good governance amongst others continue to be upheld and are protected against authoritarian regimes that engage in corruption and encroach on civil and human rights. However, this great responsibility cannot be executed effectively without the support of dedicated, well-trained professional parliamentary staff. With the increasing need to safeguard against the gradual erosion of democracy that is taking place across Commonwealth and wider world, upskilling and building the capacity of parliamentary staff has become a necessity.

While the turnover of Members of Parliament is both a natural and necessary element of democracy, high turnover presents a risk of institutional memory loss.² Parliamentary staff are the 'corporate memory' of Parliament. Building the capacity of staff ensures that the demands and needs of all Members and the Parliament

are met. For this reason, it is important that parliamentary staff be provided with professional development opportunities such as the McGill University's School of Continuing Studies programme for parliamentary staff to better meet the needs and challenges of Parliaments in the 21st century.

Experience shows that a 'one size fits all' approach to parliamentary capacity building programmes does not work. Learning about the first principles underlying Parliament of one country or area is not sufficient since these do not necessarily translate entirely to the context of other countries or regions.

To help prepare and sustain parliamentary institutions for the challenges of tomorrow, the McGill staff development programme is aimed at giving parliamentary staff a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Parliaments worldwide and greater insights into the workings of their own Parliaments.

Created with the input and close collaboration of senior parliamentary staff from across the Commonwealth, the programme was designed to promote critical thinking and reflection, to encourage participants to exchange ideas and challenge assumptions, and to translate newly acquired knowledge into action. The objective of the programme is not to merely provide more information or train participants on a specific parliamentary procedure, but to enable them to develop new perspectives and make their own meaning by building on their prior knowledge and experiences, as well as that of their peers from other Parliaments. Learning is not

"While the turnover of Members of Parliament is both a natural and necessary element of democracy, high turnover presents a risk of institutional memory loss. Parliamentary staff are the 'corporate memory' of Parliament. Building the capacity of staff ensures that the demands and needs of all Members and the Parliament are met. For this reason, it is important that parliamentary staff be provided with professional development opportunities such as the McGill University's School of Continuing Studies programme for parliamentary staff to better meet the needs and challenges of Parliaments in the 21st century."



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Parliamentary staff development programme in Canada enhances skills for Commonwealth Parliaments



Parliamentary staff from 14 Commonwealth Parliaments* have undertaken a staff development programme at McGill University, Montréal, Canada which has been organised by McGill University's School of Continuing Studies in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Created in response to the voiced needs of parliamentary staff, Programme Coordinator, Professor Rick Stapenhurst from McGill University officially opened the residency seminar and described the programme as "a unique tool that builds on the skills and capacity of senior parliamentary staff to help them better serve their Parliaments."

Originally founded by the World Bank and McGill University in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and other international partners, this intensive professional development

programme includes a one-week residency seminar followed by expert-moderated online courses and is attended by senior parliamentary staff from across the Commonwealth. The programme offers parliamentary staff the opportunity to obtain a *Professional Development Certificate in Parliamentary Management* and covers a diverse range of topics including: Parliamentary Administration, Parliamentary Research and IT, Parliamentary Committees, Public Financial Management and Corporate Management of Parliaments.

Keynote speakers at the programme included Professor Rick Stapenhurst; former Clerk of the Canadian Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments, Mr Paul Bélisle; Executive Director of the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA), Dr Rasheed Draman; and Executive Director of the Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST) in Kenya, Professor Nyokabi Kamau. The CPST organised the 2018 CPA Parliamentary Staff Development programme with the Parliament of Kenya in Naivasha, Nakuru County, Kenya which was attended by 15 parliamentary staff from CPA Branches.

The following CPA Branches were represented at the programme this year funded by the CPA Headquarters Secretariat: Australian Capital Territory; Bangladesh; Belize; Cook Islands; Manipur; Northern Territory; Ontario; Scotland; Sierra Leone; Trinidad and Tobago; and Western Cape. The CPA Pakistan, Nigeria (Federal) and Kenya Branches self-funded their participants on this year's programme.

**11 participants were funded by the CPA Headquarters Secretariat and 4 were funded by individual CPA Branches (Kenya, Nigeria Federal and Pakistan). Please contact the CPA or McGill about future programmes.*

about remembering something new, but about reflecting on past experiences and discovering the ways in which previous experiences relate to what is being taught in order to achieve meaningful learning (Taylor, 2006).

The parliamentary staff programme addresses diversity of parliamentary contexts and goes beyond traditional face-to-face ad hoc training by embracing sound adult learning principles, experience-based learning strategies and pedagogical approaches. Adult learners are motivated to learn and apply what they learn when concepts and activities are relevant, practical and contextualized. In support of this, the programme offers parliamentary staff the opportunity to engage in several stimulating discussions on major topical issues that affect

many Parliaments across the Commonwealth. The participants' keen interest in these topics was reflected in their post-course feedback recommending increasing the amount of time allocated for these sessions to give opportunity for greater dialogue as 'participants were very interested in sharing their own experiences'.

As part of the programme, parliamentary staff are also introduced to the *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* and learn about the importance of conducting self-assessments and how this practice can enhance the performance and effectiveness of their respective Parliaments. This topic consistently sparks a lot of interest and generates questions from programme participants who, prior to participating on the

McGill programme had very little or no knowledge of the CPA Benchmarks.

It is also important to mention that parliamentary staff undertaking this programme are privileged to hear from distinguished international experts throughout the duration of the programme, including the former Clerk of the Canadian Senate and Clerk of Parliaments, Mr Paul Bélisle; Executive Director of the Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST), Professor Nyokabi Kamau who hosted the 2018 Residency course as part of the staff development programme in Nairobi, Kenya; Executive Director of the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA), Dr Rasheed Draman and Dr Elaine Ubalijoro, member of the National Science

and Technology Council and Presidential Advisory Council of Rwanda.

Participant presentations (narratives) as well as in-class and online discussions are some of the key components to the programme - they allow participants to revisit and share their experiences and engage in self-examination. "Such construction of narratives with peers and instructor is another important factor in the learning that ensues" (Taylor, 2006), because "narratives allow us to combine – in conscious memory – our knowledge, sensations, feeling and behaviours supporting underlying neural network integration" (Cozolino, 2002). The McGill and CPA programme participants often report that discussions with their peers are some of their most valuable learning experiences.



BUILDING A 'FUTURE-READY' PARLIAMENTARY WORKFORCE

Images: McGill University School of Continuing Studies



“Since 2012, over 150 participants with parliamentary experience ranging from five to twenty years from over 40 countries have completed the McGill University’s Professional Development Programme. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Headquarters Secretariat has successfully funded 34 parliamentary staff from Commonwealth Parliaments on this programme since 2017.”

The writing-to-learn approach is another form of narrative, which is used in the programme through written assignments, online discussions, and the final research paper at the end of each course. Writing is a powerful tool for self-discovery and reflection as it allows one to describe and capture thought in a more precise and concrete form and is a further step in to the “*process of integration, ... assessment and recalibration of perception*” (Taylor, 2006).

Participants are required to pass five online courses to be awarded a *Professional Development Certificate in Parliamentary Management* upon completion of the programme. One of the course assignments requires participants to write about and explain the way their Parliaments function. This activity encourages participants to express in writing all the things they implicitly know about their Parliament, helps make their implicit assumptions explicit and re-evaluates their assumptions, approaches and beliefs.

Though writing-to-learn, co-construction of narratives and

various self-reflective activities can encourage awareness and growth, learning experiences such as these are most effective when they take place within a supportive relationship (Taylor, 2006). Therefore, one-on-one mentorship is an integral and unique part of McGill’s programme for parliamentary staff. At the beginning of the programme, each participant is assigned to a mentor (one of the programme instructors), who accompanies, encourages, motivates, and guides the mentee throughout the duration of the programme and beyond.

Since 2012, over 150 participants with parliamentary experience ranging from five to twenty years from over 40 countries have completed the McGill University’s Professional Development Programme. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Headquarters Secretariat has successfully funded 34 parliamentary staff from Commonwealth Parliaments on this programme since 2017.

Parliamentary staff who participate in this programme have the benefit of developing

their knowledge and skills whilst learning from many rich and diverse cultures that make up the modern Commonwealth. The CPA is an international organisation with over 17,000 parliamentary staff from some of the world’s largest and smallest Parliaments and Legislatures. These assemblies form part of the Association’s 180 Branches. The parliamentary staff currently participating in the 2019 cohort of the programme through CPA’s sponsorship represent diverse Parliaments from eight out of the nine CPA Regions.

In the fulfilment of the tenth value listed in the Commonwealth Charter, the CPA recognises ‘*the importance of ... promoting education, learning and sharing cultures*’³ and is committed to bringing parliamentary staff and experts together to exchange ideas in order to better implement and advance good practices across the Commonwealth.

Drawn from the survey of the past programme participants conducted by McGill University, here are some examples of improvements implemented by participants in their Parliaments following programme completion:

- A structure for the Committee Secretariat division.
- Data sharing systems, public engagement initiatives (virtual tour of Assembly).
- Improved quality of research work.
- Introduced a Code of Conduct for Parliamentary Staff.
- Managed to link Parliamentary Committees to Researchers.
- Developed a Draft Communication Strategy for the National Assembly.
- Introduced an orientation/ training programme for new Directors at the Assembly. The programme has since been extended to managers and supervisors.

Alumni from the programme from across the Commonwealth



are glowing in their praise for this initiative, here is what some participants have said about the programme:

- "I learned a lot! It is going to provide me with a better understanding of the functions of Parliament. It also made me realise that I have a lot more to learn. I enjoyed hearing about the differences of other jurisdictions compared to mine. We are all truly unique!"
- "Excellent networking opportunity, thought provoking, lots to take away and think about, excellent communication from the CPA."
- "More such programmes for the parliamentary staff should be initiated by CPA."
- "The in-depth knowledge I have gained from this one-week residential seminar I will definitely pass on to other

members of staff and, I am certain that it will make us more efficient and effective."

- "The program is a rich source of inspiration to parliamentary staff towards qualitative output/outcome in the discharge of our responsibility and enriching democracy."
- "Participation in the programme enabled me to learn from world class professionals and access to experiences in other Parliaments that are not documented elsewhere."
- "It was a remarkable programme; it was a tremendous experience not only for me but for all participants for sure. Being a parliamentary administrator, I found everything important for us in this programme. Sharing of experiences opened new horizons for us

to make our parliamentary practices more innovative. Last but not least, the brilliant moderators and wonderful mentors made this programme excellent and more effective."

- "This is a very valuable programme for those who work in Parliaments. It introduces and reinforces best practices, new ideas and alternate ways of thinking. The result is change in parliamentary institutions and service improvements to MPs and citizens."

