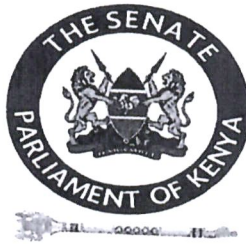


REPUBLIC OF KENYA



PAPERS LAID	
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COMMITTEE	—
CLERK AT THE TABLE	Mr. Abdurahman

13TH PARLIAMENT | FOURTH SESSION

REPORT OF THE 3RD COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH
DISABILITIES (CPwD) AFRICA REGION CONFERENCE HELD AT CIELA
RESORT & SPA IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA 24TH – 28TH FEBRUARY, 2025

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA.



Approved.


07.08.2025
DSS

Hon. Speaker
You may approve
for tabling
MA
6/8/25

Clerks Chambers,
Parliament Buildings,
NAIROBI.

March, 2025

Table of Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms	3
Preface	4
1. Background.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
2. The Conference.....	7
Opening Remarks	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
Presentations.....	8
3. Resolutions Of The 3 rd Commonwealth Parliamentarians With Disabilities Africa Region Conference	20
Topic 1: Technology, Digitization, And Its Use For Empowerment And Inclusion Of Persons With Disabilities In The African Context	21
Topic 2: Accessibility In Action – Designing Physical Spaces For Inclusive Parliaments.....	21
Topic 3: Policy Pathways – Effective Strategies For Implementing Disability Inclusion In Parliament	22
Topic 4: Culture Shifts – Changing Attitudes Towards Disability In Political Institutions.....	22
General Resolutions.....	23

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPA	- Commonwealth Parliamentarians Association
CPwD	- Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities
PwDs	- Persons with Disabilities
CWP	- Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians
EGH	- Elder of the Order of the Golden Heart
EXCO	- Executive Committee
Hon.	- Honourable
HSC	- Head of State Commendation
MNA	- Member of National Assembly
MP	- Member of Parliament
Rt.	- Right
Sen.	- Senator

PREFACE

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**, was founded in 1911 and is an international community of Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures working together to deepen the Commonwealth's commitment to the highest standards of democratic governance and parliamentary practice. It collaborates with Parliaments and other organisations, including the intergovernmental community, to achieve its Statement of Purpose. It brings Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff together to exchange ideas among themselves and with experts in various fields, to identify benchmarks of good practices and new policy options they can adopt or adapt in the governance of their societies.

CPA activities focus on the Commonwealth's commitment to its fundamental political values, including: just and honest government, the alleviation of poverty, fundamental human rights, international peace and order, global economic development, the rule of law, equal rights and representation for all citizens of both genders, the separation of powers among the three branches of government and the right to participate in free and democratic political processes.

The CPA represents more than one hundred and eighty (180) Parliaments and Legislatures (or Branches) in fifty-three (53) Commonwealth countries divided up between nine (9) geographic regions of the Commonwealth, that is, Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic; India; Pacific; South-East Asia.

The management of the activities and business of the Association is vested in an Executive Committee consisting of approximately thirty-five (35) members led by the Chairperson of the CPA and comprising of the Officers of the Association who include the Chairperson of the CWP and the CPA Small Branches Chairperson and three (3) Regional Representatives from each Region except Africa which, as a large region, has six (6) Regional Representatives.

The CPA, which is governed by a constitution established in 1993, has the General Assembly as its ultimate authority. The Executive Committee usually meets twice a year and is made up of CPA Officers and Regional Representatives. CPA Officers meet as the Coordinating Committee: Chairperson of the Executive Committee (elected by the General Assembly for three years); the Vice-Chairperson (a Regional Representative elected by the Executive Committee for one year); the Treasurer (elected by the General Assembly for three years); the CPA Small Branches Chairperson and Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson (both elected by their networks for three years). The CPA Headquarters Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, administers the CPA with support from Regional and Branch Secretaries, usually senior parliamentary staff who mobilise the resources of their Parliaments to achieve the aims and activities of the CPA.

