

CPA Press Release

For immediate release, 2 May 2017

Youth engagement in Australia as Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Roadshow visits college students in Darwin

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has brought its youth engagement programme to Australia with a CPA Roadshow visit to Taminmin College, a school in Darwin, Northern Territory. The CPA Roadshows highlight the importance of encouraging youth engagement in the political process and the sharing of Commonwealth political values, especially with the 60% of the 2.4 billion population of the Commonwealth who are aged under 30.



The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Mr Akbar Khan held an engaging CPA Roadshow session with 100 students at Taminmin College, a comprehensive rural school catering for students aged 11 to 16, where students had the opportunity to discuss the importance of the Commonwealth and of parliamentary democracy. The CPA Roadshows provide an opportunity for young people to learn about the political values of the Commonwealth such as diversity, development and parliamentary democracy; to discuss issues of concern about the society in which they live; and to meet local Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff and to find out about the work of the CPA. The CPA Secretary-General also spoke to students about the 2017 Commonwealth theme of a '*Peace-Building Commonwealth*' launched by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth on Commonwealth Day and how the cornerstones on which peace are founded are respect and understanding for one another.

The CPA Secretary-General was accompanied by the **Speaker of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, Hon. Kezia Purick MLA** along with local Member for Daly, **Mr Gary Higgins MLA, Leader of the Opposition**; and the local Member for Nelson, **Mr Gerry Wood MLA**. Students at the CPA Roadshow heard from the local Members of the Legislative Assembly who spoke about the Parliamentary System of the Northern Territory and Australia and their roles as Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

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The CPA delegation was also joined by **Hon. Niki Rattle, Speaker of the Cook Islands Parliament** who was visiting the Northern Territory for the CPA Executive Committee meeting and spoke to the students about gender equality in Parliaments. The Northern Territory is one of the Commonwealth's strongest jurisdictions with regards to gender equality, with 48% of women representatives and over 50% in its Cabinet.

The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory and CPA Northern Territory Branch President, Hon. Kezia Purick MLA said: *"We are very grateful to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan for bringing the CPA Roadshow to the Northern Territory. The CPA Roadshow held at Taminmin College, Darwin was a great experience for the students. Through the Secretary-General's comprehensive presentation about the Commonwealth and the CPA, our local Members of the Legislative Assembly speaking about their roles as Parliamentarians and the lively Q&A session, the Australian students learned more about the Commonwealth, Parliament and our many common values such as parliamentary democracy, human rights and freedom of speech."*

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Mr Akbar Khan said: *"We are very excited about bringing the CPA Roadshow to Darwin in the Northern Territory of Australia for the first time and engaging with local students on the values that unite the Commonwealth. The CPA's public engagement work across the Commonwealth and engaging young people in the democratic process by discussing the importance of the Commonwealth are key objectives of the CPA and the CPA's visit to the Northern Territory has emphasised this. It was a pleasure to have shared a platform with local Parliamentarians to engage young people in discussions on politics and issues that are directly relevant to them."*

The CPA Roadshow visited Darwin, Australia following the CPA Mid-Year Executive Committee which saw the Legislative Assembly of Northern Territory host over 30 Commonwealth Speakers and Members of Parliament from 25 to 27 April 2017.

CPA news: Youth engagement in Australia as Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Roadshow visits college students in Darwin - <https://tinyurl.com/kszzcla>

CPA Images Flickr Album: CPA Roadshows Darwin, Australia - <https://tinyurl.com/mqgu9ss>

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Notes to Editors: The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**, now in its 106th year with HM The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth as its Patron, exists to develop, promote and support Parliamentarians and their 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. Parliaments, their Members and officials learn from each other through CPA activities: Annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences, Regional Conferences and other symposiums; Interparliamentary visits; Parliamentary Seminars and Workshops; Publications including *The Parliamentarian*, the Journal of Commonwealth Parliaments; and the Parliamentary Information and Reference Centre.

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