When asked 'How did you see the programme having an impact in making your institution more efficient and effective?' a participant answered the following:

- "I have a strong believe in learning and development for staff so when you give staff regardless of their level these opportunities for learning and development particularly practical learning and development, you're going to strengthen your organisation, you're going to build that knowledge and that capacity and give your organisation a better opportunity going forward to do better."

For further information about funding for the parliamentary staff development programme with McGill University, Canada, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) please contact hq.sec@cpahq.org.

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12th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic Region takes place in Trinidad and Tobago on theme of *'Women in Leadership'*

Commonwealth Parliamentarians from across the region met for the 12th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic Region hosted by the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago on 13 and 14 July 2019.

The 12th CWP Caribbean Regional Conference was chaired by Hon. Jeannine Giraudy-McIntyre, MP, President of the Senate of St Lucia and Chair of the Regional CWP and saw updates on the activities of the CWP across the region. At the CWP Regional Conference, delegates heard from experts at two training sessions on gender-based budgeting and on gender-based harassment.

Amongst the attendees at the CWP Regional Conference were: Hon. Shirley Osborne, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Montserrat; Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago; Hon. Senator Alincia Williams-Grant, President of the Senate of Antigua and Barbuda; and Hon. Laura Tucker-Longworth, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Belize.

The 12th CWP Caribbean Regional Conference was held in Trinidad and Tobago ahead of the 44th CPA Regional Conference of the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region.



Images: Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago

Focus on encouraging young women into leadership positions for Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians in the Australia Region

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Australia Region have held the latest event in their highly successful *'Stepping-Up'* programme aimed at encouraging young women to aim for leadership positions. On 17 June 2019, the CWP Representative at the Parliament of New South Wales, Jenny Aitchison, MP hosted the *'Stepping Up: Young Women's Leadership Workshop'*, the second workshop to be held at the Parliament of New South Wales since the CWP-initiated program was launched in May 2016.

Members of the New South Wales Parliament nominated 55 young women considering a career in politics to participate and Hon. Leslie Williams, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of New South Wales, welcomed participants to the Members' Dining Room. Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, MLC; Ms Steph Cooke, MP; Ms Felicity Wilson, MP; Hon. Ms Abigail Boyd, MLC; and Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC all provided informative insights for the young women at the event into their political journeys during the *'Pathways to Politics'* panel discussions.



Images: CWP Australia Facebook page



Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Canada Region meet in Nova Scotia to discuss inclusion and supporting women entrepreneurs

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Canada Regional meetings took place from 12 to 15 July 2019 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The CWP Canada Regional Chair, Hon. Laura Ross, MLA (Saskatchewan) chaired the meetings which took place ahead of the 57th CPA Canada Regional Conference in Nova Scotia later the same week. Delegates to the CWP Canada Regional Conference were hosted by Hon. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, MLA, Deputy Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislature and CWP Nova Scotia Branch Representative.

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Canada Region held an outreach programme for Members visiting local businesses and organisations as well as a regional meeting and workshop sessions. Workshop topics included women entrepreneurs and supporting them in business; the six signature traits of inclusive leadership; and *'Inclusion Is Not Just A Buzz Word!*'. The meetings provided Members with the opportunity to hear about activities over the previous year, and to think about priorities for the upcoming year.

The CWP Canada Chair gave her report emphasising the importance of the CWP Canada Regional Steering Committee continuing their efforts to promote CWP in Canada on a variety of platforms, including social media. The importance of continuing to build ties with other groups who promote the role of women in Legislative Assemblies was also emphasised.

The CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan (who was attending the CPA Canada Regional Conference)



Images: Nova Scotia Legislature.



congratulated the CWP Canada Regional Chair, Hon. Laura Ross, MLA on the excellent work of the CWP Canada Region in promoting greater female inclusion in Parliaments. The CPA Canada Regional Chair also presented the CWP *'She Should Run'* booklet, a framework campaign for schools to encourage young women's political participation, to the CPA Vice-Chairperson and the CPA Secretary-General at the regional conference.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians in Queensland celebrate the first women elected to the Legislative Assembly

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) at the Parliament of Queensland have celebrated the 90th anniversary of the election of the first women Member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, Irene Longman.

Irene Longman was elected on 11th May 1929 to represent the seat of Bulimba and held the seat until 1932. Irene was one of the first trained kindergarten teachers working in Queensland. She had a long career in early childhood education. At age fifty-two, Irene was nominated to run for the state seat of Bulimba as a National Party candidate. She was an experienced organiser as a member of the Queensland Women's Electoral League and as President of the Queensland branch of the National Council of Women (1920 – 1924).

Current and past women Members of the Queensland Parliament were joined by Hon. Curtis Pitt, MP, current Speaker of the Queensland Legislative Assembly to celebrate the anniversary.



Image: Parliament of Queensland Facebook page. For more images of CWP activities and events please visit www.cwpq.org/cwpq/lickr.

Commonwealth Parliamentarians focus on gender sensitive scrutiny of legislation at Westminster Workshop

Forty Commonwealth Parliamentarians from 25 Legislatures from all CPA Regions attended the *Westminster Workshop on Gender Sensitive Scrutiny* hosted by the CPA UK Branch from 17 to 19 June 2019 for a full programme of shared learning on gender sensitive scrutiny of legislation and budgets.

The programme was designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise between Legislatures and focus on how individual Parliamentarians can become leaders in their own Parliaments. Over the course of the three-day programme, the delegates engaged with a variety of speakers including other Parliamentarians, academics and experts in civil society. The conversations were rich and diverse, bringing together many different view points and approaches on how to ensure legislation and budgets are properly scrutinised through a gender sensitive lens.

The CPA UK Branch was delighted to welcome Amelia Kinahoi Siamomua, Head of Gender at the Commonwealth Secretariat, who gave the keynote speech in which she spoke about the Commonwealth Charter which recognises gender equality as one of its key principles. She spoke about the importance of ensuring that no citizen of the Commonwealth gets left behind and that all Parliamentarians must be aware of the implications of legislation they work with. She highlighted that it is vitally important as a 'Connected Commonwealth' to share learnings as well as challenges.

The programme enabled delegates to explore different methods of scrutinising legislation and budgets through Committee inquiries and by engaging with civil society groups. A recurring theme of the session discussions focussed on increasing the representation of women and minority groups in Commonwealth Parliaments to ensure that gender sensitive scrutiny is robustly facilitated and at the top of the agenda. In addition, cross party approaches were explored with speakers offering their views on the importance of well-resourced, evidence-based, cross-party working groups to challenge policy and ultimately improve the lives of all those who live in countries around the world.

Tara Cheyne, MP, Government Whip for the Australian Capital Territory, spoke about the trajectory of gender sensitive budgeting in Australia. She highlighted the cultural shift caused



Images: CPA UK Branch

by the first Women's Budget Statement which was introduced at the Australian Federal Government level in 1984 and required government departments and agencies to outline how their policies impacted women.

Rt Hon. Maria Miller, MP spoke about her role as the first and only Chair of the UK Parliament's Women and Equalities Select Committee. The Committee selects laws to scrutinise and produces reports which the UK Government must respond to. This work also forces these issues up the news agenda.

Kate Faragher of *Bespoke Skills* spoke about the importance of preparation, effective questioning and teamwork when addressing witnesses during Committee sessions. Delegates explored the best approaches to asking questions, including using clear and specific language, and ordering questions and follow up questions effectively.

Rt Hon. Nicky Morgan, MP spoke about her role as the Chair of the UK Parliament's Treasury Select Committee which scrutinises expenditure, administration and policy of the Treasury, Revenue and Customs, and associated public bodies in the UK, including the Bank of England.

On the final day, the programme included an interactive Committee exercise which allowed the delegates to practice their techniques for questioning witnesses at committee inquiries. Hon. Fatoumatta Njai, MP of The Gambia chaired the proceedings and delegates volunteered as Committee Members to question the witnesses about measures to protect employees from sexual harassment in the workplace.

The final session of the Workshop explored knowledge gained and shared. Key pledges from delegates included establishing Women and Equalities Committees, working closely with colleagues to establish gender sensitive scrutiny of legislation and budgets, and commissioning Gender Sensitive Audits in their respective Legislatures.

To find out more about the Westminster Workshop on Gender Sensitive Scrutiny, please visit www.uk-cpa.org or email haligah@parliament.uk.





Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Asia Region discuss impediments and challenges facing women in politics at 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference in Pakistan

A seminar for Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) has been held for women Members at the 5th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Asia Regional Conference. The regional conference was held from 29 July to 2 August 2019 in Islamabad, Pakistan. The seminar was attended by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Hon. Asad Qaiser and the Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee, Hon. Emilia Lifaka, MP, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon.

Delegates discussed the challenges and impediments against women in politics in the region and a wide range of connected topics including the male dominant party structures; general seats versus reserved seats for women; and prioritising women issues as national issues. Hon. Dr Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister of Pakistan and CPA Asia Regional Representative on the CPA International Executive Committee spoke about the role of women in Pakistan in politics and her experiences as both a Speaker and Minister in Pakistan.

Hon. Munaza Hassan, MNA, CWP Steering Committee Member for the Asia Region spoke about the work of the Pakistan Women's Parliamentary Caucus; Hon.



Image: CPA Pakistan Branch.

Shireen Mazari, Pakistan's Minister for Human Rights spoke about women's empowerment; and Hon. Jalia Bintu, MP spoke about her experience as a women Member of the Parliament of Uganda.

Ahead of the CWP Asia Region seminar, a specially convened meeting of the Pakistan Women's Parliamentary Caucus was held with senior delegates and was also attended by the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson, Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad, MP (Malaysia) and former CWP Chairperson and current CPA President Designate, Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda.



Image: CPA Headquarters Secretariat.

Left: The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan attended the 5th CPA Asia Regional Conference and was delighted to meet with former Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson, Ms Kashmala Tariq in Pakistan who is continuing to campaign for women's rights in her role as Federal Ombudsperson for the Protection Against Harassment of Women in the Workplace.

Election successes of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians recognised in Bermuda

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) from the CPA Bermuda, Montserrat and Trinidad & Tobago Branches together with parliamentary staff and staff members from the CPA Headquarters Secretariat gathered in the margins of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Parliamentary Strengthening Seminar in Bermuda in May 2019 to recognise that the Parliament of Bermuda now has 25% women Members of Parliament following its most recent elections, up from 19.4% in previous elections.



Image: CPA Bermuda Branch.

For more images of CWP activities and events please visit www.cpaibq.org/cpaibq/flickr.