Among its flagship programmes, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) established the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Network in 2018. The CPwD network is dedicated to championing and increasing the representation of persons with disabilities within the Commonwealth, and actively works to mainstream disability considerations across all CPA activities and programmes. Supporting elected representatives with disabilities in over 180 Parliaments and Legislatures throughout the Commonwealth, the CPwD ensures that issues affecting persons with disabilities are brought to the forefront of parliamentary debate and legislation, thereby fostering more inclusive and representative legislative institutions. The CPwD African Region Network has held three conferences since its inception in 2018.

The 3rd Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Africa Regional Conference was held from 24th to 28th February, 2025 in Lusaka in Zambia under the theme ***‘Breaking Barriers: Building inclusive Parliaments for persons with disabilities.’***

The Kenyan delegation comprised of the following Members of Parliament: –

- i. Hon. Timothy Wanyonyi, MP, - Leader of the Delegation and CPwD Africa Regional Chairperson.

- ii. Hon. Rose Museo, MP,
- iii. Sen. Crystal Asige, MP, and
- iv. Sen. George Mbugua, MP,

The delegation was accompanied by the following officers: -

- i. Mr. Polycarp Matara - Clerk Assistant II, Senate
- ii. Eng. Mutunga Mike - Engineering Officer, National Assembly

Delegates at the CPwD Regional Conference discussed a wide range of topics presented by resource persons who shared their insights and knowledge including-

- i. Technology Digitalisation, and its use for Empowerment and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the African Context;
- ii. Accessibility in Action: Designing Physical Spaces for Inclusive Parliament;
- iii. Policy Pathways: Effective Strategies for Implementing Disability Inclusion in Parliament;
- iv. Culture Shifts: Changing Attitudes Towards Disability in Political Institutions

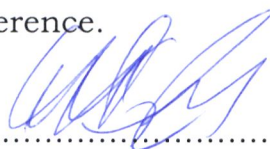
At the end of the conference, the delegates made and adopted general resolutions, calling upon all Commonwealth Parliaments in the Africa Region to implement the resolutions and contribute towards building inclusive Parliaments for persons with disabilities.

The delegation expresses its sincere gratitude to the Speakers of the National Assembly and the Senate for granting them the opportunity to attend and contribute, as well as to the Office of the Clerk for providing technical support and secretariat services throughout the conference.



.....
SEN. CRYSTAL ASIGE, MP, AND
MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION

DATE:.....30/7/2025.....



.....
SEN. GEORGE MBUGUA, MP,
MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION

DATE:.....30/7/2025.....

THE 3rd COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES AFRICA REGION CONFERENCE

A. THE CONFERENCE

The 3rd CPwD Africa Regional Conference, held in Lusaka, Zambia from 24th to 28th February 2025, began with opening remarks from key dignitaries and was followed by a series of presentations and discussions focused on technology, accessibility, policy, and cultural shifts necessary for building inclusive parliaments for persons with disabilities.

Keynote speakers, including Hon. Dr. Christopher Kalila, MP (CPA Chairperson, CPA, Executive Committee), Mr. Roy Ngulube (Clerk, National Assembly of Zambia), and CPA Secretary-General Stephen Twigg, emphasized the need for inclusive parliaments and highlighted the progress and ongoing challenges in disability inclusion.

Representing the Parliament of Kenya, Hon. Timothy Wanyonyi, MP, CPwD Africa Regional Chairperson, called for an increase in the political participation of persons with disabilities in elective roles as a means to strengthen representation across the continent. He urged African Parliaments to prioritize the design of accessible infrastructure and the development of robust policy frameworks, ensuring these are informed by comprehensive stakeholder engagement. Hon. Wanyonyi also highlighted the importance of benchmarking inclusive practices across legislatures and advocated for the integration of Persons with Disabilities into government programmes to guarantee their active involvement in national development. He reaffirmed the crucial role of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) in fostering accessibility and inclusivity within parliamentary environments, emphasizing that these efforts are important in order to achieve genuinely representative and equitable governance.

