

# PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

## ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2023

### ANNOUNCEMENT

#### The Speaker

**REPORT ON THE 66TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE  
IN ACCRA, GHANA, 30 SEPTEMBER TO 7 OCTOBER 2023**

### DELEGATION

Speaker Daylin Mitchell  
Deputy Speaker Beverley Schäfer  
Hon Cayla Murray  
Hon Christopher Fry  
Hon Khalil Brinkhuis  
Mr Romeo Adams, Secretary to the Provincial Parliament  
Ms Amarone Nomdo, Senior Researcher  
Mr Achmat Patience, International Relations and Protocol Officer

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to give an account of the outcomes of the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) held in Accra, Ghana from 30 September to 7 October 2023.

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 Southeast Asia. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) represents the countries of the Commonwealth, covering national, state, provincial and territorial parliaments, and legislatures, bringing together over 180 CPA branches.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) is affiliated and participates in the political activities of the CPA at both Africa Region and international level.

The WCPP participated in the proceedings of the 66th CPC under the theme *The Commonwealth Charter 10 years on: Values and Principles for Parliaments to uphold*.

The 66th CPC afforded parliamentarians from the regions to deliberate and process the governance work of the Executive Committee, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), topics arising from the workshops and matters debated and decided on in the general assembly. The topics discussed at the workshops included the following:

- The threat of terrorism to statehood: the role of parliament.
- Gender quotas in parliament.
- What does sustainable trade and economic development mean for small jurisdictions.
- Youth roundtable: Role of the Commonwealth in international security and peacebuilding.
- Environmental approaches in tackling poverty.
- 20 years of the Lattimer House Principles on the separation of powers.
- The Commonwealth Charter.
- E-Parliament: An effective mechanism for intersectional diversity and equitable public engagement.

During the 66th CPC, there were a number of smaller conferences and meetings including: the 39th CPA Small Branches Conference; Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference; 66th CPA General Assembly; meetings of the CPA Executive Committee; and the Society of Clerks at the Table (SoCATT).

The General Assembly meeting also processed reports emanating from the Executive Committee meeting and presided over the filling of vacancies as well reports on the ongoing status of the CPA and the way forward.

## **2. MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY**

The Vice-Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), His Excellency Nana Akufo- Addo, the President of Ghana, urged Commonwealth parliamentarians to work together to uphold democratic principles and the values of the Commonwealth as he opened the 66th CPC), attended by over 500 delegates in Accra, Ghana.

The CPA Vice-Patron said: “The world is still experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which compelled us to work together to survive. As we exit the doldrums of the pandemic, the world has been hit again with a series of geo-political crises, including the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the recent coup d’états in some parts of Africa. These crises are a threat to the foundations of our democratic values and institutions, and a clarion call for us to work together to address this new challenge. It is a call on all parliaments to act.

“I urge Commonwealth parliamentarians to reflect deeply on the goal of the values and principles in the Commonwealth Charter and focus your discussions on the goal of attaining and maintaining the democratic ethos of this noble community. I commend the Commonwealth for its commitment to the rule of law, open and tolerant societies, equality for all and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms.”

Delegates to the 66th CPC were welcomed by the CPA President (2022–2023), Rt Hon Alban Bagbin, Speaker of the Parliament of Ghana, who said at the opening ceremony: “On behalf of the Parliament of Ghana, I welcome all Commonwealth parliamentarians to Accra for the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference which brings together delegates on a single platform to share their experiences and good practices, as well as promoting the values of the Commonwealth. This includes a commitment to the highest standards and principles of democratic governance and parliamentary practice.”

This is the first time that the CPA Ghana Branch and the Parliament of Ghana have hosted the CPA’s annual conference. The CPA Africa Region is very active within the CPA’s nine regions, and this will be the 17th time that the region has hosted the annual conference.

Delegates were also welcomed by the CPA Chairperson, Hon Ian Liddell-Grainer, Members of the House of Commons in the United Kingdom; CPA Vice-Chairperson, Hon Osei Kyei-Mensah Bonsu, Majority Leader in the Parliament of Ghana; and the Ghanaian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey. The vote of thanks was given by the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Hon Dr Zainab Gimba, Member of Parliament from Nigeria).

The CPA Secretary-General, Stephen Twigg said: “On behalf of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, it is my great pleasure to welcome delegates to the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, in Accra, and thank the CPA Ghana Branch and Parliament of Ghana, and in particular the CPA President and CPA Vice-Chairperson, for their generosity in hosting this year’s conference.

This conference offers an invaluable opportunity to come together and share best practice in addressing common issues and strengthening Commonwealth values, as the theme on the Commonwealth Charter attests. The values within the charter, and the vital role the CPA has in sustaining and reinforcing them, are as relevant today as they were when they were originally signed in 2013.

“With our coming together on the tenth anniversary of the Commonwealth Charter, it provides us with an opportunity to review the relevance of its values and principles, as well as assessing how the Commonwealth is progressing against these pledges. Commitments to democracy, human rights and good governance are cornerstones of the CPA’s work, and these charter principles play a part in everything we do as an association.”

### **3. DISCUSSIONS AND ANALYSIS FROM THE CWP CONFERENCE**

The CWP Business Meeting was opened by the CWP Chairperson, Hon Dr Zainab Gimba, who welcomed delegates and updated attendees on the CWP network’s activities during the previous year and the plans for the year ahead. The CWP Chairperson also pledged to renew the effort to increase women’s representation and political participation in parliaments across the Commonwealth.