Parliamentary Report

NEWS AND LEGISLATION FROM COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTS



Prime Minister Morrison achieves stunning electoral victory for the 'quiet Australians' Page 254

UGANDA

Uganda Finance Minister presents Budget

Page 258

INDIA

First Session of the new 17th Lok Sabha in India

Page 264

UNITED KINGDOM

PM resigns and UK Parliament speculates on Prorogation

Page 260

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

High Court decision upholds parliamentary processes

Page 267

CANADA

Federal Parliament adjourns ahead of Fall Election

Page 262

THIRD READINGS

Australia Federal

Page 253

New Zealand

Page 256

With thanks to our *Parliamentary Report* and *Third Reading* contributors: Mohammed Katamba (Parliament of Uganda); Paras Ramoutar (Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago); Stephen Boyd (Federal Parliament of Australia); Dr Jayadev Sahu (Parliament of India); Erin Virgint (Federal Parliament of Canada); Luke Harris (Parliament of New Zealand); and Michael Berry (Parliament of the United Kingdom).

THIRD READING: AUSTRALIA

Electoral Legislation Amendment (Modernisation and Other Measures) Act 2019

The legislation amends the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* to make completion of a qualification checklist compulsory in relation to candidate nominations, and makes other changes.

During the 45th Parliament (2016-2019), a number of Senators and Members had to resign their position because they had dual citizenship which is in breach of section 44(i) of the Constitution. If a person has dual citizenship, then they 'shall be incapable of being chosen or of sitting as a Senator or a Member of the House of Representatives.' It has always been an individual candidate's responsibility to ensure that they are compliant with this section of the Constitution.

The Special Minister of State, **Hon. Alex Hawke, MP**, explained that the legislation makes a number of changes to the Electoral Act to 'include an obligation for persons wishing to nominate as candidates in elections to provide information, in the form of a checklist, relevant to their eligibility under section 44 of the Constitution.' Mr Hawke stated that the legislation 'will make completing the checklist a mandatory requirement for all candidates at the next federal election. The checklist is consistent with the form previously established by regulations and used at the recent by-elections. Information provided in the checklist is also consistent with the form used by current Senators and Members of Parliament which is published on the respective parliamentary citizenship registers.'

The Shadow Minister for Finance, **Dr Jim Chalmers, MP**, commented that 'as Members here would be very well aware, the issue of section 44 eligibility has plagued this Parliament. In May last year, the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, JSCEM, issued its report on these eligibility issues. The Committee recommended the Australian Government investigate measures and strategies to mitigate the impact of section 44 on this Parliament, particularly when such confusion and chaos was taking hold. Importantly, the Committee noted that the power of the Parliament and the High Court in these matters should be respected.'

Dr Chalmers stated that 'a checklist

used to be voluntary, allowing candidates to provide information where they believed it was appropriate. Schedule 1 of this Bill seeks to enforce that checklist as a compulsory requirement for every person nominating as a federal candidate. This compulsory requirement is not just important for administrative purposes but also ensures that the Australian public can have faith that, regardless of their choice of candidate, these issues have been squared away in some capacity by the time people get to the polls. Where answers are not provided to the required questions, the nomination would be invalid. Similarly, where more than one answer is provided to a required question, that nomination would also be invalid.'

Dr Chalmers explained that 'completing this checklist does not automatically guarantee a candidate is eligible for federal office. The Parliament and the judiciary rightly remain paramount in these cases for important constitutional reasons. But what this compulsory checklist does ensure is that all candidates for federal office consider their circumstances carefully and provide evidence wherever ambiguity exists. Providing deliberately false or misleading information will rightly attract a penalty under the Criminal Code, where either a maximum penalty of imprisonment for 12 months or a fine of \$12,600, or both simultaneously, can apply.'

Parliamentary Service Amendment (Post-election Report) Act 2019

The legislation amends the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* to change the deadline for publishing the post-election report of election commitments, from before the end of 30 days after the end of the caretaker period for a general election to the later of either 30 days after the end of the caretaker period for the general election to which the report relates or 7 days before the first sitting day of either or both Houses of the Parliament after the general election to which the report relates. The post-election report is prepared and published by the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO).

The PBO is required to prepare and release a post-election report on election commitments shortly after a federal election. The Special Minister of State, **Hon. Alex Hawke, MP**, commented that 'the report presents the budget

impacts of election commitments that would have a material impact on the Commonwealth Budget, and provides an indication of the total impact a party's election platform would have on the Commonwealth Budget for the current and next three financial years, if those election commitments were enacted as announced.'

Mr Hawke noted that 'only the proposal to change the timing of the post-election report requires change to legislation. The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit and the Presiding Officers have agreed to the change in timing for the publication of the report. The delayed publication not only is intended to accommodate the changed scope of these reports by the Parliamentary Budget Office but is also expected to enhance the visibility of the post-election report by moving the timing closer to the resumption of parliamentary sittings.'

The Shadow Assistant Treasurer, **Dr Andrew Leigh, MP**, noted that Labor will support the legislation. Dr Leigh commented that 'it has been Labor that has led the way on medium-term costings, recognising that for many policies it's important to understand the implications not just over the four years but also over the decade. This is particularly true with grandfathered reforms, such as Labor's changes to capital gains and negative gearing, where the impact over the 10 years is materially different from the impact over four years. It's important, too, when we're thinking about long-term policies and the issues typically raised in the Intergenerational report, that we aren't simply confined to thinking about fiscal costs over a four-year window.'

In relation to the PBO, Dr Leigh stated that it 'is an equal status coster to the Treasury, a point sometimes missed by those opposite. Labor established it. We are proud of the institution it's become. It's helped the Parliament and the public develop a deeper understanding of the budgetary impacts on policies being considered. Its independence and focus on transparency have improved the information and data available to the public. The PBO also produces regular reports on important fiscal issues, which shine a light onto key questions around budget sustainability and ensure that the public has a strong idea of who is bearing the heavy lifting for fiscal changes.'

PRIME MINISTER MORRISON ACHIEVES STUNNING ELECTORAL VICTORY FOR THE 'QUIET AUSTRALIANS'

The Prime Minister, **Hon. Scott Morrison, MP**, and his Coalition Liberal/National Government, has come from behind to win the Australia Federal Election held on 18 May 2019. Mr Morrison was not expected to win and he himself called his victory a miracle. During the past six years the Coalition was dogged by infighting and internal dissent. Mr Morrison was elected as Leader in August 2018 replacing the then Prime Minister, **Hon. Malcolm Turnbull** who was removed in an ugly leadership contest. Mr Morrison was the third Coalition Prime Minister in Australia in just over five years.

The opinion polls heavily favoured the opposition Labor Party to win. But Prime Minister Morrison ran a simple but highly effective campaign claiming that a vote for Labor would mean higher taxes and getting Bill Shorten. Labor in contrast ran a campaign full of policy detail and promising redistributive change. At the same time, Labor was highly confident in its vision and

at times would just ignore dissent. For example, the then Shadow Treasurer, **Hon. Chris Bowen, MP**, in response to criticism from retirees about the proposal to end refundable franking credits told them that if you do not like the policy vote for someone else. And they did. Australian voters told Labor that they are not interested in redistributive policies and bigger spending. By demonstrating their support for Mr Morrison, Australians supported lower taxes and clearly demonstrated their conservatism. Labor's confidence going into the election made its loss not just devastating but humiliating.

Mr Morrison ran essentially a sole election campaign warning 'don't risk Labor'. He repeated over and over again a simple but effective message 'don't give your hard-earned money to Bill Shorten to spend'. Mr Shorten was often referred to as 'the Bill Australia can't afford.' In contrast, Labor was often tied up in policy detail and in the end could not cut through. Mr Morrison fronted

the media on a daily basis and strategically targeted key seats. His unpopular Ministers were conspicuous by their absence, but this was not a problem. In addition, there were no inter-party outbreaks. The past six years of Government has seen the Coalition, at times, heavily divided on

policy and leadership. Former Liberal Foreign Affairs Minister, Alexander Downer, commented that *'talking of miracles, there wasn't a single outbreak of Coalition disunity for five and a half weeks. For five long weeks Morrison kept under control a parliamentary party that has, for six years, behaved like a drunken family forced together at Christmas extolling the perceived failings of each other.'*

Late on election night, Mr Morrison said he always believed in miracles and claimed the victory for the 'quiet Australians'. He stated *'tonight is about every single Australian who depends on their Government to put them first. That is exactly what we are going to do. Our Government will come together after this night and we will get back to work. That is our task and that is my undertaking to Australians from one end of the country to the other. I said I was going to burn for you and I am – every single day.'*

In politics, there is no prize for coming second and so it was for the Leader of the Opposition, **Hon. Bill Shorten, MP**, to concede defeat and congratulate Mr Morrison. Mr Shorten also announced that he would step down from his position as the Leader of the Opposition which he has held for six years. His dreams of becoming Prime Minister were over.

In contrast, Mr Morrison's successful leadership and management of the campaign has strengthened his position and authority. His victory, although narrow, is one of the most impressive in Liberal Party history.

In other election news, the former Australian Prime Minister, **Hon. Tony Abbott, MP**, lost his blue-ribbon Liberal

seat of Warringah to former Olympian skier Ms Zali Steggal. Ms Steggal campaigned on being economically conservative but socially progressive. Mr Abbott has held Warringah since 1994 but fell out of favour with his electorate on policies such as same-sex marriage and action on climate change. Mr Abbott, in conceding defeat, said he would rather be a loser than a quitter, which was probably a veiled reference to the former Prime Minister, **Hon. Malcolm Turnbull** who immediately quit his seat when he lost the support of his party in August 2018.

The billionaire Clive Palmer formed the United Australia Party and spent an estimated AUD\$60 million on campaign advertising but failed to win a seat anywhere. However, the preferences from his 3.5% of the national vote helped the Coalition government to be re-elected.

For the new 46th Parliament, the House of Representatives chamber increased to 151 seats up from 150 in the 45th Parliament. At the start of the 45th Parliament in 2016, the distribution of seats was Liberal/National Coalition 76, Labor 69, one Green and four independents. In the new Parliament, the Coalition slightly increased its majority to 77 seats, Labor 68, one Green and five independent Members.

The Senate of the 46th Parliament comprises 35 Coalition, 26 Labor, nine Australian Greens, two Pauline Hanson's One Nation, two Centre Alliance, one Independent and one Jacqui Lambie Network. The Government does not control the Senate and will need 39 votes to pass legislation.



Albanese becomes new Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Anthony Albanese, MP, became the Leader of the Opposition unopposed. Mr Albanese was first elected to the New South Wales inner metropolitan seat of Grayndler in 1996. He is 56 and has a Bachelor of Economics from Sydney University. During the Rudd/Gillard Governments, he was a Cabinet Minister from 2007 to 2013. He held various portfolios including Minister for Infrastructure and Transport and was Deputy Prime Minister for three months in 2013. Mr Albanese, in addressing the Labor caucus for the first time, stated that *'in the election campaign, it has to be said, and I say it unequivocally today – I accept my share as a senior Shadow Minister in the show, for the fact that we weren't successful. I think the senior Members, all of us, have to accept responsibility, that those many millions of Australians who rely upon us and the tens of thousands of people who have worked on our campaigns, need us to do better next time. And today we resolve to do just that.'*

In outlining his approach as Opposition Leader, Mr Albanese commented that *'people have conflict fatigue. They don't want to see us yelling at each other for the sake of it. They want solutions, not arguments. They want unions and business to be able to work together in the common interest. They want an economy that works for them, not the other way around. Labor supports economic growth as the core part of our agenda. Because jobs are always first, second, and third priority of this great party. Not just any job, good jobs, with fair pay, and fair conditions'*. He emphasised the need to bring Australians together commenting that *'so that whether you're a trade union member, a non-union member, a someone who is*

involved in small and family business, whether you're someone who set yourself up as a tradie, whether you're a pensioner, whether you're young or old, whether you live in a city or a region, or a remote community, you feel included in society. And that is the Labor agenda very much.'

