

## CPA Press Release

For immediate release, 9 December 2016

### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to launch new university accredited CPA Parliamentary Fundamentals Flagship Programme for Commonwealth Parliamentarians at 62<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) advances parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance, and by building an informed parliamentary community, capable of deepening the Commonwealth's democratic commitment and co-operation among its Parliaments and Legislatures.

To further this objective, the CPA is launching its pioneering flagship programme - the **CPA Fundamentals Programme on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure** - at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, taking place in London, United Kingdom from 11 to 17 December 2016.



This will be the first course of its kind and through the new CPA Fundamentals programme, the CPA aims to assist Commonwealth Parliaments in building the capacity of their newly-elected and returning Parliamentarians, by equipping them with:

- Greater depth of knowledge of parliamentary practice and procedure
- Increased in-depth and practical knowledge based on accepted theories and international good practices
- An accredited qualification from an internationally recognised university that will benefit participants for life during and after Parliament.

The programme will be interactive and comprehensive, comprising online modules as well as face-to-face contact sessions on-site with our partner universities. This programmes will aim to develop well-informed, skilled parliamentary leaders, who will go on to contribute to creating strong democratic legislatures that adhere to principles of good governance.

The unique CPA Fundamentals Programme focusing on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure will have two main courses, with one course specifically developed for CPA Small Branches. The CPA works closely with Small Branches (jurisdictions of less than 500,000 people) in all Regions of the Commonwealth to identify their particular needs and requirements in parliamentary strengthening, development and cooperation.

The **Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan** said: *"The launch of the new CPA Fundamentals Programme on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference will further the aims of the CPA in advancing parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. We are especially honoured to be working alongside two prestigious Commonwealth universities to provide this flagship programme for our Membership and I'm delighted that we will have a course specifically for CPA Small Branches."*

The CPA will be working alongside two prestigious Commonwealth universities to provide this flagship programme. The CPA Fundamentals course will be provided to Commonwealth Parliamentarians in

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partnership with **University of Witwatersrand in South Africa**. The specialised CPA Fundamentals course for CPA Small Branches will be delivered to Commonwealth Parliamentarians from CPA Small Branches in partnership with **McGill University in Canada**, in the form of the Professional Development Certificate in Parliamentary Governance.

**Professor David Everatt, Head of the WITS School of Governance, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa said:** *“The School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is very excited to be part of the CPA Fundamentals Programme. We believe that an African context is important in providing particular insights and nuances; as it is for learning from our fellow Commonwealth counterparts across the globe. As one of the more recent democracies in the Commonwealth, we have perhaps had to think harder, and recently, about the fundamentals of democracy in our own context – the formal death of apartheid, the transition into democracy but accompanied by on-going poverty and inequality, the challenge of racial differences – these issues are debated and contested on a daily basis here, and we hope to infuse our inputs with these contemporary issues, and challenge participants to localise them in their own contexts. By being able to call on such luminaries as former Speaker of Parliament, Max Sisulu, former Presidents Thabo Mbeki and Kgalema Motlanthe, as well as senior academics and others, we believe that the course can offer both theory and practice, in a vibrant context that will speak to many, challenge many, and interrogate some inherited orthodoxies that perhaps fit an emerging democracy less well than planned.”*

**Dr Judith Potter, Dean of the McGill University, School of Continuing Studies said:** *“Over the past five years, McGill University has emerged as one of the premier universities in the Commonwealth for parliamentary studies. Not only do we offer a global Professional Development Programme for Parliamentary Staff - now in its fifth year - in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the World Bank Group, but we are delighted to have been selected by the CPA to develop and deliver this programme, on the Fundamentals of Parliamentary Practice and Procedure for Small Branches. In addition, we have been awarded four Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grants, including looking at the need for enhanced parliamentary oversight of extractive industries and, most recently, for the establishment of the Global Network of Parliamentary Training Institutes. We greatly look forward to our continued collaboration with the CPA, including the application of leading edge research in professional development programs for MPs and staff.”*

**The CPA Parliamentary Fundamentals Flagship Programme will be launched at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, taking place in London, United Kingdom from 11 to 17 December 2016.**

**Places are now available for newly elected or returning Commonwealth Parliamentarians for the first course starting in February 2017. To find out more about the CPA Flagship Programme on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure for 2017 visit [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org) or email [arlene@cpahq.org](mailto:arlene@cpahq.org).**

**CPA news story:** <http://tinyurl.com/j5y64fl>

**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.

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