### **3.1 ISSUES EMANATING FROM THE COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS BUSINESS MEETING**

A verbal report was presented by the CWP steering committee. The report presented the following:

- Challenges experienced in legislatures and parliaments in the promotion of women representation.
- 55 CPA branches achieved 33% representation of women in parliaments.
- There have been several increases in women representation in parliaments. There have been parliaments that have achieved 50% and the committee will write a letter to commend these Speakers, and lobby other parliaments to follow suit.
- The CWP has conducted a review and assessment of the CPA parliamentary course titled *Elective Women's Parliamentary Caucus*, which commenced in Australia. This course has been launched and has eight modules and is accessible to all parliaments and staff and is offered online. The CWP encourages both men and women to register.
- CWP is focused on equality and ensuring there are women in executive positions outside of parliament as well.
- The CWP developed a MOU with the UN Women to work towards combatting discrimination against women.
- A new vice chairperson was nominated on 1 October.
- The CWP executive committee provided an overview of what is planned for the months ahead and the associated costs.
- A total of GBP121 000 is required for one programme which suggests a problem for the remaining programmes. This is inadequate and it has been tabled at the CPA executive committee level and with the regions. Regions were encouraged to search for alternate funds.
- Despite a strategic plan in place, but this does not allow for flexibility and as a result, CWP introduced a committee consisting of five members to lead a work group to implement a workplan.
- The finance committee has indicated that not all regions are accessing the GBP10 000 available to them. They should claim and utilise these funds. To date, four or five regions have not claimed.
- CWP will have a workshop on “Advancing gender equality in parliaments”.

### **3.2 UNITED NATIONS WOMEN EVENT**

Following the CWP Business meeting, delegates attended a CWP and UN Women co-hosted event that highlighted the support available to achieve gender-responsive legislation and advance state commitments around global goals pertaining to gender equality.

Parliamentarians and experts gave key highlights from legal assessments across the Commonwealth, concrete actions that have been taken and the elements of successful reform efforts.

- The CWP President (2023), Hon Patricia Appiagyei from the Parliament of Ghana, spoke to delegates about her experience as a legislator.
- Panellists also included Hon Donatille Mukabalisa, Speaker of the Parliament of Rwanda and Ms Marsha Caddle, from the House of Assembly of Barbados.
- Dr Beatrice Duncan, Senior Policy Adviser, and Maureen Shonge, Policy Specialist from UN Women, spoke about the recent trends in discriminatory laws, successful reforms and how they were achieved.

### **3.3 INAUGURAL LIFAKA LECTURE**

The Lifaka Lecture took place during the 66th CPC and was attended by delegates and the Ghanaian diplomatic community. The Lifaka Lecture has been established in memory of the late Hon Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, former Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Cameroon.

The keynote address was given by Betty Abeng, Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth Education Trust, who spoke about the importance of education for all Commonwealth citizens and the key objective of achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 on ensuring “inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

### **4. KEY ISSUES EMANATING FROM THE 57TH SoCATT MEETING**

The meeting brought together parliamentary clerks/secretaries and parliamentary staff from Commonwealth parliaments to discuss the latest legislative practices and to share best practice. The chairperson of the meeting was Mr Cyril Kwabena Oteng Nsiah, Clerk to Parliament of Ghana. During the two-day meeting, the attendees received presentations from various jurisdictions on the following topics:

- Parliamentary system and developments in the Parliament of Ghana.
- Parliamentary diplomacy in the Canadian Federal Parliament.
- Ministerial accountability and privilege in the UK Parliament.
- Cybersecurity in an e-parliament: A case study from the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.
- Gender sensitive audits in the Scottish Parliament.
- Ratification of treaties and conventions: National Assembly of Kenya.
- Developments in procedure and practice in Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly.
- Delegated legislation: The shifting balance of power between the legislature and the executive in the UK.

- Benchmarking against the CPA's Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr Ed Beale, SoCATT Secretary (United Kingdom) outlined several SoCATT reports and decisions, and proposals for the agenda for the 58th SoCATT General Meeting were agreed. The hosts of the next meeting will be the New South Wales CPA Branch in Australia.

## **5. KEY ISSUES EMANATING FROM THE CPA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

On the final day of the conference, the CPA General Assembly took place with the focus on the CPA legal status and the way forward. The General Assembly resolved the following three-pronged approach:

- Sourcing and assessing the relevant legal and financial advice to enable the CPA to be able to create a new non-charitable organisation in 2023.
- Engaging with the UK Government to persuade them to agree to legislate to recognise the CPA as an international, interparliamentary organisation.
- Developing verifiable benchmarks and a related assessment methodology and timeline to assess CPA Branches as future hosts of the CPA Headquarters, should the CPA choose to relocate outside of the UK.

The General Assembly also included a topical debate on food security and sustainability in the Commonwealth, with presenters from jurisdictions including Australia, Tanzania, Canada, Isle of Man and Turks and Caicos Islands.

### **TABLING**

The Speaker:

#### **Tabling of a document in terms of section 32(1)(a) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000):**

##### **Stellenbosch Municipality**

- (a) Adopted of the first amendment of the fifth-generation integrated development plan (IDP) 2022–2027.
- (b) Memorandum in terms of regulation 3(2)(a) of the Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001.
- (c) The SDF/IDP/budget time schedule/process plan 2024/25 as adopted by council on 23 August 2023.
- (d) Minutes of the council meeting held on 25 October 2003.

Copies attached.