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**PARLIAMENT OF KENYA**


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25/6/25*



**13<sup>TH</sup> PARLIAMENT  
(FOURTH SESSION)**

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**REPORT OF THE 67<sup>TH</sup> COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY  
CONFERENCE  
HELD IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA  
3<sup>RD</sup> TO 8<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024**

 <b>THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PAPERS LAID</b>	
<b>DATE:</b> 25 JUN 2025	<b>DAY:</b> WED
<b>TABLED BY:</b>	Hon. JOHN PAUL MUKIRIGI MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION
<b>CLERK-AT THE-TABLE:</b>	MERRI CHUMO

Clerks' Chambers  
Parliament Buildings  
**NAIROBI**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
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## **PREFACE**

### **Honourable Speakers,**

1. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an organization established in 1911 with the overarching objective of bringing 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 that can be adopted in the governance of the people.
2. The CPA Africa Region is one of the nine (9) regional associations of the CPA International comprising of sixty-three (63) national and subnational legislatures. It is made up of National Parliaments and Provincial/State/Territorial Legislatures of member countries of the Commonwealth in Africa. The CPA Africa Region aims to promote and protect interests of African Parliaments and Countries in the Commonwealth, and to promote, irrespective of gender, race, and religion, the democratic ideals of the CPA including women empowerment, respect for human rights and freedoms, representative government and good governance. The region undertakes a number of programmes including its Annual Regional Conference geared towards deliberating and arriving at a consensus on pertinent issues.
3. The 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) took place from 3<sup>rd</sup> November to 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 in Sydney, Australia. The conference was held *under the conference theme of “Engage, Empower, Sustain: Charting the Course for Resilient Democracy.”*
4. The 67<sup>th</sup> CPC inaugural ceremony took place at the International Conference Centre, Sydney on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 9.00am presided over by the Vice-Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Her Excellency Honourable Margaret Beazley, AC KC, the Governor of New South Wales. The ceremony was attend by CPA President (2023-2024), Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC,

President of the New South Wales Legislative Council; Penny Sharpe MLC, Leader of the Government in the New South Wales Legislative Council, and delegates from across the Commonwealth. Also in attendance were Professor Luis Franceschi, Assistant Secretary General, Hon. Greg Piper, MP, Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, Hon. Chris Minns, MP, the Premier of New South Wales, and Hon. Courtney Houssos, MLC, New South Wales Minister for Finance and Natural Resources.

5. In her remarks, the Vice-Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Her Excellency Honourable Margaret Beazley, AC KC, the Governor of New South Wales, urged Commonwealth Parliamentarians to work together to uphold the values of the Commonwealth as she opened the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Sydney, New South Wales. A message to conference delegates from HM King Charles III, Head of the Commonwealth and Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was also read out by the CPA Vice-Patron.
6. The CPA President (2023-2024), Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC, President of the New South Wales Legislative Council, welcomed the delegates to the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC. During the opening ceremony, he stated that as they marked the bicentenary of the New South Wales Legislative Council that year, one of their most significant celebrations would be the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) and CPA General Assembly, which the CPA New South Wales Branch was honored to host. He added that the conference would provide an opportunity for participants to envision the future of democracy and ensure its resilience against current and future threats.
7. The CPA Secretary-General, Stephen Twigg, welcomed delegates to the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in New South Wales. He expressed gratitude to the Parliament of New South Wales for their

generosity in hosting the conference as they celebrated the bicentenary of the New South Wales Legislative Council. He noted that the conference provided an invaluable opportunity for delegates to come together, share best practices in addressing common issues, and strengthen Commonwealth values. He further emphasized that the gathering allowed participants to review the progress of the Commonwealth and its principles. He highlighted that commitments to democracy, human rights, and good governance were fundamental to the CPA's work and stated that these commitments would be a key focus of discussions throughout the week.

**Honourable Speakers,**

8. The conference brought together Speakers, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff representing the nine regions of the CPA – Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic; India; Pacific; and South East Asia.