Mr Albanese will be supported by new Deputy Leader, **Dr Jim Chalmers, MP**, who was first elected to the Queensland seat of Rankin in 2013. Labor's leaders in the Senate will be **Senator Hon. Penny Wong** as Leader and **Senator Hon. Kristina Keneally** as Deputy Leader. Senator Keneally is a former Premier of New South Wales.

New Prime Minister Morrison announces new look Ministry

Shortly after the Federal Election, the Prime Minister, **Hon. Scott Morrison, MP**, announced his new Ministry. Mr Morrison stated that *'Australians have re-elected our Government to get back to work and get on with the job of delivering for all Australians as they go about their own lives, pursuing their goals and aspirations for themselves, their families and their communities. My Government's new Ministry brings together the experience and stability of service in key portfolios, while bringing in new Members that will add their own experience, skills and passion to the job ahead.'*

Mr Morrison commented that the Ministry will be tasked with delivering our commitments to: create 1.25 million more jobs over the next five years; maintain budget surpluses and pay down debt; deliver tax relief for families and small businesses; guarantee increased funding for schools, hospitals, medicines and roads; and keep Australians safe, including online, and keeping our borders secure.

Mr Morrison noted that the Ministry maintains record representation of women in the Cabinet, including **Senator Hon. Marise Payne** as Minister for Foreign Affairs; **Senator Hon. Bridget McKenzie** as the first female Minister for Agriculture; **Senator Hon. Michaelia Cash** as Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business; **Senator Hon. Linda Reynolds, CSC** as Minister for Defence; **Senator Hon. Anne Ruston** as Minister for Families and Social Services; and **Hon. Karen Andrews, MP**, as Minister for Industry, Science and Technology.

National Party Member, **Hon. Michael McCormack, MP**, remains the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development. Mr Morrison commented that *'the Deputy Prime Minister will continue in his role delivering our \$100 billion National Infrastructure Programme, including the National Water Grid, supported by Hon. Alan Tudge, MP, who has been promoted to Cabinet, to continue his work of congestion busting in our cities and implementing our plan for Australia's future population.'*

The Economic Ministers remain the same with **Hon. Josh Frydenberg, MP** returning as Treasurer and **Senator Hon. Mathias Cormann** returning as Minister for Finance. Mr Morrison noted that *'the Economic team will also be supported by Hon. Michael Sukkar, MP, as Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing to implement our First Home Loan Deposit Scheme, as well as more affordable housing and Senator Hon. Jane Hume taking to the role of Assistant Minister for Superannuation, Financial Services and Financial Technology.'*

In relation to national security, Mr Morrison commented that *'our experienced Foreign Affairs and National Security Ministers in Senator Hon. Marise Payne as Minister for Foreign Affairs, former Army Reserves Brigadier Senator Hon. Linda Reynolds as Minister for Defence, Hon. Peter Dutton, MP as Minister for Home Affairs and Senator Hon. Simon Birmingham as Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment will help guide our country through the uncertain times and global economic headwinds. They will be supported by Hon. Alex Hawke, MP, as Minister for International Development and the Pacific and Assistant Minister for Defence helping drive our Pacific 'step up' agenda.'*

In relation to the environment and energy, Mr Morrison stated that *'Hon. Sussan Ley, MP, will return to Cabinet as Minister for the Environment with a focus on practical and local environmental outcomes as well as waste reduction and recycling, assisted by Hon. Trevor Evans, MP. Hon. Angus Taylor, MP, will continue as Minister for Energy and his portfolio will take on Emissions Reduction to ensure we have a strong focus on lowering Australians' power bills and meeting our 2030 emissions targets. Mr Warren Entsch, MP, will also serve as Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef.'*

Mr Morrison stated that *'a key focus for all of my Ministers and their Departments will be lifting performance on government service delivery. This will include congestion busting on regulatory and bureaucratic roadblocks, making better use of technology and better integrating service delivery across portfolios. The goal is to make it easier to deal with and access the Government services Australians rely on.'*



Arms (Prohibited Firearms, Magazines, and Parts) Amendment Bill

The Arms (Prohibited Firearms, Magazines, and Parts) Amendment Bill was introduced to the New Zealand Parliament following the 15th March 2019 terrorist attacks at Al Noor and Linwood mosques in Christchurch, an act of violence that resulted in the deaths of 51 people. The legislation, which by leave of the House was passed within an expedited time frame, aims “to remove semi-automatic firearms from circulation and use by the general population in New Zealand . . . by prohibiting semi-automatic firearms, magazines, and parts that can be used to assemble prohibited firearms.”

The Prime Minister, **Rt Hon. Jacinda Ardern, MP** (Labour) had announced within days of the attacks that the country’s gun laws would change, and she commented at the Bill’s Third Reading: “I could not fathom how weapons that could cause such destruction and large-scale death could have been obtained legally in this country. I could not fathom that.”

Members from across the House noted that the changes were ‘long overdue’, ‘a long time coming’ and ‘needed for many years’. References were made also to the unsuccessful attempts at gun law reform in New Zealand following the Aramoana massacre, in 1990.

The Finance and Expenditure Committee, which worked within a shortened report-back period of seven days, received more than 13,000 submissions and heard oral evidence from 22 submitters. **Mr Mark Patterson, MP** (NZ First) said: “There has been some criticism of the process. It has been very truncated, but,

as we have heard, this is an issue that’s been well traversed in the past.”

Ms Golriz Ghahraman, MP (Green) explained: “The expedited process that we’ve taken has been appropriate in assuring members of the public, who actually were shocked that we live in a community where this type of military-style weapon was so easy to obtain, that actually change is coming and it’s being done now.”

However, **Mr David Seymour, MP** (Leader, ACT) said: “I urge caution. I urge public consultation. I urge that we do our job as a Parliament and truly honour the victims of this tragedy by defending our democracy and our due process of public consultation and parliamentary scrutiny and making good laws, because if gun control is important, it’s important to do it right.”

The Bill includes changes in what will be the first tranche of a wider review of New Zealand’s gun laws. It provides an amnesty period for firearms to be surrendered to licensed dealers or to the police. This will tie in with a Government buy-back scheme. The Prime Minister explained that those who still require weapons for legitimate purposes, such as for hunting or for pest control: “have told us what is fair and legitimate use, and they have told us that they, by and large, with very few exceptions, support what we are doing here today.”

A proposed amendment in the name of Opposition police spokesperson, **Mr Chris Bishop, MP** (National) was ruled out of order. The amendment would have created an exemption for competitors in international target-shooting sports. The National Party still

hopes to see this reviewed in the next phase of the gun law reforms.

Mr Ian McKelvie, MP (National) commented that the Government’s buy-back scheme should accept illegally obtained weapons as well: “I accept that that won’t be part of this Bill - it wouldn’t be possible to be part of this. But I think it needs to be seriously considered as we go forward, as to how we get these guns that are illegally owned in New Zealand - and there will be many more of them as a result of this - out of circulation.”

The Minister of Police, **Hon. Stuart Nash, MP** (Labour), indicated that work was under way on an Arms Amendment Bill (No 2), which will make further amendments to the Arms Act and is expected to be brought before Parliament in June 2019. He said: “That Bill will address some long-debated questions around a gun register, the licensing regime, the system of police vetting, the fit and proper person test, storage requirements, and penalties, amongst other matters.”

The Bill was passed with 119 votes to 1 and received the Royal Assent on 11 April 2019. A Royal commission of inquiry has been established to investigate the events leading up to the Christchurch attacks.

The Education Amendment Bill (No 2)

The Education Amendment Bill (No 2), introduced on 13 September 2018, amends the Education Act 1989, the Education Act 1964, and the Education (Update) Amendment Act 2017 and clarifies the functions, duties, and powers of specified education entities. At the Bill’s Third and final Reading, the Minister of Education, **Hon. Chris Hipkins, MP** (Labour) noted that the legislation: “ends the previous Government’s policy of lowering the school starting age to include four-year-olds . . . requires private schools to be safe places for students, in line with the requirements on State and State integrated schools . . . [and] ensures that the Teaching Council, in making decisions on matters related to the profession, makes those within the context of Government policy.”

There was wide support for the Minister’s amendment set out on Supplementary Order Paper 224, which, **Ms Chlöe Swarbrick, MP** (Green) explained: “implemented into this piece of legislation the requirement that any name change of any university is no longer a decision that is to be made just by a Minister of Education but it is to be made by the entirety of this House, this Parliament. I think

that that's a democratic provision, and I think that it's fantastic."

In speaking to the Bill as a whole, Ms Swarbrick said it was "important to put on the record for the sake of Hansard the Green Party's supreme support for all of these brilliant policy points."

Similarly, **Ms Nicola Willis, MP** (National) supported the reform to the process by which universities may change their name: "This reflects recent events in New Zealand where one of our - if not our most - premium universities, Victoria University of Wellington, decided that it would go about changing its name. Unfortunately, the university council attempted to make that change without the support of its community, with a significant proportion of students and alumni opposed to that change and with staff divided on it."

However, Opposition spokesperson on Education, **Hon. Nikki Kaye, MP** (National) commented: "While we may have supported one Supplementary Order Paper within this legislation, we are opposing it on the grounds, actually, for what the Minister mentioned at the beginning of his speech. This is an incredibly ideological piece of legislation."

Ms Kaye's colleague, **Ms Denise Lee, MP** (National) also said of the Bill: "it's quite simply a crude dismantling of previous National Party reforms - that's straight out what it's about."

Opposition Members spoke also against the school starting age component of the Bill. **Hon. Tim Macindoe, MP** (National) stated: "let's not take away from parents the right to choose, and, in particular, let's acknowledge the fact that for many parents it's an economic necessity apart from anything else. There are so many families now, where the parents need to be able to go to work, that if the child is just a little bit short of his or her fifth birthday and it works for them, let that happen."

Ms Jan Tinetti, MP (Labour), in speaking to advice from the Advisory Group on Early Learning in 2015, countered: "Those people said very clearly that we cannot let young people start school before the age of five. Even five can be considered very early on a global standard. Now, when we've heard it can be just as long as eight weeks, actually, eight weeks in the life of a five-year-old is quite a length of time and actually can make a big, huge difference in the development of a child."

