



Bangladesh Parliament

CPA Press Release

For immediate release, Monday 6 November 2017

Bangladesh Prime Minister urges Commonwealth Parliamentarians to uphold democratic principles at the 63rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, H.E. Sheikh Hasina, MP, Vice-Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has urged Commonwealth Parliamentarians to uphold democratic principles as she opened the 63rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Prime Minister said: *“We, Parliamentarians, being the people’s representatives have the first and foremost obligations to preserve and maintain the faith of the people in democracy and Parliamentary institutions.”*

One of the largest annual gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians, the conference will address key global issues and solutions. Against a backdrop of greater scrutiny of Parliamentarians and the overall public trust deficit in Parliaments, the CPA’s annual conference offers the opportunity for Members to benefit from professional development, supportive learning and the sharing of best practice with colleagues from over 180 Commonwealth Parliaments together with the participation of leading international organisations. The overall main conference theme for the 63rd CPC will be ***‘Continuing to enhance the high standards of performance of Parliamentarians’***.



The CPA President and Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee, Hon. Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh said: *“The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) provides a forum for change-makers from around the world to come together to discuss solutions to the global challenges that we face. The diverse nature of the membership provides the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association with a unique position within the parliamentary community to offer a comprehensive perspective on how to strengthen parliamentary democracy Commonwealth-wide and discuss new and innovative approaches on how to do so.”* The CPA President read to delegates the goodwill message for the 63rd CPC from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Patron of the CPA and Head of the Commonwealth.

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan welcomed Commonwealth Parliamentarians and delegates to the conference and said: *“The Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference strengthens our networks and nurtures our shared Commonwealth democratic values. The fact that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association embodies diversity yet shares values of democracy, rule of law and human rights, only serves to strengthen and deepen our unity. The need for the CPA*



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to continue to strengthen its core programmatic work and to translate the practical benefits of democratic governance to the peoples of the Commonwealth has never been greater."

The **Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland QC** in a video message to delegates said: *"Shared understanding of democratic values, with honest and accountable administration, and respect for the separation of powers, are fundamental to our Commonwealth approaches to development. The CPA conference and the work of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are fine examples of how forums and mechanisms for exchange of ideas and expertise enable us to leverage the advantages our shared inheritances offer."*

The vote of thanks on behalf of Members of Parliament was given by **Hon. Vicki Dunne, MLA, CPA Treasurer and Deputy Speaker of the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly**.

The 63rd CPC began with a briefing for Commonwealth Parliamentarians on the Rohingya refugee crisis from the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Hon. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, MP. Workshops and debates will be held during the conference on a wide range of topics including the role of Parliament in addressing the challenges of democracy; the role of trade in building stronger ties within the Commonwealth; Climate Change in the Commonwealth context; and giving a voice to the youth of the Commonwealth. The 63rd CPC takes place ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the *'Commonwealth Summit'* in London, UK. The outcomes of the Conference, as well as a unique parliamentary perspective, will feed directly into the Summit next year, which is themed *'Towards a Common Future'*.

Social Media: Twitter #63CPC @CPA_Secretariat | Facebook.com/CPAHQ | Online www.cpahq.org

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Notes to Editors:

63rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 1-8 November 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference** is the annual conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). The **63rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference** will take place in Dhaka, Bangladesh hosted by the CPA Bangladesh Branch and the Parliament of Bangladesh. For further information visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/annualconference.

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)** exists to develop, promote and support Commonwealth Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to identify benchmarks of good governance and to implement the enduring values of the Commonwealth. The CPA is an international community of over 180 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures working together to deepen the Commonwealth's commitment to the highest standards of democratic governance.

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