B. PRESENTATIONS

The conference featured a series of presentations and discussions that addressed key themes central to advancing disability inclusion in governance. The highlights of the presentations are as follows-

i. **Technology Digitalisation, and its use for Empowerment and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the African Context by Dr. Margareth Matonya**

The presenter highlighted access to digital technologies for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Africa, emphasizing that digitalization referred to the integration of digital tools into daily life—such as communication, education, healthcare, and governance. It was noted that for PWDs, this transformation had the potential to eliminate long-standing barriers, increase independence, and open new social and economic opportunities. The presentation stressed that when digital tools were implemented thoughtfully and inclusively, they could act as powerful tools for empowerment, enabling full societal participation.

Regarding the focus on Africa, the presenter highlighted that although the continent was diverse and rapidly developing, it faced significant challenges in achieving disability inclusion. The African Disability Alliance had reported that over 80 million people in Africa lived with a disability, yet many were still excluded from essential services like education, employment, and healthcare. The presentation pointed to cultural stigma, infrastructural deficiencies, and policy limitations as factors that perpetuated marginalization.

Despite these barriers, the presenter indicated significant potential, noting the continent's growing mobile phone usage and increasing internet access—even in remote areas. It suggested that if these technologies were made accessible and inclusive, they could play a major role in promoting inclusion for PWDs.

The presenter further explained that assistive technologies (AT) were one of the most transformative elements of digitalization. These tools, designed to help individuals overcome functional limitations, were said to be crucial for supporting independence and social participation. Examples cited included screen readers, hearing aids, mobility aids, and AI-powered virtual assistants. These technologies, according to the presentation, helped bridge the gap between ability and opportunity by improving access to education, communication, and employment.

From the presentation, it was acknowledged that substantial obstacles remained for PWDs in Africa. These included limited access to digital devices due to high costs, poor infrastructure in rural areas, and persistent social stigma. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that mobile technology had been transformative, with over 450 million mobile phone users across the continent using these platforms for communication and empowerment. It was highlighted that the rise of digital financial services like M-Pesa in Kenya played a crucial role in allowing people with mobility challenges to manage their finances independently. African startups were also said to be creating inclusive technologies, such as accessible apps and affordable assistive devices.

The presenter highlighted several case studies; in Kenya, M-Pesa was reported to have improved financial inclusion for PWDs. In South Africa, the South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB) supported students with visual impairments through braille materials and digital reading tools. In Nigeria, initiatives like Tech4Dev were equipping young PWDs with digital skills to improve their job prospects and economic independence.

On the policy front, the presenter made reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which emphasized equal access to digital technologies. It

noted that countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, and Zambia had taken steps to enact policies supporting digital accessibility. However, she noted that progress varied across the continent, and many countries lacked comprehensive laws ensuring digital accessibility. Non-governmental organizations like the African Disability Forum and ActionAid were said to play an essential role in both advocacy and training efforts.

Looking to the future, the presenter indicated that emerging technologies such as AI, VR, and 3D printing had the potential to further enhance accessibility. She noted that Africa's youthful, tech-savvy population was central to this transformation. The report cited examples like Penda Health in Kenya, which was developing accessible health platforms, and Tega Technologies in Nigeria, which focused on inclusive transport solutions.

In conclusion, the presenter asserted that digitalization could significantly improve the lives of persons with disabilities across Africa. She noted that with coordinated efforts from governments, tech companies, civil society, and donors, the digital age could become inclusive. The presenter concluded by stating that inclusive digital growth was not only achievable but essential, and Africa had the potential to set a global example for equitable digital development.

ii. Accessibility in Action: Designing Physical Spaces for Inclusive Parliament by Dr. Thomas Timothy Mtonga (Zambia)

In his presentation, Dr. Mtonga stated that persons with disabilities made up the largest minority group, and when combined with other barriers, they were frequently left behind in national activities. It was noted that they were excluded from areas such as economic development, education, political engagement, and cultural and religious activities.

Dr. Mtonga explained that the history of persons with disabilities was filled with many difficult and painful experiences. It was also mentioned that the understanding of disability had evolved over time, from a primitive stage to institutionalization, then to public accommodation, and ultimately to a phase of accelerated growth. It was pointed out that each stage had led to the development of a specific model for understanding disability as follows-

- The primitive stage had led to the traditional model of disability.
- The institutionalization phase had introduced the medical and charity models.
- The public accommodation phase had given rise to the social model of disability.
- The phase of accelerated growth had produced the human rights model of disability.