**Honourable Speakers,**

9. The Kenya delegation to the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC comprised—

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| (1)  | <b>The Rt. Hon. (Dr) Moses Wetang'ula, Joint President, CPA Kenya EGH, MP - Speaker of the National Assembly</b> | <b>Branch/Leader of Delegation;</b>                          |
| (2)  | The Hon. John Paul Mwirigi, MP   | CPA Kenya Branch Representative/Delegate;                    |
| (3)  | The Hon. (Dr) Beatrice Adagala, MP   | CWP Kenya/Delegate;  |
| (4)  | The Hon. Timothy Wanyonyi, MP -  | CPwD Regional Champion/ Delegate;                            |
| (5)  | Sen. Jackson Mandago, EGH, MP  | Delegate;  |
| (6)  | Sen. Beth Kalunda Mutunga, MP -  | Delegate;  |
| (7)  | The Hon. Zaheer Jhanda, MP   | Observer;  |
| (8)  | The Hon. Samuel Gonzi Rai, MP  | Observer;  |
| (9)  | The Hon. Elijah Njore Kururia, MP  | Observer;  |
| (10) | Mr. Samuel Njoroge, CBS  | Clerk of the National Assembly SoCATT Delegate; and          |
| (11) | Mr. Ruge Stephen Njenga, OGW   | Director, Legislative & Procedural Services/SoCATT Delegate. |

10. The delegation was accompanied and supported by the following parliamentary staff –

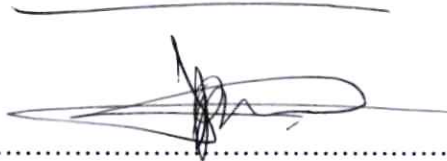
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|--------------------------|--|
| (1) Mr. Stephen Apopo    | Director, Speaker's Office;                  |
| (2) Mr. Japhet Muthomi   | Deputy Director, Speaker's Office;           |
| (3) Mr. Mainah Wanjiku   | Senior Clerk Assistant/Delegation Secretary; |
| (4) Ms. Sylvia Ocharo    | Senior Research Officer/Assisting Secretary  |
| (5) Ms. Abigael Nabalayo | Clerk Assistant III/Assisting Secretary      |

**Honourable Speakers,**

11. On behalf of the delegation, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in ensuring that Kenya was well represented during the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.

**Honourable Speakers,**

12. It is my pleasure and humble duty to submit this report, highlighting the proceedings and recommendations of the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference to Parliament for noting and necessary action.



.....  
**THE HON. JOHN PAUL MWIRIGI, MP**  
**CPA KENYA BRANCH REPRESENTATIVE**  
**FOR: LEADER OF THE DELEGATION**

DATED... 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 .....

**REPORT OF THE 67<sup>TH</sup> COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY  
CONFERENCE HELD IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA FROM 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER TO  
8<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024**

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**A. ABOUT THE CPA**

1. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an organization established in 1911 with the overarching objective of bringing 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 that can be adopted in the governance of the people.
  
2. The CPA Africa Region is one of the nine (9) regional associations of the CPA International comprising sixty-three (63) national and subnational legislatures. The Association is made up of National Parliaments and Provincial/State/Territorial Legislatures of member countries of the Commonwealth in Africa. The CPA Africa Region aims to promote and protect interests of African Parliaments and Countries in the Commonwealth, and to promote, irrespective of gender, race, and religion, the democratic ideals of the CPA including women empowerment, respect for human rights and freedoms, representative government and good governance. The region undertakes a number of programmes including its Annual Regional Conference geared towards deliberating and arriving at a consensus on pertinent issues.

**B. INTRODUCTION: THE 67<sup>TH</sup> CPC**

3. The 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) took place in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024, hosted by the Parliament of New South Wales and CPA New South Wales Branch. The conference was held under the theme of *“Engage, Empower, Sustain: Charting the Course for Resilient Democracy”*.