The Bill passed its Third Reading on 9 May 2019 with 63 votes to 57.

THIRD READING: NEW ZEALAND

The Arbitration Amendment Bill

The Arbitration Amendment Bill, a Member's Bill in the name of **Mr Andrew Bayly, MP** (National), to improve laws relating to arbitration proceedings and to bring them closer to international legislation, passed its Third Reading on 1 May 2019 with unanimous support in the House.

The Bill's amendments to the *Arbitration Act 1996* include: giving arbitration clauses in trust deeds the same effect as arbitration agreements; defining the grounds for setting aside an arbitral award; and confirming the consequence of failing to raise a timely objection to an arbitral tribunal's jurisdiction. Given the technical nature of the Bill, the Justice Committee received independent advice from legal experts, including from recently retired High Court judge, Hon. Paul Heath, QC.

The Select Committee Chair, **Mr Raymond Huo, MP** (Labour) explained that in so doing they were "not only honouring the sector but also getting some of the fundamental principles right, because, as Chief Justice, Rt Hon. Sian Elias stated in her two letters to the Justice Committee, this Bill, although a Member's Bill, did touch upon some important issues dealing directly with a court function."

The Bill enjoyed broad support across the House, with Members agreeing that it was important to provide an alternative to the court system. "[Arbitration] is usually quicker, it is usually more cost-effective, and it is usually less rancorous", said **Mr Michael Wood, MP** (Labour).

Mr Duncan Webb, MP (Labour) highlighted also that "the court systems absolutely do not work for everyone. Sometimes they don't work because of the complexity and size of disputes which arbitrations - as Mr Bayly noted - relate to, but also for a whole lot of other disputes which may be smaller and require more simple procedures."

Other Members spoke of the need to remove any opportunities to 'game the system' through this Bill. **Mr Chris Penk, MP** (National) stated: "If we are to encourage members of our society - whether it's natural persons, or corporate bodies, or whatever form a legal person might take - to engage in this constructive way, then we should do everything possible to make the law better for that purpose." The Bill's sponsor, Mr Bayly,

asked, "So why all this effort? Simply, arbitration is a very cost-effective and timely method of resolving commercial and other disputes. In essence, it reduces the caseload on courts."

Amendments to the Bill were proposed in order to align arbitration law more closely with international standards. **Ms Golriz Ghahraman, MP** (Green) explained how this could have other benefits: "So we're doing this for New Zealand, but we are going to get this very attractive outcome as well, that we will be so up to date and so effective in arbitration that we may actually become a hub for this type of dispute resolution internationally."

One of the few major disagreements during the Bill's passage concerned the conflict between New Zealand's principle of open justice and the privacy that would be desired for international arbitration proceedings. "Without making changes, we will remain uncompetitive as a chosen destination, and this represents a real commercial loss of opportunity", argued Mr Bayly. However, **Mr Fletcher Tabuteau, MP** (NZ First) disagreed: "New Zealand is a legal system where its foundation and its premise is very much about an open, public legal system. So I echo the words of those who have spoken tonight, yet again, and acknowledge that whilst there might have been some advantageous pecuniary advantage to especially dual commercial entities who were interested in using the arbitration system here in New Zealand, that is not New Zealand. We would not have wanted those proceedings to be undertaken in private."

One issue that arose during the Select Committee's consideration of the Bill was the so-called 'quick-draw' procedure, through which one fast-acting party could engineer the appointment of the arbiter of its choice. A number of submitters asked that provision for this procedure be repealed. While the Select Committee favoured this repeal, it reported that an amendment to this effect was outside the scope of the Bill. However, in a novel move, the Committee secured the Business Committee's agreement for the Committee of the Whole House to be authorised to consider the amendment. Using this authority, the Committee of the Whole House adopted the amendment, and the quick-draw procedure was abolished.

The Bill received the Royal Assent on 7 May 2019.

UGANDA FINANCE MINISTER PRESENTS BUDGET AND TARGETS INCREASING WEALTH AND IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS OF UGANDANS

In May 2019, the Parliament of Uganda considered, debated and passed five Budget bills, in preparation for the eventual approval of the national budget and presentation of the budget speech for the financial year 2019/2020.

The Bills included: the Excise Duty (Amendment) Bill, 2019; the Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2019; the Tax Procedures Code (Amendment) Bill, 2019; the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2019; the Stamp Duty (Amendment) Bill, 2019; these Bills were presented to the House on 28 March 2019. The Bills, which are presented and passed every year, make alterations in taxes and provide government with avenues to raise revenue required to fund the national budget. The Appropriation Bill provides how government will spend collected funds.

Unlike the years before the *Public Finance Management Act 2015* came into effect, Parliament and Legislators now have a more direct involvement in the preparation of the national Budget as well as the contents of the Budget speech.

The **Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Matia Kasaija** presented the national Budget for the financial year 2019/2020 on 13 June 2019, on the same day his counterparts in the neighbouring countries that make up the East African Community (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan and Tanzania).

Previously, after the Budget speech, the Parliament of Uganda would meet to consider the vote on account, to approve funds to allow for the withdraw of money from the Consolidated Fund Account for the purposes of meeting the

expenditure necessary to carry on services of government, before the consideration, approval and coming into effect of the Appropriation Act. With this system, the Budget bills would be introduced in Parliament after the presentation of the Budget speech in June of the year. This old system meant that figures, projections and proposals of the Government in the Budget speech were new to not only the Parliamentarians but also to the country.

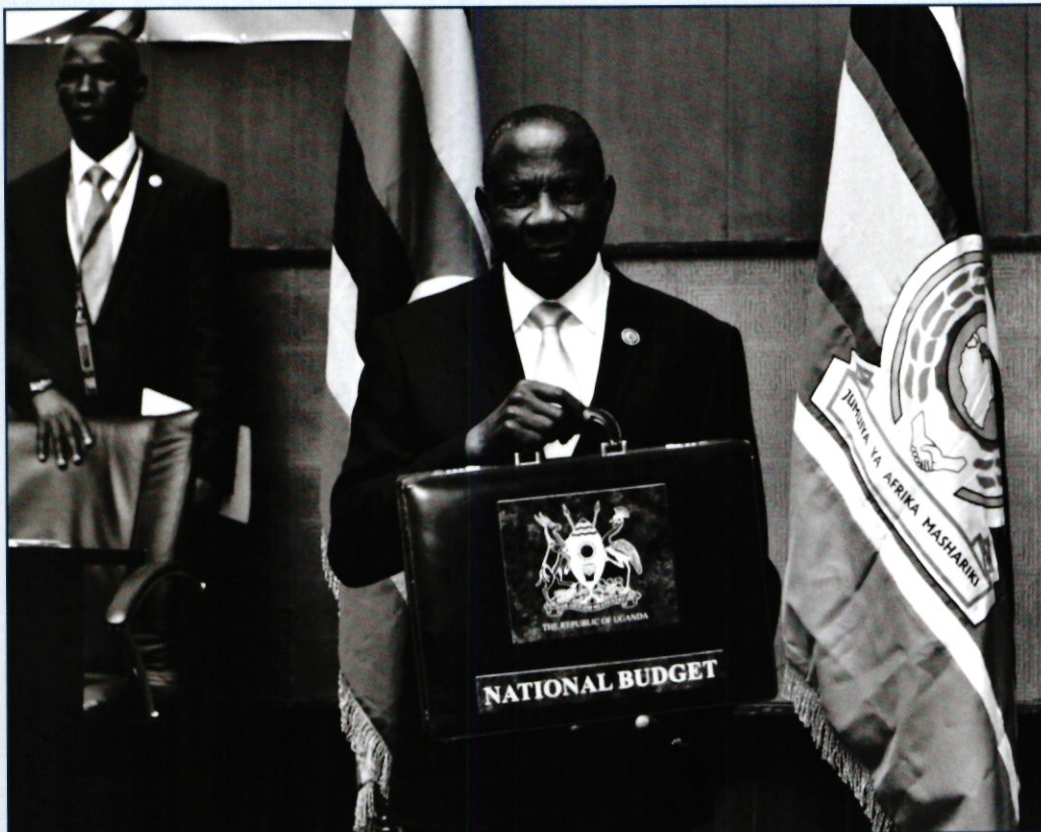
The Public Finance Management Act changed the Budget cycle and provided for more involvement of Parliamentarians in the Budget making process. Members now have a direct input into what gets into the national Budget, as figures and tax proposals are considered and approved beforehand. The Act among others provides for fiscal and

macroeconomic management; the Charter of Fiscal Responsibility; the Budget Framework Paper; the roles of the Minister of Finance and Secretary to the Treasury in the budgeting process; virements, multiyear expenditures, supplementary budgets and excess expenditure.

Further, the Act provides for bank account management, management of expenditure commitments, the raising of loans by the Minister, management of government debt, authority to receive monetary grants and assets management. It also establishes accounting standards and Audit Committees.

The Bill/Act was introduced in an effort to improve public financial management and was meant to consolidate all laws related to the management of public finances, including the *Budget Act, 2001* and the *Public Finance and Accountability Act, 2003*. The law also meant that the parliamentary calendar would require adjustment to make provision for scrutinising the Ministerial policy statements and the Budget figures during the period before 1st July.

The Act also requires the Minister of Finance to present to Parliament a Charter of



Left and above right: The Uganda Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Matia Kasaija, MP (also Member of Parliament for Buyanja in Kibaale district) presents the national Budget for financial year 2019/2020 to the Parliament of Uganda, 13 June 2019.



Fiscal Responsibility, three months after the first sitting of a new Parliament and after the general elections, for parliamentary approval. This Charter provides a statement indicating the measurable objectives for fiscal policy for a period of not less than the next three financial years and should be consistent with the National Development Plan.

On 13 June 2019, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Matia Kasaija, on behalf the President of Uganda presented to the Uganda Parliament the national Budget under the theme: 'Industrialization for Job Creation and Shared Prosperity'.

Highlights of the Budget speech

Uganda's economy has recovered and picked up momentum, growing at over 6% per annum over the last two years. With the progress in economic growth, average incomes of Ugandans have increased to US\$825 per person in financial year 2018/19, compared to US\$800 in 2017/18, notwithstanding the increase in the population size to 39 million Ugandans.

The quality of Uganda's labour force has dramatically improved, with the proportion of the labour force with tertiary

education increasing from 7.5% in 2013 to 13.6% in 2017. In addition, the annual growth in formal employment has averaged 9.8% between 2010 and 2017, higher than the average growth of the economy during the same period.

The structure of the economy has changed. The share of industry in the economy is now 21% compared to 11.3% in 1986. Services have increased to 48.7% from 32% over the same period. In contrast, the share of agriculture has reduced from over 50% in 1986 to 22% in financial year 2018/19.