Dr. Mtonga further explained that individuals generally related to disability based on one of these models. Therefore, it was argued that the model a person adhered to influenced their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards persons with disabilities. These, in turn, affected the accessibility of physical spaces, especially within an inclusive parliamentary and democratic environment.

iii. **Enabling factors for participation of Persons with Disabilities in Parliament and Democracy by Mr. Mwiya Katukula Muya (Disability and Social Protection Specialist)**

Mr. Muya stated that for persons with disabilities to participate meaningfully in democracy, a comprehensive set of enablers, covering legal, structural, technological, and societal areas, needed to be in place. She noted that these enablers were essential in removing long-standing barriers and ensuring equitable

opportunities for engagement in voting, civic advocacy, leadership, and public decision-making.

One foundational requirement, he emphasized, was the establishment of strong legal and policy frameworks. She noted that anti-discrimination laws were crucial in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their inclusion in political processes. He also pointed out that electoral laws must be inclusive, protecting the right to vote and to run for office. In some cases, she suggested that quotas or representation mandates could help ensure that persons with disabilities were represented in legislative bodies.

Mr. Muya noted that accessibility was another critical factor, particularly in voting and civic processes. He explained that polling stations and civic buildings needed to be physically accessible, and digital platforms had to provide content in formats usable by people with various disabilities. He further noted that electoral materials should be available in formats such as Braille, large print, or easy-to-read versions. He noted that flexible voting options, such as mail-in ballots or mobile polling stations would make participation more feasible.

Mr. Muya emphasized that assistive technology and innovation were transformative tools, with tools like screen readers, speech-to-text applications, and tactile voting aids enabling greater independence. He added that digital platforms could host accessible town halls with live captioning or sign language avatars, while apps might simplify political content for those with cognitive disabilities.

Mr. Muya highlighted that encouraging representation and leadership opportunities for persons with disabilities was essential. This, he noted, could be achieved through targeted support for candidates with disabilities, fostering inclusivity within political parties, and increasing the visibility of leaders with disabilities in

public life. He also noted that civic education and awareness campaigns were important in empowering individuals with disabilities to understand and exercise their rights.

Mr. Muya acknowledged the role of disability advocacy networks as vital in supporting the rights of persons with disabilities, influencing policy, and ensuring inclusive decision-making. He stated that collaborations between Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and broader civil society groups strengthened these efforts. He concluded his presentation by noting that inclusive social and economic conditions, such as accessible public infrastructure, economic empowerment initiatives, and healthcare services, were necessary to provide the stability needed for active civic engagement. He additionally pointed out that public campaigns were important in shifting cultural attitudes and challenging stereotypes about persons with disabilities. He also indicated that on a global scale, international cooperation and financial support are important drivers of change.

iv. Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Inclusive Democracy by Mr. Mwiya Katukula Muya (Disability and Social Protection Specialist)

Mr. Muya stated that persons with disabilities should have full participation in democracy, but that systemic barriers often hindered their inclusion. To increase participation, he suggested that focus be placed on several key attributes:

- Accessible voting
- Representation in government
- Civic engagement and advocacy
- Accessible information
- Legal and policy frameworks
- Education and awareness
- Technology and innovation

Mr. Muya emphasized that ensuring accessibility in parliamentary and democratic spaces was a shared responsibility that required both lawmakers and citizens to act. He noted that failure to create inclusive environments not only marginalized persons with disabilities but also harmed society as a whole. He claimed that for democracy to be truly inclusive, members of parliament had to acknowledge and address the varying degrees of inaccessibility that persons with disabilities faced. Additionally, they needed to advocate for the full implementation of inclusive laws and practices and learn from successful global examples.

Mr. Muya stressed that all members of society, including persons with disabilities, should have the opportunity to participate fully in democracy. That, lawmakers and citizens alike had the collective responsibility to ensure inclusivity, thus safeguarding the integrity and future of democratic processes.

Challenges of inclusive democracy to overcome

At plenary several challenges to political engagement for persons with disabilities were identified. Attitudinal barriers, stemming from stigma and the assumption that persons with disabilities were incapable of political participation, were seen as major obstacles. Intersectional discrimination, particularly for those with disabilities who also faced gender, racial, or sexual identity marginalization, was also highlighted as a significant barrier.