4. The conference brought together parliamentarians, government officials, experts, and stakeholders from Commonwealth member countries, fostering a diverse and inclusive dialogue. Further, the conference provided a platform for parliamentarians to discuss and deliberate on issues related to democracy, governance, and the rule of law in Commonwealth countries. Workshops and sessions aimed at enhancing the capacity of parliamentarians in the suggested areas were also held during the conference.

### **C. AGENDA OF THE 67<sup>TH</sup> CPC**

5. The Agenda of the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC was as follows—

- (i) 67<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly
- (ii) Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities meetings
- (iii) Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Meetings
- (iv) Workshops held during the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference
- (v) 58<sup>th</sup> General Meeting Of The Society-Of-Clerks-At-The-Table (SoCATT) in Commonwealth Parliaments
- (vi) 2<sup>nd</sup> Lifaka Lecture
- (vii) CPA Election of Officers
- (viii) Commonwealth Parliamentarian of the Year Awards for 2024

### **D. 67<sup>TH</sup> CPC GENERAL ASSEMBLY & RESOLUTIONS**

6. Commonwealth Parliamentarians participated in the 2024 CPA General Assembly on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024, as part of the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in New South Wales. The CPA General Assembly was chaired by CPA President (2023-2024), Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC, President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, and attended by members from 128 CPA branches.

7. The CPA General Assembly, the association's governing body, comprises delegates to the annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. This year's General Assembly also included a thematic debate on the role of

Parliament in strengthening democratic resilience in the era of fake news and synthetic media.



*The Rt. Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly with Members of CPA Kenya Branch Delegation during the General Assembly*

### **Key Decisions and Outcomes**

**8.** The following are the key decisions and outcomes of the 67<sup>th</sup> General Assembly:

#### **(i) Ending Charitable Status**

An update was provided on the progress made in achieving a new international, inter-parliamentary status for the CPA. It was further reported that work was ongoing to create a new organization akin to an international, inter-parliamentary organization including the passage of the CPA Status Bill in the UK Parliament.

In making the resolution, delegates noted that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association exists to connect, develop, promote and support parliaments and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance, and implement the enduring values of the Commonwealth. The members of the CPA (charity) therefore resolved

that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association should be reconstituted as a non-charitable international inter-parliamentary organization with functional privileges and immunities. The UK Government agreed to introduce legislation to confer functional privileges and immunities on the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and International Committee of the Red Cross (Status) Bill was already at an advanced stage in the UK Parliament.

The envisaged new CPA (non-charity) to be established will have functional privileges and immunities upon operationalization—

- (a) the CPA (non-charity) will assume the operational role of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; and
- (b) the assets and liabilities of the CPA (charity) are to be transferred to the CPA (non-charity).

**(ii) Annual Report for the period January to December, 2023:**

The CPA President gave an update on the annual report for the period between January to December, 2023. The report detailed the activities undertaken by the Trustees in pursuance of the Associations' constitutional mandate of promoting knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy, with particular reference to the countries and territories of the Commonwealth. The report also contained the CPA's audited financial statements for the year 2023, the CPA Membership Report, the CPA Budgets and Financial Management Reports. The Assembly noted and approved the Annual Report for the period January to December, 2023.

In the matter of the CPA Membership Report, the General Assembly noted the suspended Branches, and encouraged Regional Representatives and Secretaries to engage with defaulting Branches in respective regions to settle outstanding Branch fees or agree to a

payment plan as soon as possible. The Assembly also noted the outstanding fees and agreed to the proposals for handling those Branches with arrears and for support to be provided to the branches as required. The progress made to date in respect to reinstating previously suspended branches together with further action was outlined.

Delegates endorsed reports from the three CPA networks namely- the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) and the CPA Small Branches.

**(iii) Membership Subscriptions**

An update on the proposals for the membership fees for the forthcoming years and suggestions for the future was provided. It was noted that membership fees continue to be CPA's primary source of funding. The figure in the budget reflects an increase, as agreed, of 4% for 2025 and no increase is currently proposed for 2026 but this will be kept under review. All income has been eliminated from branches suspended as at the date of the meeting but income for all other Branches is included. There is, however, a general debtor provision provided as noted below.

