

## CPA Press Release

For immediate release, 24 November 2016

### Renewed focus on global trade at CPA-WTO Workshop for Parliamentarians in the Caribbean Region

Parliamentarians from across the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region have come together for the Regional Trade Workshop convened by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) from 22 to 24 November 2016 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The Workshop was opened by **Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago; Hon. Shirley Osborne MLA, Speaker of the Montserrat Legislative Assembly and Vice Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA);**

and Mr Bernard Kuiten, Head of External Relations of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).



The keynote address was given by **Senator Hon. Paula Gopee-Scoon, Trade Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.** Please [click here](#) for the Minister's keynote address. The Minister reaffirmed Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to the multilateral system of the WTO and that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is looking to expand and enhance market access into Central America, Africa and Asia as part of efforts to diversify the economy of Trinidad and Tobago away from dependence on oil and gas.

Parliamentarians were able to look at the challenges and opportunities for the Caribbean region and for the global economy in relation to trade and heard from renowned experts in the field.

**Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago said:** *"This three day CPA/WTO Workshop will assist Parliamentarians in better understanding the WTO rules and functions; understand the decisions that have been taken at the Bali and Nairobi Ministerial Conferences; look at a way forward on the Post Nairobi Negotiations, including possible ways to conclude the Doha Rounds; and finally, this is an opportunity for us as legislators to exchange views and our experiences in economic trade policies including emerging challenges that affect our economies."* Please [click here](#) for the Speaker's opening address.

**Hon. Shirley Osborne MLA, Speaker of the Montserrat Legislative Assembly and Vice Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) said:** *"As Parliamentarians we are an important link between constituents and their governments and we provide information exchanges between domestic and international interests. It is therefore critical for us to keep the public informed about the importance of looking at the world as a global market place where the flow of goods and services are crucial for the sustenance of our small island states. It is also important for us to work collectively to create a world trading system and indeed a global economy that is equitable and fair and leaves no one behind. This type of workshop from the CPA and WTO allows us to gain a broader and deeper understanding of the origins and principles of global trade and to use the principles to serve our people better. I wish to thank most sincerely the World Trade Organisation for their partnership with the CPA and the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago for hosting this CPA Workshop."* Please [click here](#) for the CPA Vice-Chairperson's opening address.

#### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

CPA Secretariat, Westminster House, Suite 700, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA, United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)20 7799 1460 | F: +44 (0)20 7222 6073 | Website: [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org) | Email [hq.sec@cpahq.org](mailto:hq.sec@cpahq.org)

Connect with the CPA on Twitter [@CPA\\_Secretariat](https://twitter.com/CPA_Secretariat) or Facebook.com/CPAHQ



**Mr Bernard Kuiten, Head of External Relations of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) said:** *“It gives me great pleasure to participate in this regional parliamentary workshop, organised jointly with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. We cannot deny that people feel left behind because of trade. Yet rising unemployment, diminishing welfare gains and social support cannot be countered by disconnecting from global trade and change in general. It would have the exact opposite effect. To be more inclusive and access new opportunities, we have to embrace change, adapt and support everyone involved and create possibilities for those wanting to be involved.”* Please [click here](#) for the WTO opening address.

The following jurisdictions were represented at the Regional Trade Workshop: **Antigua & Barbuda; Belize; Grenada; Guyana; St Lucia; Bermuda; Cayman Islands; Montserrat.**

**-Ends-**

**Notes to Editors:** The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**, now in its 105<sup>th</sup> 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 around 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. Visit [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org) for further information.

**For further information, please contact:** Jeffrey Hyland, Editor, **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.** T: +44 (0)20 7799 1460 (switchboard) | T: +44 (0)20 7227 1696 (direct) | E: [jh@cpahq.org](mailto:jh@cpahq.org)

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