Resource gaps, particularly in low-income areas, were said to exacerbate these challenges, as the lack of adequate funding and accessible infrastructure prevented many individuals with disabilities from participating in political life. It was concluded that overcoming these barriers would require a multifaceted approach that addressed stereotypes, intersectional discrimination, and resource allocation.

Why inclusive democracy matters

It was emphasized that inclusive democracy benefits everyone by ensuring that all voices are heard. It was further noted that excluding persons with disabilities undermines the fairness and legitimacy of democracy. It was agreed that dismantling barriers to participation could lead to a shift in societal attitudes, improving the political agency of persons with disabilities.

v. Policy Pathways: Effective Strategies for implementing

Disability inclusion in Parliament by Mr. Misheck Mutamba

Mr. Mutamba noted that the inclusion of persons with disabilities in parliamentary systems is fundamental for creating democratic institutions that are genuinely representative and responsive to all citizens. He also noted that African Parliaments have been recognized as playing a critical role in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities—not only by enacting laws but also by setting an example through the creation of inclusive workplaces, accessible procedures, and participatory processes. He further indicated that despite regional and international commitments, such as those under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), significant gaps remain in the political inclusion of persons with disabilities across much of the African continent.

To address these gaps, Mr. Mutamba suggested that African Parliaments needed to adopt a comprehensive and proactive approach to disability inclusion. He noted that the approach should involve both the development of policies and the transformation of institutional cultures and practices.

Strategies for Implementation

During plenary discussions led by Mr. Misheck Mutamba, a number of strategies were proposed by the delegates as indicated below: -

It was recommended that African Parliaments be encouraged to develop and implement comprehensive disability inclusion policies and action plans. These should be aligned with the CRPD, articulating clear goals, measurable targets, and indicators to monitor progress. The policies should go beyond broad commitments, with concrete steps provided for inclusive practices.

It was also pointed out that there was need to formulate policies that could foster inclusion to all areas of parliamentary work, including recruitment and employment practices, legislative procedures, infrastructure design, and public engagement mechanisms. Institutionalizing inclusion across all facets of parliamentary functioning was seen as essential to ensuring that disability rights are consistently and systematically considered.

Furthermore, it was argued that adequate financial resources should be allocated to ensure the effective implementation of these disability inclusion policies. Disability inclusion cannot be achieved without dedicated funding for necessary infrastructure, training, accessible technologies, and inclusive consultation processes.

It was emphasized that active participation of persons with disabilities in parliamentary processes must be promoted. This includes facilitating their election or appointment to leadership positions within parliament and ensuring that physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers to participation are removed. This approach was described as critical to ensuring equitable representation.

Another important point was the need for regular disability inclusion training and awareness programs for Members of Parliament (MPs), parliamentary staff, and support personnel. This training was considered essential for combating stigma and creating a culture of respect, dignity, and equality within parliamentary institutions.

The establishment of dedicated parliamentary committees or focal points on disability issues was also highlighted. These structures could monitor progress, ensure accountability, and advocate for mainstreaming disability inclusion across all legislative functions.

It was pointed out that ensuring all parliamentary communications and documents are accessible is an important strategy. This includes providing sign language interpretation, Braille documents, plain language summaries, and digital content compatible with assistive technologies.

In addition, it was suggested that meaningful collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) should be prioritized. OPDs bring invaluable expertise and should be involved in the entire policymaking process—from planning and drafting legislation to monitoring and evaluation.

It was proposed that disability inclusion be integrated into the legislative review process. All proposed laws should be assessed for their potential impact on persons with disabilities, and any unintended barriers they may create should be addressed.

The use of technology was identified as a key strategy to enhance accessibility. Parliaments were encouraged to explore and adopt assistive technologies, which can provide remote participation opportunities and improve accessibility within parliamentary chambers.

It was also emphasized that data collection should be promoted, with disaggregated data being used to better understand the needs of persons with disabilities and assess the effectiveness of inclusion policies.