**Recommendations:** The General Assembly noted as follows: the current financial position as the CPA moves towards 2025; the risks to future financial well-being as CPA moves into the medium term; Set levels of overall spending consistent with current priorities whilst maintaining reserves at levels that will help ensure CPA's financial sustainability; the updated 2024 forecast; Reviewed, discussed and approved the updated approved budget for 2025; and updated provisional budget for 2026.

**(iv) The proposal on Special Observer Status**

9. Following the presentation of this item at the Executive Committee Meeting in Ghana, in 2023 the Secretary-General committed to conducting a

consultation within the CPA membership on creating a “Special Observer” status for the CPA. Currently, there is no such a status. There is a provision for Observer Status at CPCs, but such applications are not automatically granted to non-CPA Parliaments and are specifically related to attendance of that particular conference.

10. CPA’s relationships with Parliaments outside the Commonwealth are significant, both at a regional level and globally. Creating a new “Special Observer” status could strengthen these relationships, whilst making a clear distinction between members and observers. It would also provide the CPA with a model closer to that of international, inter-parliamentary counterparts such as the IPU, APF and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, who all have a Special Observer status similar to the one proposed.
11. It was recommended that a Special Observer status would be offered only to non-Commonwealth national, sub-national and regional Parliaments who share the principles and values of the CPA and the Commonwealth. The Executive Committee would review applications from said Parliaments and, to ensure there is consensus on the granting of the status, if any member of the Executive Committee objects, then the application will be refused.
12. The proposed cost to approved applicants is an annual fee of **£5000 GBP per Parliament**. This would entitle the Special Observers to:
  - (1) The attendance of two representatives to the annual CPC without paying the additional CPC Observer fee – this could include attendance at the CPA’s learning and development workshops and the General Assembly.
  - (2) Access to the CPA’s communications (including online issues of The Parliamentarian) and parliamentary toolkits, handbooks and guides.
  - (3) Access to the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Small Branches and Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities

network workshops (where appropriate and capacity-permitting) and invitations to webinars and virtual conferences.

- (4) Access to the online CPA Parliamentary Academy (for no additional fee) and the right to apply to send one representative to each Parliamentary Academy Residency Course.

**(v) Election of the Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee:**

13. At the 2024 CPA General Assembly, the election for the Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee took place. The CPA Chairperson serves a three-year term and collaborates with the CPA Secretary-General and the CPA Secretariat to guide the Association and preside over the CPA Executive Committee. According to CPA electoral regulations, only delegates who were present at the 67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference were eligible to vote in the election for a new CPA Chairperson. There were three contenders for the position of Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee during this election: Hon. Dr. Zainab Gimba, MP from Nigeria; Hon. Arthur E. Holder, MP, SC, Speaker of the House of Assembly of Barbados; and Hon. Dr. Christopher Kalila, MP from Zambia. The Hon. Dr. Christopher Kalila was elected as the chairperson after a majority vote in the second round. He is the fifth CPA Chairperson from the CPA Africa Region and the second from Zambia, following Hon. Lavu Mulimba, MCC, MP, who served from 1987 to 1990, since the chairperson role was established in 1967.

**(vi) Election of CPA Vice-Chairperson**

14. At the end of the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in New South Wales, the CPA Executive Committee met under the leadership of the newly elected Chairperson, Hon. Dr. Christopher Kalila, MP. During the meeting, Hon. Carmel Sepuloni, MP (New Zealand), the Regional Representative for the CPA Pacific Region, was elected as the Vice-Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee. The Vice-Chairperson serves for one year tenure.