Export performance has been excellent, with diversification leading to non-traditional cash crops earning Uganda US\$2.84 billion last financial year, compared to the traditional cash crops, which earned US\$0.79 billion.

Trade with East Africa Community partners has significantly improved, generating a surplus of US\$557 million last year. The composition

of exports has also changed positively with exports of light manufacturing products exceeding traditional merchandise.

National grid electricity connections have increased to 1.3 million customers, and the rural electrification access rate rising from 1% in 2001 to

over 13% in 2019.

Many new factories have been opened in the course of the last financial year with the result that the proportion of Ugandan products in supermarkets has increased from 15% to 45%. The Government's target is to reach 50% by the year 2020.

Further the Minister also highlighted some of the major development challenges faced by the country, singling out unemployment, income inequality and malnutrition and unhealthy lifestyles. He said that the universalisation of health and education has meant that about 600,000 people join the job market every year, creating the need for new jobs and leaving four

out of 10 young people with no work.

"The informality of the Agriculture and Services sectors implies that about 80% of our labor force is in the informal sector, and therefore not optimally employed," said Kasaija adding that "With most Ugandans engaged in the rural economy, it is of paramount importance to increase labour productivity in agriculture and aggressively promote agro-processing which in the end will be the basis for Uganda's industrialization and further job creation."

He said that income inequality has widened between rural and urban areas, considering that wealth has not been created faster in rural communities in comparison to urban areas.

On malnutrition and unhealthy lifestyles, Minister Kasaija said that this requires improving the nutrition status of Ugandans through coordinated actions, mass sensitisation and education and lifestyle awareness.

The Minister said that the Budget for the financial year 2019/2020, which amounts to over US\$34 trillion was meant to provide interventions aimed at increasing the wealth and improving the livelihoods of all Ugandans.



UK PRIME MINISTER RESIGNS AND UK PARLIAMENT SPECULATES ON PROROGATION PROCESS

Outside 10 Downing Street on the morning of 24 May 2019, **Rt Hon. Theresa May, MP** announced that she would be standing down as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. In her speech, she said that *"I have done everything I can to convince MPs to back [the Government's negotiated Withdrawal Agreement for leaving the EU]. Sadly, I have not been able to do so. I tried three times. I believe it was right to persevere, even when the odds against success seemed high. But it is now clear to me that it is in the best interests of the country for a new Prime Minister to lead that effort."*

In the previous six weeks, talks took place between the Government and the Opposition Labour Party to find a possible compromise that could lead to a revised Withdrawal Agreement being put before the House of Commons. However, these talks ended with no agreement.

On 21 May 2019, Mrs May delivered a speech on a *'new Brexit deal'*, which most notably announced that the Withdrawal Agreement Bill would include a requirement for the House of Commons to vote on whether to hold a second referendum. She faced opposition from MPs across the House following the speech and the Leader of the House of Commons, **Rt Hon. Andrea Leadsom, MP**, resigned from the cabinet.

Following speculation of a rule change within the 1922 Committee of Conservative backbenchers to permit another confidence vote within a year (following the previous confidence vote held in December 2018), Mrs May announced her resignation and formally stepped down

as leader of the Conservative Party on Friday 7 June 2019.

To select a new leader, the Parliamentary Conservative Party vote in a series of ballots to whittle down the nominated candidates until only two remain. The final two candidates then face an election amongst the Conservative Party membership. In this contest, which began in June 2019, ten candidates stood in the first round. After another four rounds of voting, the final two contenders, **Rt Hon. Boris Johnson, MP** and **Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt, MP**, faced an election among the party membership to be the next Conservative leader and therefore, the UK Prime Minister.

Whilst this election amongst the Conservative Party membership takes place, Theresa May remained Prime Minister. The next Conservative Party leader was announced the week commencing 22 July 2019 after which Theresa May resigned, and the new leader, **Rt Hon. Boris Johnson MP** was invited to form a Government by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Prorogation of the UK Parliament

The UK Parliament is now in one of its longest parliamentary sessions in history. On 7 May 2019, the current session became the longest by sitting days since the English Civil War (1642-51), beating the record and sitting for 295 days. The 2017-19 session is unusual for crossing three calendar years. The 2017-19 session was established by the Government to ensure there was adequate time to pass Brexit-related legislation following the 2017

General Election, departing from the usual twelve-month cycle.

Except for dissolution, which ends a Parliament and precedes a General Election, a parliamentary session can only be ended by prorogation. The origin of prorogation lies within the United Kingdom's monarchical system, in which it is a Royal prerogative to prorogue Parliament. Although prorogation remains a Royal prerogative, it is exercised by the Crown on advice of the Privy Council. In modern practice, the decision to prorogue the UK Parliament is taken by the Government of the day, given the politically neutral role of the UK's constitutional monarchy today.

Prorogation ends the proceedings in both Houses of Parliament in the United Kingdom. The effects include that primary legislation which has not completed its passage in Parliament falls, except in cases where the House of Commons has agreed to 'carry-over' a Bill to allow proceedings on it to continue in the next session. All other parliamentary business before either House also falls. Parliament cannot formally meet; questions cannot be tabled, and Committees cannot formally meet during prorogation. The Government cannot pass any primary legislation, including approval for further (financial) supply.

As a result of the *Parliament Acts 1911 and 1949*, should the House of Lords reject a Bill passed by the House of Commons, a new session can enable a UK Government to reintroduce the same Bill, and (provided that a year has elapsed since its Second Reading in the Commons) it can become an Act of

Parliament without the consent of the Upper House.

At the end of prorogation in the United Kingdom, the new parliamentary session begins with the State Opening of Parliament. The Queen formally opens Parliament and delivers the Queen's Speech in the House of Lords chamber. This Speech is written by the UK Government and sets out their legislative agenda for the forthcoming session. Both Houses will begin debating the Speech later that sitting day.

Opposition Day debates: taking control of the Parliamentary timetable

For an Opposition Day debate, which took place in the House of Commons on 12 June 2019, the Leader of the Opposition, **Rt Hon. Jeremy Corbyn, MP**, tabled a Business of the House motion. The motion would suspend *Standing Order No. 14(1)* (which provides that government business shall have precedence) and provide that precedence shall be given to a motion relating to the Business of the House in connection with matters relating to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union.

The motion also provided that, should more than one motion relating to the Business of the House be tabled, the Speaker should decide which motion should have precedence. This was similar in effect to the amendment which passed the House of Commons in March 2019 (tabled by **Rt Hon. Sir Oliver Letwin, MP**), which gave precedence to backbench business and allowed time for the European Union Withdrawal (No. 5) Bill to pass



both Houses of Parliament (see *The Parliamentarian* 2019 Issue Two for report).

This Opposition motion was cross-party, having signatures from Leaders of other parties represented in the House of Commons, namely Rt Hon. Sir Vince Cable, MP (Liberal Democrats), Caroline Lucas, MP (Green Party), Rt Hon. Anna Soubry, MP (Change UK – The Independent Group), Liz Saville Roberts, MP (Plaid Cymru) and Rt Hon. Ian Blackford, MP (SNP).

In setting out his case, Rt Hon. Sir Keir Starmer, MP (Labour), Shadow Secretary of State for leaving the European Union, said, “it is a first and limited step to ensure that Parliament cannot be locked out of the Brexit process over the coming weeks and months. It paves the way for Parliament to take further action, including to prevent [a] no deal [exit].” Referencing comments made

by Conservative leadership contenders, he said “When we face the suggestion by some leadership contenders that Parliament be prorogued and shut out of the process, we are forced to take action.”

Sam Gyimah, MP (Con) spoke in favour of the motion, saying “it strikes me that there are two principles at stake today. One of them is the convention in this House that the Government should be able to control the Order Paper, and the other is the constitutional principle of whether the Government can prorogue Parliament in pursuit of their policy objectives...I believe that the latter principle is the weightier one and the one we should bear in mind when we vote today.”

Opposing the motion, the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, Rt Hon. Stephen Barclay, MP (Con) gave his view that “section

1(b) gives precedence to any motion from any individual MP over Government business, and section 1(c) states that it is for ... Mr Speaker to decide whether that motion is brought before the House over other motions. In essence, sections 1(b) and 1(c) say that an individual MP and the Speaker - two Members of the House - can override Government business.”

Tim Loughton, MP (Con) supported the Secretary of State, asking him: “Did my Right Hon. Friend hear anything in the 30-minute speech by the Right Hon. and learned Member for Holborn and St Pancras (Sir Keir Starmer), or can he see anything in the motion, that remotely gives a positive or constructive solution or way forward to the Brexit impasse, rather than just more of what Members do not want?”

At the end of the debate, the motion was divided on

and defeated by 309 votes to 298. Unlike Sir Oliver Letwin's amendment to a Business motion in March 2019, this attempt to give precedence to backbench business failed.

Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Bill

The Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 8 May 2019 and establishes the statutory bodies that will be responsible for the works for the restoration and renewal of buildings within the Parliamentary estate.

This was instigated by resolutions passed by the House of Commons and House of Lords in January and February 2018 respectively, which stated that work should commence on the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster. The resolution stated that “immediate steps should be taken” to establish a shadow Sponsor Body and Delivery Authority to manage the project. This Bill establishes them as statutory bodies and enables them to take on the responsibility for delivering this historic project. The Bill allows Parliament to have a clear role in approving the design, cost and timing of the Restoration and Renewal project. The Sponsor Body will fund the Delivery Authority and hold it to account.

The Bill has completed its passage through the House of Commons and is now progressing through the House of Lords. Meanwhile progress has been made on the Restoration and Renewal programme and the related Northern Estate programme, which includes the relocation of the House of Commons into a temporary chamber for the duration of the project in a renovated Richmond House – previously the occupied by the Department of Health.

CANADA FEDERAL PARLIAMENT ADJOURNS AHEAD OF FALL ELECTIONS

On 20 June 2019, the House of Commons adjourned, followed by the Senate of Canada on 21 June. The Canadian Parliament will likely resume sitting following the 43rd Federal Election. Under the Canada Elections Act, the election is scheduled to take place on 21 October 2019.

Legislation

Before adjourning for the summer, 24 Government Bills received Royal Assent. Among those Bills were:

- *S-203, Ending the Captivity of Whales and Dolphins Act*, which bans keeping and breeding cetaceans - including whales, dolphins and porpoises - in captivity. The Bill also bans using such animals for entertainment.
- *C-91, Indigenous Languages Act*, which aims to reclaim, revitalize, strengthen and maintain Indigenous languages in Canada. The Bill also recognises

Indigenous language rights as Aboriginal rights protected under section 35 of *Canada's Constitution Act, 1982*.

- *Bill C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, which affirms that Indigenous people have jurisdiction over child and family services in their communities.
- *C-93, An Act to provide no-cost, expedited record suspensions for simple possession of cannabis*, which provides no-cost record suspensions for people who in the past have received a simple marijuana possession conviction.
- *Bill C-83, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and another Act*, which makes a number of changes to the criminal justice system, including

banning the use of solitary confinement.

