

PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

FRIDAY, 13 JUNE 2025

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Speaker:

**REPORT ON COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS WORKSHOP,
NASSAU, BAHAMAS 29 APRIL TO 2 MAY 2025**

DELEGATION:

Member NomaFrench Mbombo

Member Nobulumko Nkondlo

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to give an account of the outcomes of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Network who convened a four-day workshop in collaboration with the Parliament of The Bahamas.

The workshop brought together Members from 24 legislatures from across the Commonwealth. The theme of the workshop was “Parliamentarians as Drivers of Women’s Economic Empowerment”.

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

2. MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY

Delegates were formally welcomed by Honourable Kate Doust, Vice Chairperson of the CWP, Senator J LaShell Adderly, President of the Senate of The Bahamas, and Honourable Patricia Deveaux, Speaker of The Bahamas House of Assembly.

Following the welcoming remarks, the delegates were taken on a tour of the Bahamian Parliament and a welcome reception at Government House in Nassau. The reception was hosted by the Governor-General of The Bahamas, Her Excellency the Most Honourable Dame Cynthia Pratt, and The Bahamas Minister of Education and Technical and Vocational Training, Honourable Gleyns Hanna-Martin, who, in her welcoming speech, highlighted the importance of women's role in education and leadership.

3. KEY ISSUES EMANATING FROM THE WORKSHOP

- The power parliamentarians must drive economic policies of their country.
- The importance of establishing a WCPP women's caucus.
- The title of the workshop was "Parliamentarians as drivers of women's economic empowerment" with the following subthemes:
 - o Gender responsive budgeting: From theory to practice
 - o Inclusive and effective lawmaking and oversight
 - o Gender sensitive scrutiny of bills and laws
 - o Combatting discriminatory laws
 - o Women's economic empowerment: The Bahamas case

4. OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

In addition to the planned workshop, delegates were provided with the opportunity to engage with the following:

- Hosted by The Bahamas Business Chamber and visiting women-lead businesses.
- Hosted by the South African Honorary Consulate to The Bahamas to explore economic opportunities and sharing of ideas for South African exports of wine and on tourism.
- Engaging with young legislators, Members of the Bahamian Youth Parliament as well as the representatives of the CIWIL SheLeads Programme.
- Engaging with Ministers and Members from both houses of the Bahamian Parliament.

5 KEY LESSONS FOR THE WCPP

- The host country presents a compelling case study in economic reliance on tourism and offshore investment. An estimated 60% of its gross domestic product (GDP) is generated through tourism, with the remainder largely sustained by foreign direct investment and offshore financial activities. The government has cultivated a highly flexible and investor-friendly regulatory environment that actively encourages out-of-country businesses to establish operations within its jurisdiction.
- A significant area of interest is the host country's achievement in gender parity, particularly in political representation. Women currently hold a substantial number of seats in parliament and occupy senior ministerial positions.
- An interesting phenomenon is examining how the dual identity of sovereign statehood combined with active Commonwealth membership impacts the national identity of The Bahamas, legislative norms and foreign policy orientation.