**(vii) Recognition for 67th CPC host Branch and outgoing CPA Executive Committee Members**

15. As part of the acknowledgement of the hosting of the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC, the CPA President (2023-2024), Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC, President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales was presented with a commemorative silver salver in recognition of the CPA New South Wales Branch for hosting of the conference. The CPA noted the seamless organisation undertaken by the branch, the CPC being one of the largest gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians and staff. The 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference brought together over 700 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth. It was further noted that the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC marked the first time the CPA New South Wales Branch was organising the event, as well as the first time an Australian State or Territory had held the CPC.

**(viii) Audited Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2023:**

16. The Audited report and financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 were presented for approval. The Assembly was informed that the accounts had been audited, approved and signed off in April 2024 by the Trustees at the Executive Committee. Notably, the accounts had been consolidated to incorporate the financial accounts of CPA Headquarters Secretariat and the two associated Trusts - the Conference Assistance Fund (CAF) and Working Capital Fund (WCF). Having considered the Annual report and financial statements, the Assembly approved CPA Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

**(ix) Budgets and Financial Management Reports:**

17. The meeting was taken through the financial performance for the period January 2024 to June 2024 together with the forecast for the year and a commentary on major variances from the budget. With regard to the Conference Assistance Fund, the meeting also noted the increased endowments for 2025 onwards. The Assembly received and approved the

result for the period and the forecast financial result for the year and the year-end financial position at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 in respect of the following reports and budgets—

- (a) CPA Secretariat Financial Report for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024;
- (b) CPA Secretariat Forecast 2024, Budget 2025 and Projection for 2026;
- (c) Working Capital Fund Financial Report for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Forecast 2024 and Budget 2025;
- (d) Conference Assistance Fund Financial Report for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Forecast 2024 and Budget 2025; and
- (e) 2025 CPA Headquarters Budget and provisional budget for 2025.
- (f) CPA Secretariat Forecast 2024, Budget 2025 and Projection for 2026.

**18.** The General Assembly received and endorsed the results for the period and the forecast financial result for the year ending December 2024. It was proposed that level for overall spending be set with current priorities whilst maintaining reserves at levels that will help ensure CPA's financial sustainability. Also noted and approved were the updated provisional budget for 2025 and 2026.

**19.** It was recommended that the following major issues be considered and resolved in the years ahead—

- (i) *Increase in the membership fees: Bearing in mind recent events, **an increase in membership fee rates was included in both the 2024 and 2025 at a rate of 4%.** However, no increase has been incorporated in the proposed 2026 budget.*
- (ii) ***Non-payment of subscriptions** by branches continues to be a concern. The total budgeted provision for bad debts is £150k as at the end of 2025. Due to continued financial difficulties that some branches still suffer from various global economic factors, the £150k provision continues to be included in the budgets moving forward.*

(iii) *Diversification of income via **Partnership and Engagement** is a major initiative that continues to be pursued. Notably, the FCDO had awarded a grant in respect of Benchmark projects amounting to £196k for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. The Assembly however noted that to ensure the sustainability of the CPA and its programmes, a more diverse range of income is required.*

**(x) Future CPC Conferences:**

20. The Assembly was apprised on venues and dates for future CPA governance meetings which included the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences and Mid-Year meetings of the Executive Committee. Branches were encouraged to put forward offers to host future Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences in 2025 and subsequent years. To this end, the Assembly was informed that 68<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference would be hosted by the CPA Barbados Branch. The General Assembly approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee for CPA Barbados Branch to host the 68<sup>th</sup> CPC in 2025.

**(xi) Topic for General Assembly Debate:**

21. The CPA General Assembly included a topical debate under the subject – ‘*Votes vs Likes – the Role of Parliament in Strengthening Democratic Resilience in an Age of Fake News and Synthetic Media.*’ The topic sought to deliberate on the role of Parliaments in strengthening democratic resilience in an age of fake news and synthetic media. Presenters were drawn from different CPA Branches including Australia Federal, Punjab (Pakistan), the Maldives, Wales, Canada Federal, New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago, and Northern Ireland.