Finally, it was advised that best practices and lessons learned be shared among African Parliaments through regional forums, peer learning exchanges, and collaborations with continental bodies like the African Union. This kind of exchange would support the rapid spread of effective models of disability inclusion.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it was asserted that disability inclusion in African Parliaments is not simply a matter of legal compliance, but also one of justice, equity, and democratic legitimacy. Ensuring that persons with disabilities can fully participate in and benefit from parliamentary processes was described as enriching democracy and strengthening governance. The strategies outlined above were seen as a roadmap for action, with the key factors being political will, resource commitment, and sustained collaboration to bring them to fruition. The hope was expressed that, with deliberate effort, African Parliaments could become leaders in disability inclusion and serve as global models of inclusive governance.

vi. Culture Shifts: Changing Attitudes towards Disability in Political Institutions by Hon. Dr. Joseph Musanje, M.P (Zambia)

Hon. Musanje indicated that in recent decades, there has been a significant shift in how disability is understood and represented within political institutions worldwide. He noted that historically, people with disabilities were often excluded and marginalized in political spheres. However, he pointed out that changing societal attitudes, advocacy movements, and legal reforms have led to progress in creating a more inclusive environment for individuals with disabilities. He indicated that the shift reflects broader cultural changes focused on equality, accessibility, and human rights, challenging the traditional view of disability as a medical or charity-based issue.

Hon. (Dr.) Musanje was noted that a key driver of these changes is the global disability rights movement, which argues that disability should be seen as a civil rights issue. He pointed out that important milestones, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 and the UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006, have established new standards for disability rights and encouraged political institutions to re-evaluate their policies. He pointed out that the ADA, for example, mandates accessibility in public spaces and services, as well as protections against discrimination in employment, transportation, and communication.

The presenter, Hon. (Dr.) Musanje, reiterated that while the inclusion of disabled individuals in political institutions has been slow, their representation in national parliaments and political offices has been gradually increasing.

Hon. (Dr.) Musanje indicated that political parties are also making efforts to ensure their campaigns are accessible to people with disabilities, providing materials in accessible formats and ensuring that events are physically accessible. He said that the efforts reflect a more inclusive approach to democracy, where people with disabilities are recognized as active participants rather than passive recipients of charity.

Hon. (Dr.) Musanje indicated that Disability rights have become central to modern political platforms, with issues like healthcare, education, employment, and housing being prioritized. Disability rights organizations have played a critical role in pushing for policy changes, ensuring that disabled individuals' challenges are addressed. He buttressed that the integration of disability rights into political discourse has led to a deeper commitment to equity and justice.

Hon. (Dr.) Musanje highlighted that despite these advancements, challenges remain. Disabled individuals continue to be underrepresented in political office, and barriers such as financial, physical, and societal limitations persist. He noted that issues like accessible healthcare, employment discrimination, and inadequate support systems still prevent many disabled individuals from fully exercising their rights. And that there is also a need for expanded accessibility, including digital access and social services.

In conclusion, the presenter, Hon. (Dr.) Musanje noted that, while progress has been made, the journey toward full participation and equality for people with disabilities is ongoing. He also insisted that political institutions must continue addressing systemic barriers, improving representation, and fostering policies that promote accessibility and protect the rights of disabled individuals. He concluded his remarks by pointing out that as attitudes evolve, societies are expected to benefit from a more inclusive and equitable political environment.

C. RESOLUTIONS OF THE 3RD COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES AFRICA REGION CONFERENCE

Resolutions of the Conference

The Resolutions adopted for implementation by Branches across the CPA Africa Region are as follows-

RECOGNIZING the fundamental human rights and freedoms of all persons, including persons with disabilities, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa; and other relevant international instruments;

ACKNOWLEDGING the valuable contributions of persons with disabilities to society and the imperative of their full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including political and parliamentary processes;

EXPRESSING CONCERN that persons with disabilities continue to encounter barriers hindering their effective participation in parliaments in the Commonwealth Africa Region;

EMPHASIZING the critical need for inclusive and accessible parliaments for persons with disabilities, both as members and as the public;

WELCOMING the progress made by some parliaments in the Africa Region in advancing the inclusion of persons with disabilities, while recognizing the need for sustained and intensified efforts;