- *C-48, Oil Tanker Moratorium Act*, which bans tanker traffic off the northern coast of British Columbia.
- *C-59, An Act respecting national security matters*, which sets out a wide range of national security and oversight reforms. Namely, the Bill establishes the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency and sets out its composition, mandate and powers. Furthermore, it enacts the Intelligence Commissioner Act, which outlines the duties and functions of the Intelligence Commissioner.
- *Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act*, to amend the *Navigation Protection Act* and to make consequential amendments to other Acts,

which makes considerable changes to environmental assessments and regulations.

Committee Activity

Committees were very active throughout May and June 2019, presenting over 120 reports in the House of Commons. Some of these reports included:

- Taking Action to End Online Hate (Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights)
- Clean Growth and Climate Change in Canada: How Canada Can Lead Internationally (Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development)
- Democratic Strain and Popular Discontent in Europe: Responding to the Challenges Facing Liberal Democracies (Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development)
- Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Canadian Armed Forces (Standing Committee on National Defence)
- A Parallel Debating Chamber for Canada's House of Commons (Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs)
- A Lifetime of Dedication: Helping Senior Women Benefit from their Lifelong Contributions to Canadian Society today (Standing Committee on the Status of Women)
- Aquatic Invasive Species: A National Priority (Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans)





- The Health of LGBTQIA2 Communities in Canada (Standing Committee on Health)
- Regulations Respecting the Non-Attendance of Members by Reason of Maternity or Care for a New-Born or Newly-Adopted Child (Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs)
- Statutory Review of the Copyright Act (Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology)
- Shifting Paradigms, (Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage)
- Medical Cannabis and Veterans' Well-Being (Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs).

On 13 June 2019, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights voted to strike a Committee Member's remarks to a witness from the official record. The Committee said the remarks were "*discriminatory, hurtful and disrespectful.*"

Senate Committees also presented a number of substantive reports leading up to the summer adjournment, including:

- Parliamentary Privilege: Then and Now (Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament)
- Open Banking: What it Means for You (Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce)
- Northern Lights: A Wake-Up Call for the Future of Canada (Special Committee on the Arctic)
- Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Canadian Armed Forces (Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence)
- Venezuela: An Uncertain Transition (Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade)
- How did we get here? A concise, unvarnished account of the history of the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Canada (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples)

Changes in the Senate

On 18 April 2019, Senator **Hon. Ghislain Maltais** retired,

after serving in the Senate of Canada since 2012.

As of 10 July 2019, the standings in the Senate were: Independent Senators Group 59, Conservative Party of Canada 30, Liberal Party of Canada 9, Non-affiliated 6; there is also one vacancy.

Changes in the House of Commons

On 6 May 2019, a by-election was held in the riding of Nanaimo-Ladysmith, British Columbia. Green Party candidate **Paul Manly, MP**, won the seat, making him the second Green Party MP elected to a federal seat. This seat was previously held by the New Democratic Party.

On 20 June 2019, **Mark Warawa, MP** died after battling cancer. Mr Warawa served the British Columbia riding of Langley-Aldergrove from 2004-2019.

Conflict of Interest

On 10 July 2019, Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, Mario Dion found that **Anita Vandenberg, MP** contravened the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons.

Specifically, the Commissioner determined that her use of her title in door-to-door canvassing, recorded telephone calls, and letters of endorsement for her husband's campaign for municipal councilor contravened the Code.

Motion on climate emergency

On 17 June 2019, the House of Commons passed a motion put forward by Environment and Climate Change Minister, **Hon. Catherine McKenna, MP**, declaring that Canada is in a "*national climate emergency which requires, as a response, that Canada commit to meeting its national emissions target under the Paris Agreement.*"

Sergeant-at-Arms

On 4 July 2019, the Canadian Prime Minister, **Rt Hon. Justin Trudeau, MP**, appointed Patrick McDonnell as the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons. The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for many aspects of the operation of the Chamber of the House of Commons, performs ceremonial functions and works closely with the Director of the Parliamentary Protective Service.

FIRST SESSION OF THE NEW 17th LOK SABHA IN INDIA

In the General Elections held in April-May 2019 to constitute the 17th Lok Sabha, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured 303 seats out of 542 seats for which elections were held. Elections for one parliamentary constituency had been cancelled by the Election Commission. The BJP with 303 seats surpassed its previous record of 282 seats in 2014. This is the first time that a non-Congress party has come to power at the centre for the second term consecutively. The Congress Party won 52 seats as against 44 in the previous Lok Sabha. The total strength of BJP-led coalition, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is 351 seats as against its previous tally of 336. The United Progress Alliance led by Congress (UPA) has secured 90 seats. A record 78 women candidates have been elected to the Lok Sabha as against 62 in the previous one. The House has 265 first time Members.

The 16th Lok Sabha was dissolved by the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind on 24 June 2019 on the recommendation of the Union Council of Ministers. The President also accepted the resignation of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and his Council of

Ministers the same day and requested the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers to continue till the new Government assumes office.

On 25 May 2019, the Election Commission of India submitted a copy of the Notification issued by it in the *Official Gazette* containing the names of Members elected to the House of the People to the President of India. With the issue of such notification the House is deemed to be duly constituted.

A new Council of Ministers headed by the Leader of the BJP Parliamentary Party, Shri Narendra Modi was sworn in by the President of India on 30 June 2019 at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

The first session of the newly constituted Lok Sabha commenced on 17 June 2019. The House met at 11 o'clock with the playing of the National Anthem. Members stood in silence for a short while to mark the solemn occasion of the first sitting of the new Lok Sabha. Dr Virendra Singh, a senior Member of Lok Sabha, was appointed as *pro tem* Speaker and administered the oath in the morning of 17 June by the President of India. The Speaker *pro tem* signed the Roll of Members at the commencement of the sitting and took his seat in the House. The Speaker *pro tem* congratulated and welcomed all the Members who have been elected to the Lok Sabha and expressed hope that the Members will help the Chair in maintaining the high tradition of the House, thereby strengthening the edifice and the roots of democratic polity.

The Secretary-General of Lok Sabha, Smt. Snehlata Shrivastava laid on the Table a list, containing the names of Members elected to the 17th Lok Sabha, submitted by the Election Commission of India.

Later, the Speaker *pro tem* along with the Members of the Panel of Chairpersons administered the oath to the Members.

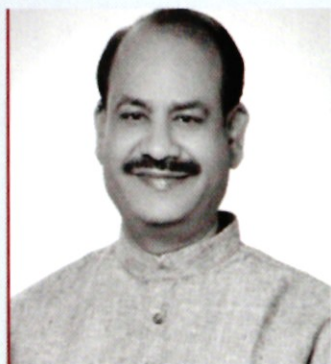
The first two days of the House were devoted to taking the oath or affirmation by the Members. The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi was the first to take the oath as a Member of Lok Sabha followed by Members on the Panel of Chairpersons, the Council of Ministers and then Members State-wise in alphabetical order. On the first day, 320 Members took the oath and 214 Members on the second day. The rest took the oath on subsequent days.

On 20 June 2019, Shri Om Birla, MP was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the House. There were 13 motions before the House proposing the name of Shri Om Birla for the post of office of Speaker of Lok Sabha. The motion moved by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and seconded by the Defence Minister, Shri Raj Nath Singh was unanimously adopted and Shri Om Birla was chosen as Speaker. The Speaker *pro tem* then invited Shri Om Birla to occupy the Chair. The Prime Minister and the Leaders of some parties conducted Shri Om Birla to the Chair. The Leaders of parties in Parliament including the Prime Minister felicitated Shri Birla on his election as Speaker.

The Lok Sabha Speaker, Shri Birla thanked all the parties for reposing their faith in him in taking up the challenging job. He believed that in view of the massive mandate, the accountability of the Government has grown far more this time and expected the Government to act with more accountability, transparency and openness. The Speaker

requested Members to raise such issues that are relevant to the Government of the country and the Government to respond to such issues with a sense of responsibility, taking full care of Member's sentiments. He said that Members may have divergent views and ideology, their policies too may be divergent, but all have come to this House with a mission to make the nation prosperous and progressive. Effort should be made to maintain decorum in the House and set a precedent for others across the globe. He assured to carry out the solemn responsibility entrusted upon him and expected cooperation from all in running the House in an impartial and uninterrupted manner. The Speaker said it is his responsibility to protect the concerns of everyone without having any regard to their numbers.

On 20 June 2019, the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind addressed the joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament assembled together in the Central Hall of Parliament. Congratulating the newly elected Members of Lok Sabha, Shri Kovind said more than 610 million voters India set a new record by casting their votes and enhanced the credibility of India's democracy in the world. The participation of women in elections has been almost equal to men while millions of youth have voted for the first time. People have given a very clear and strong mandate after assessing the performance of the Government during its first tenure. The Government, while fulfilling the basic needs of the countrymen, is moving forward towards realising their aspirations of building a strong, safe, prosperous and all-inclusive India. This journey



Shri Om Birla, MP, Speaker of the Lok Sabha



Image: Parliament of India/CPIA India Branch

is inspired by the basic spirit of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas aur Sabka Vishwas*.

The Government, in order to pave the way for the golden future of New India, has resolved to make rural India strong and empower urban India; to enable the entrepreneurial India attain new heights; to make all systems transparent and enhance the prestige of honest countrymen further; to build infrastructure for the 21st century and mobilize all resources for creation of a powerful India. The Government has already taken many decisions aimed at the welfare of farmers, soldiers, students, entrepreneurs, women and other sections of society and have also started implementing them. The President listed various initiatives of the Government in areas like health, education, infrastructure, housing, sanitation, water conservation, fisheries, agriculture, etc. The President said the government accords the top most priority to national security and effective steps are being taken to tackle terrorism and naxalism.¹

The idea of New India will be realized by the year 2022. In the New India farmers' income will be doubled; every poor will have a *pucca* (concrete) roof over his head; every poor will have access to clean fuel;

every poor will have electricity connection; no poor will be compelled to defecate in the open; every poor will have access to medical facilities; every village in the country will be connected by roads; river Ganga will flow uninterrupted, and pollution free; India will be close to becoming a US\$5 trillion economy; India will be progressing towards joining world's three largest economies; an Indian will unfurl the tri-colour in space, entirely on the strength of indigenous resources; and India will provide leadership to global development with a new zeal and confidence.

The Lok Sabha had a two-day discussion on the *Motion of Thanks on the President's Address* on 24-25 June 2019. Moving the motion in the Lok Sabha, the Minister of State for Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, **Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi** highlighted the success of several developmental initiatives and schemes by the Modi-led government. He highlighted the positive atmosphere created as a result of the direct transfer of benefits of various schemes to the targeted people. He said the President's address is a reflection of the conviction and commitment of the Modi Government.