*The Speaker of the National Assembly with the CPA Kenya Branch Delegation: From left: Hon. Beatrice Adagala, MP, Sen. Jackson Mandago, EGH, MP, Hon. Tim Wanyonyi, MP, Hon. John Paul Mwirigi MP, Hon. Gonzi Rai, MP, Sen. Beth Syengo, MP, and Hon. Elijah Kururia, MP*

**22.** At the conclusion of the deliberation of the General Assembly, the key decisions and outcomes were—

- (i) Delegates welcomed the work undertaken to enable the CPA to create a new non-charitable organisation and the passage of the CPA Status Bill in the UK Parliament to legislate to recognise the CPA as an international, inter-parliamentary organisation’.
- (ii) Delegates approved the 2023 CPA Annual Report (including the audited Financial Statements), the CPA Membership Report, the CPA Budgets and Financial Management Reports.
- (iii) Delegates endorsed reports from the three CPA networks - the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) and the CPA Small Branches.

### **E. COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES (CPwD Network)**

23. The Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) network, led by the CPwD Chairperson, Hon. Laura Kanushu, MP (Uganda), highlighted the work of a local rehabilitation centre working with persons living with disabilities. The CPwD Chairperson, accompanied by the Regional Champions of the network, went to the Royal Rehab Ryde, a rehabilitation hospital, in Sydney to see their work and tour the Brain and Spine Injury Units and the Royal Rehab Lifeworks Unit. The CPwD delegates also participated in an interactive demonstration on Wheelchair Basketball and Tennis.
24. During the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC, the CPwD Regional Champions held the network's annual governance meeting to set the agenda of the network for the year ahead and to also review the CPwD activities including the Capital Investment Fund supporting Commonwealth Parliaments to become more accessible.



*The Hon. Tim Wanyonyi, MP (right) with Regional Champions following a governance meeting of the CPwD Network at the Parliament of New South Wales – Photo: CPA*

25. Delegates at the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC also joined a workshop on creating inclusive elections for Persons with Disabilities (PwD) which examined practical

examples of inclusion during election campaigns and processes and featured CPwD Regional Champions as guest panellists. The CPA Kenya Branch was actively represented by the **Hon. Tim Wanyonyi, MP** who also serves as the CPwD Network for Africa Region.

## **F. COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS (CWP)**

### **Steering Committee**

26. Prior to the 8<sup>th</sup> CWP Conference, the CWP Steering Committee convened during the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC representing seven of the nine CPA Regions: Africa; Asia; Australia; British Isles and the Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic; and Pacific, to deliberate on ongoing activities and key themes for future conferences and meetings.
27. The CPA Kenya Branch was represented by the **Hon. (Dr.) Beatrice Adagala, MP**, the CWP Kenya Convener and who was also serving as the Alternate for the CWP Africa Region during the 67<sup>th</sup> CPC.
28. During the meeting, the committee re-elected Hon. Kate Doust, MLC from the Parliament of Western Australia, as the CWP Vice-Chairperson for another one-year term. Previously held every three years, the CWP Conference transitioned to an annual event in 2023, following an agreement among CWP Members to align it with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC).
29. During this meeting, delegates discussed the timing and format of future CWP Business meetings and conferences, along with the approaches for reporting CWP activities through the Regional Secretariats. Their debate was guided by a motion that included recommendations for the CWP Steering Committee, which was subsequently approved by the delegates.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference**

30. The 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference was held under the theme – “*Engaging, Promoting and Retaining Women in Power.*” The

conference was officially opened by the CWP Chairperson, the Hon. Dr. Zainab Gimba, MP (Nigeria) and was also attended by the CWP President (2024), Ms. Lynda Voltz, MP (New South Wales).