REITERATING the commitment of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) to promoting good governance, democracy and human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities;

The 3rd Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Africa Region, having thoroughly considered the four thematic topics, thereby **RESOLVED** as follows:

D. Topic 1: Technology, Digitization, and its Use for Empowerment and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the African Context

1. **Encourage** African Parliaments to leverage technology and digitization to empower and include persons with disabilities, ensuring accessibility of parliamentary information, processes, and services through assistive technologies, accessible websites, and universally designed digital platforms.
2. **Urge** African Parliaments to undertake comprehensive capacity-building programs to equip parliamentarians and staff with the skills and knowledge necessary for the effective utilization of assistive technologies and accessible digital platforms.
3. **Further urge** African Governments to collaborate with organizations of persons with disabilities and technology experts to prioritize the development and implementation of impactful digital inclusion strategies.
4. **Furthermore urge** African Governments to include disability mainstreaming discussions on Artificial Intelligence.

E. Topic 2: Accessibility in Action – Designing Physical Spaces for Inclusive Parliaments

1. **Advise** African Parliaments to adhere to universal design principles in the construction and renovation of parliamentary buildings, ensuring physical accessibility for all persons with disabilities,

including ramps, elevators, accessible chambers, accessible restrooms, and clear, universally understood signage.

2. **Further advise** African Parliaments to regularly conduct accessibility audits to proactively identify and address barriers within the physical environment.
3. **Urge** African Governments to undertake meaningful consultations with persons with disabilities prior to procuring any equipment or aids for use by persons with disabilities.

F. Topic 3: Policy Pathways – Effective Strategies for Implementing Disability Inclusion in Parliament

1. **Encourage** African Parliaments to develop and implement comprehensive disability inclusion policies and action plans, aligned with the CRPD, articulating clear goals, targets, and measurable indicators for monitoring progress.
2. **Further encourage** African Parliaments to ensure that disability inclusion policies encompass all facets of parliamentary work, including employment, parliamentary procedures, and public engagement.
3. **Urge** African Parliaments to allocate adequate financial resources to ensure the effective implementation of disability inclusion policies.

G. Topic 4: Culture Shifts – Changing Attitudes Towards Disability in Political Institutions

1. **Advise** African Parliaments to implement awareness campaigns and training programs to combat stigma and negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities among parliamentarians, staff and the general public.
2. **Encourage** African Governments to promote initiatives that showcase the contributions and capabilities of persons with disabilities thereby fostering a culture of respect and inclusiveness of persons with disabilities.
3. **Urge** African Parliaments to actively champion disability rights and advocate for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.
4. **Further urge** African Parliaments to enact legislation that promote inclusiveness of persons with disabilities in the political and other spheres of life.

H. General Recommendations

1. *The CPA Africa Region Secretariat in collaboration with CPA Headquarters shall continue to support and facilitate the work of the CPwD Network Africa Region, providing necessary resources and technical assistance to parliaments in implementing these resolutions.*
2. *African Parliaments shall report to the Regional Secretariat on the progress of the implementation of these resolutions.*
3. *The CPA Africa Region Secretariat shall include a segment for Members to report back on the implementation of the resolutions of the previous Conference.*
4. *The CPA Secretariat shall circulate proposed topics of the next Conference to members to reflect emerging issues, at least one month before the next Conference, for approval.*
5. *The Conference called upon all Commonwealth Parliaments in the Africa Region to fully implement these resolutions and actively contribute towards building genuinely inclusive Parliaments for persons with disabilities.*



From Right to left staring from the front row Hon. Rose Museo, MP(Kenya), Hon. Timothy Wanyonyi, MP (Kenya), Hon. Dr. Joseph Musanje, M.P (Zambia), Hon. Dr. Christopher Kalila, MP (Zambia), Mr. Roy Ngulube, Clerk – N. A (Zambia), Mr. Daniel Eliufoo, the Assistant Regional Secretary of the CPA Africa Region, Back row: 1st to 5th MPs from Zambia, 6th -Sen. George Mbugua, MP(Kenya), Sen. Crystal Asige, MP (Kenya)