



CPA Press Release

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Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians discuss new ways to tackle political violence against women at CWP triennial conference

Women Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth have gathered in London, United Kingdom for the triennial conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), as part of the wider 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. The theme of the fifth Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference was *'Political Violence against Women'*.



The conference saw leading figures in Commonwealth Parliaments addressing the conference. The CWP conference included four wide-ranging sessions for Commonwealth Parliamentarians on the following issues: Violence and Intimidation of Women during Elections; Parliament's Role in Raising Awareness of Political Violence against Women, and Women's Equal Civil and Political Rights; Legislating Effectively to Protect Women from Political Violence; The Role of Civil Society and the Media in Tackling Political Violence against Women.

Over 100 Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians attended the conference from 43 countries and 56 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Branches across the Commonwealth.



The CWP Conference was opened by the outgoing Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, **Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda** who has held the office since her election in 2013. Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga MP has worked tirelessly in promoting inter-regional cooperation among members of the CWP. She has established a CWP strategy, which has led to many activities, geared towards the strengthening of Women Parliamentarians across the CPA's nine regions; and has



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Headquarters 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 | Email hq.sec@cpahq.org | Twitter [@CPA_Secretariat](https://twitter.com/CPA_Secretariat) | Facebook [/CPAHQ](https://www.facebook.com/CPAHQ)



convened women Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth to discuss the key issue of 'Political Violence against Women'.

The **Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee, Hon. Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh** congratulated Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga MP on her leadership, her dedicated and committed work that has brought about positive results for the CWP. The Chairperson went on to state that gender equality must be factored into food, energy, water policies in each respective jurisdiction. It is important that women take their place in Parliament to ensure that this may come about.

The **Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan**, in addressing the CWP Conference on 'Political Violence against Women' said: *"It is not only for female Parliamentarians to carry the torch against political violence against women, but it is for all Parliamentarians, including men to champion inclusion and gender equality. It is also for Parliament as a public institution itself to set an example for all of society to follow by raising awareness of the issue and taking steps to eliminate violence against women through adopting structures, operations and methods of work, which promote zero tolerance of such behaviour. I congratulate Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga MP, outgoing Chairperson of the CWP for convening a conference on such an important barrier preventing women from entering public office. On behalf of the entire CPA Membership, we are incredibly grateful to her for her leadership over the past three years. I very much look forward to working with Hon. Dato' Noraini Ahmad MP (Malaysia), the new CWP Chairperson during the next three years and wish her all the very best in the important role."* Please [click here](#) for the opening speech at the CWP Conference by the CPA Secretary-General.

Hon. Nikki Rattle, Speaker of the Parliament of the Cook Islands and Pacific Regional Representative on the CPA Executive Committee also spoke at the opening of the CWP Conference and said: *"Women must look to assume leadership roles within their respective parliaments. The topic of the fifth triennial conference, Political Violence against Women, is of the utmost importance, as it is essential that women have full, unfettered, and free access not only in the ability to seek office, but also to perform their duties without being subjected to threats, intimidation or violence of any kind."*

The CWP Conference saw the election of a new **Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Hon. Dato' Noraini Ahmad MP (Malaysia)** who pledged to renew the effort to increase women's political participation across the Commonwealth during her three year term.

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) is the network of women Members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Parliament and Legislatures. The CWP network provides a means of building the capacity of women elected to parliament to be more effective in their roles; improving the awareness and ability of all Parliamentarians, male and female, and encouraging them to include a gender perspective in all aspects of their role - legislation, oversight and representation and helping parliaments to become gender-sensitive institutions.

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Notes to Editors

The **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)** was founded in 1989 to increase the number of female elected representatives in Parliaments and legislatures across the Commonwealth and to ensure that women's issues are brought to the fore in parliamentary debate and legislation.

62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 11-17 December 2016, London, United Kingdom

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference** is the annual conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). The **62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference** will take place from **11-17 December 2016** (inclusive of arrival and departure days) in London, United Kingdom, hosted the CPA Secretariat.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) - The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) organises its annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) each year. Global political issues and developments in the parliamentary system are analysed in conference debates among leading Parliamentarians representing Parliaments and Legislatures throughout the Commonwealth. These plenary conferences were biennial from 1948 to 1959 and annual since 1961. A summary of the main views expressed in conference debates is sent to Members, Commonwealth governments and international agencies. The conference period also encompasses meetings of the CPA's General Assembly, the Executive Committee, Small Branches Members, the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) and meetings for Parliamentary Clerks and Secretaries (SOCATT). The following CPA Branches have hosted Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences in recent years: 2014 Cameroon; 2013 South Africa; 2012 Sri Lanka; 2011 United Kingdom; 2010 Kenya; 2009 Tanzania; 2008 Malaysia; 2007 India. For further information visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/annualconference.

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**, now in its 105th 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.

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



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