Seconding the motion, **Dr Heena Gavit** (BJP) said all sections of society have voted for the Prime Minister in large numbers and the vote is a positive vote, pro-incumbency vote.

Initiating the discussion, Congress Party Leader in Lok Sabha, **Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury** alleged that the NDA Government has only renamed the schemes launched by the earlier UPA Government. He also took on the Government on issues of economy and unemployment. Elaborating the various achievements made during the Congress Government period, he said the Congress rule brought green revolution to increase food grain production and also the *Food Security Act*.

Shri T R Baalu (DMK) accused the Government of not delivering on the promises made by it during 2014 general elections. **Professor Sougata Roy** (TMC) raised the incidents of alleged mob lynching, huge unemployment and bad shape of Public Sector Undertakings. **Shri Mithun Reddy** (YSR Congress) asked the Government to implement the provisions of the *Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act* and accord special category status to Andhra Pradesh. **Shri Vinayak Bhaurao Raut** (Shiv Sena) wanted that the

Left: The President of India, **Shri Ram Nath Kovind** proceeds to the Central Hall of the Parliament of India to address the joint sitting of Parliament accompanied by the Prime Minister, **Shri Narendra Modi** and senior Parliamentarians.

Government should reduce the centrally-sponsored schemes and give powers to the States to formulate schemes according to their needs and to spend funds thereon.

Shri Pinaki Misra (BJD) said the Bill providing the reservation of seats for women in Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies should be passed. He asked for special assistance for the State of Odisha as it had been hit by four major cyclones. **Kunwar Danish Ali** (BSP) requested the Government to give more focus on the farmers, poor and the youth of the country. **Shri Nama Nageswara Rao** (TRS) narrated the various developmental works launched by the Government of Telangana.

The NCP Member, **Dr Amol Ramsing Kolhe** hoped that given the magnitude of the mandate, the dignity of the Opposition Party and the autonomy of institutions must be maintained. **Dr Kirit P. Solanki** (BJP) highlighted the achievements of the Government in areas like electrification, housing, health, banking, direct benefits transfer, etc. **Shri P.K. Kunhalikutty** (IUML) said the Government has failed to solve any of the problems the country faced during its last tenure.

Shri Ganesh Singh (BJP) said the manner in which the country has progressed in the last five years was not seen in the last 55 years. **Adv. A. M. Ariff** (CPI-M) said the idea of '*one country, one election*' is totally anti-federal and undemocratic. **Shri Ram Kripal Yadav** (BJP) drew attention to a new action-

plan formed for the development of 112 aspirational districts of the country. **Shri P. Raveendranath Kumar** (AIADMK) urged the Central Government to allocate the more funds to the State of Tamil Nadu.

Shri Dharambir Singh (BJP) thanked the President for rightly emphasising the importance of water. **Shri Mohammad Azam Khan** (SP) said many political parties and Governments have contributed towards development of the nation over a period of time and no one can claim that development has taken place during the last five years only.

Shri M. Selvaraj (CPI) wanted the centre to give attention to the water crisis faced by Tamil Nadu state. **Shri Asaduddin Owaisi** (AIMIM) said it is very sad that only four per cent Muslims have got elected to Lok Sabha and not even a single one is from the BJP. **Shri Tokheho Yepthomi** (NDPP) asked the government to give priority to the road sector in the North-Eastern States. **Professor Rita Bahuguna Joshi** (BJP) said women centric policies of the government have contributed to economic, political and social empowerment of women in a big way.

Participating in the discussion on 25 June 2019, the DMK Member, **Shri Dayanidhi Maran** raised the issue of water crisis prevailing throughout the country, particularly in Tamil Nadu. The Kerala Congress (M) Member, **Shri Thomas Chazhikadan** wanted the Government to increase the minimum support price (MSP) of natural rubber. **Shri Hasnain Masoodi** (NC) wanted elections to Jammu and Kashmir Assembly to be held without any delay. **Shri Jayadev Galla** (TDP) observed any attempt to weaken institutions built over many decades will cripple democracy.

Smt. Mahua Moitra (TMC) alleged that the Constitution is



under threat under the BJP rule. **Shri Prataprao Jadhav** (Shiv Sena) asked the Government to review the *Crop Insurance Scheme* as it has been more beneficial to the insurance companies than farmers. **Smt. Anupriya Patel** (Apna Dal) suggested for creating an All India Judicial Service. **Smt. Preneet Kaur** (INC) called upon the Agriculture Minister to increase the subsidy on underground irrigation pipe scheme and start a total debt waiver scheme for the farmers of Punjab. **Shri Thol Thirumaavalavan** (VCK) opposed the proposal of simultaneous election on the ground of accountability. **Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi** (BJP) said the clear mandate reflects the leadership of the Prime Minister and organisational capabilities of Party President, **Shri Amit Shah**.

Shri N.K. Premachandran (RSP) regretted that the entire Presidential speech revolves around the so-called achievements of the five years of NDA-I Government and

no mention has been made about the programmes and the policy directives to be pursued in the coming five years. **Shri Bhagwant Mann** (AAP) requested the Central Government to sanction more industries for Punjab to provide employment to the youth. **Shri Indra Hang Subba** (SKM) believed creation of the Ministry of Jal Shakti will help in resolving the issue of water scarcity in the country.

Replying to the *Motion of Thanks on the President's Address to Parliament*, the Prime Minister, **Shri Narendra Modi**, said the President's address envisions a New India, as dreamt by millions of Indians. The people of India have re-elected a stable Government once again, after evaluating its performance. Highlighting the vision of the Union Government, the Prime Minister said that the Government believes in public welfare and modern infrastructure. He said that the Government never diverted from the development path, nor diluted the development

agenda and the government and the opposition has to work together to fulfill the dream of a strong, safe, developed and inclusive nation.

The Prime Minister said that the Union Government has taken many pro-people decisions within weeks of taking charge. **Shri Modi** urged the people to take concrete steps to save water. Reiterating the Government's resolve to continue its fight against corruption, he urged everyone to work towards creating a New India. The Prime Minister asked for a collective endeavour to make India a five trillion-dollar economy.

After a debate lasting 13 hours 47 minutes, the Motion of Thanks was passed by the Lok Sabha after disapproving all the amendments. The Rajya Sabha also passed the Motion of Thanks after a long debate.

References:

¹ A Naxal or Naxalite is a member of any political organisation that claims the legacy of the Communist Party of India, founded in Calcutta in 1969.

HIGH COURT DECISION UPHOLDS PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

It is the first in Trinidad and Tobago, and probably in the Caribbean or the wider Commonwealth. Trinidad and Tobago's Attorney-General, **Faris Al-Rawi** has lauded the decision of High Court Judge, Justice Jacqueline Wilson who had refused to grant an injunction to stop the parliamentary debate on the Privileges Committee's report relating to contempt allegations against Oropouche East MP, **Dr Roodal Moonilal**.

The Attorney-General noted that that the decision preserved the immunity and privileges of the Parliament as enshrined under the Constitution. *"It is an important decision because it says that Parliament can regulate its own practices, processes and Members. If Parliament cannot hold discipline amongst its Members, we are going to invite chaos into our equation,"* the Attorney-General said.

The Attorney-General claimed that it would have set a legal precedent which would have allowed Parliamentarians to mount legal challenges to frustrate the work of the Committee. *"That would have respectfully made a mockery of the separation of powers argument and it would mean that on every whim and fancy of any sitting Parliamentarian, the court process can be invoked to stop Parliament's autonomy,"* he said. *"Although we have not gotten the reasons of the judge as yet, what flows is the acceptance that injunctive relief on allegations of a breach of fundamental rights do not trump the Constitution as a whole. The Constitution must be read as a whole,"* the Attorney-General said, as he claimed that Trinidad and Tobago was among a handful of nations which incorporated

the immunity and privileges of Parliament into its Constitution.

The Member of Parliament, **Dr Roodal Moonilal**, would now have to wait for the hearing of his substantial motion challenging the composition of the Parliamentary Committee which produced the report against him. Through the lawsuit, the Member is seeking declarations against the Committee as well as financial compensation over its handling of his case.

The contempt of Parliament allegations against **Dr Roodal Moonilal** stemmed from a series of statements he made in the House of Representatives on 9th and 10th October 2018. The main grounds of **Dr Roodal Moonilal's** substantive lawsuit against the Committee is that neither **Laventille West MP, Fitzgerald Hinds** nor the House of Representatives Speaker, **Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George** should have been allowed to participate as they are involved in his complaints and because both Members had previously made statements against him when the issue of privilege was first raised.

In the report, which was tabled, the Committee claimed that **Dr Roodal Moonilal's** comments were threatening in nature and brought the House into public odium. The Committee also suggested that he should be asked to apologise.

Venezuelans cannot vote in Trinidad elections

Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of National Security, **Hon. Stuart Young** has stated that the 16,523 Venezuelans who were given one-year temporary visas to stay and work in the country, would not be able to vote in the forthcoming local government elections scheduled for later this year,

and the general elections, set to be held in 2020.

Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister, **Dr Keith Rowley** recently said that those Venezuelans who work, would not pay taxes or contribute to the National Insurance Scheme. There is also concern about children's enrolment in the education system.

The Minister of National Security was contributing to a debate in the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago on a private motion presented by the Opposition Leader in the Senate, **Senator Wade Mark** in which he called for the *Immigration (Amendment) Regulation 2019* to be annulled by mid-June 2019.

The Venezuelan Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, **Carlos Perez** had initially signalled that Venezuelans, who came to the country in response to the economic crisis in his homeland, were entitled to claim residency or citizenship, but the Minister of National Security had denied this statement. In this case, Venezuelans would not be able to vote in elections, adding that citizens could only vote after they had acquired five years of residency and acquired citizenship of Trinidad and Tobago.

There continues to be debate on all sides of the economy, including from the trade unions, saying that Venezuelans would

take away the jobs of nationals, as they are expected to provide cheap labour.

Trinidad and Tobago is just 22 miles away from Venezuela and many Venezuelans came to Trinidad and Tobago by boat. Several Venezuelans were drowned passing through the harsh waters of the Gulf-of-Paria between the two countries. It has been alleged that several Venezuelans have been charged with a number of crimes including murder, prostitution and human trafficking, and many citizens in Trinidad and Tobago are expressing alarm as the country's crime rate continues to escalate to catastrophic proportions daily. Many people fear, and probably believe, the presence of Venezuelans would continue to further enhance the crime figures.

In mid-June 2019, the Ministry of National Security announced that all Venezuelans now coming to Trinidad and Tobago would have to acquire visas to visit from the Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago in Caracas, the Venezuelan capital.

The Opposition United National Congress, led by former Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister, **Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar**, now the Leader of the Opposition, is also on record warning the Government that allowing in Venezuelans would be a disaster in the country.



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