*The Hon. Beatrice Adagala, MP (3<sup>rd</sup> Right) at the opening ceremony of 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference*

31. The conference featured leading figures from Commonwealth Parliaments who engaged participants in four sessions. Delegates delved into a wide range of topics, including women's representation in Parliaments, gender sensitization, and quotas.
32. The conference provided a platform for Members of Parliament to explore ways of achieving equal representation through a series of governance meetings and dedicated learning and development workshops.
33. The workshops under the CWP were as follows—

**(a) CWP Workshop A: Promoting the Political Participation of Young Women and Girls**

The workshop sought to respond to the question '*why are there so few young women in political leadership?*' by highlighting some of the current challenges that girls and young women face when trying to engage with, and participate in politics. Key challenges identified in

the deliberations include the perception of a woman's role, a lack of visible representation of women in Parliament, and inadequate access to education and training.

Panelists from Pakistan, Canada, India and Australia shared examples of current initiatives and strategies in their jurisdictions which seek to increase the participation and representation of girls and young women in political leadership. Many of these programmes provide future leaders with training to build confidence, attain skills and cultivate networks.

The panel discussion also emphasized the importance of retention, noting that while entering the field of politics may be one particular challenge, creating an environment which encourages women to stay is another.

At the end of the session, workshop participants noted the recommendation **that Parliaments should have effective strategies in place to promote the political participation of girls and young women, including collaboration with civil society organizations.**

**(b) Joint Workshop: CWP Workshop B & CPA Small Branches Workshop D: Gender and National Climate Planning: moving from commitment to scalable**

This workshop examined the intersection of gender equality and climate change, recognizing that while climate change affects everyone, its impacts vary based on gender and social vulnerabilities. Specifically, women face disproportionate consequences, which exacerbate existing gender inequalities.

Panelists discussed how gender inequality increases exposure to climate crises and natural hazards but cautioned against viewing

women solely as victims. Instead, the gathering emphasized that women can be powerful agents of change in climate action.

It was noted that across many Commonwealth jurisdictions, the crucial role of women in driving climate action is widely acknowledged. Representatives from small island nations shared how gender considerations are integrated into their National Climate Plans and policies, underscoring the need for greater participation and representation of women in decision-making processes.

Participants also highlighted the disproportionate climate change effects on small island nations. Despite contributing the least to the climate crisis, these nations are experiencing its most severe impacts. Panelists shared examples of programs and projects developed under their National Climate Plans and stressed the importance of continuing advocacy for global climate action while advancing national efforts.

Delegates proposed amending the recommendation to clarify that Parliamentarians do not directly control access to climate financing or gender mainstreaming in climate plans but are responsible for advocating to the Executive for action. Additionally, it was recognized that gender mainstreaming is already in progress but should be further strengthened. Both amendments were agreed upon.

At the conclusion of the session, workshop participants endorsed the recommendation **that Parliaments should advocate for the further integration of gender considerations into National Climate Plans.**

### **(c) CWP Workshop C: Future-Proofing Democracy: Innovations in Security and Support for Women Parliamentarians**

This workshop explored the physical and psychological safety challenges faced by women Parliamentarians and examined potential

innovations and reforms to address these concerns. Panelists highlighted the growing impact of social media and viral misinformation, noting that since 2017, there has been a significant rise in threats and physical assaults against women Parliamentarians, partly attributed to increasing violent online behavior.

Discussions centered on strategies to mitigate these risks, including the use of Artificial Intelligence to trace the origins of harmful content and the enforcement of stricter regulations requiring social media firms to remove threatening language or posts. Additionally, panelists shared insights into measures adopted by various jurisdictions to enhance the physical safety of women in politics, such as conducting security assessments, implementing duress alarms, and establishing escape rooms. However, challenges remain in balancing these precautions with the need for Parliamentarians to remain accessible to their constituents.

The workshop also examined ways of improving parliamentary culture, particularly within the Westminster system, advocating for a shift from an adversarial, conflict-driven approach to a more collaborative and values-based model. Panelists further discussed how existing legislation and parliamentary processes could be leveraged to enhance protections for women in political leadership. At the conclusion of the session, workshop participants endorsed the recommendation **that Commonwealth Parliaments, with the support of experts, should implement protective measures to address the complex security challenges faced by women Parliamentarians.**