



CPA Press Release

For immediate release, Wednesday 14 December 2016

CPA Chairperson urges Commonwealth Parliamentarians to focus on what unites them to find global solutions at opening of 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

The Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee, Hon. Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh urged Commonwealth Parliamentarians to work together to find common solutions to global issues as she opened the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in London, United Kingdom today.

The Chairperson welcomed Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth on behalf of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) at the opening ceremony of the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. This unique conference brings together Speakers, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff representing the nine regions of the CPA – Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic; India; Pacific and South East Asia. The CPA reaches all 52 countries of the Commonwealth as well as national, sub-national and territorial Parliaments and Legislatures bringing together over 180 CPA Branches of the Association.



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The 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 unique platform for inter-parliamentary dialogue to take place. 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.”*

CPA Video: Highlights of the opening ceremony of the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference #2016CPC <https://youtu.be/23Zh3MnvNuk>



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 | Facebook.com/CPAHQ



The opening ceremony of the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference heard from the Secretaries-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and 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 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."* **To read the full text of the CPA Secretary-General's speech at the opening ceremony of the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference please [click here](#).**

The **Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland QC** said: *"The Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference is like a beehive. It buzzes with pollinators whose work will result in fruit throughout the Commonwealth. Thanks to Commonwealth Parliamentarians coming together, law reform and progressive social and economic development are accelerated. Exchanges of knowledge and expertise lead to institutions of governance being strengthened, while respect and goodwill within the rich diversity of Commonwealth identity helps build a safer, more prosperous and more inclusive future for us all."*

The Master of Ceremonies for the opening ceremony was Hon. Lindiwe Maseko, MP (South Africa) who welcomed all delegates before introducing the Commonwealth Youth Choir who performed both the Commonwealth Anthem and the Commonwealth Song under the conductorship of Simon Haw MBE, the Commonwealth Music Ambassador 2016-2018.

The main conference theme for 2016 at the annual event is: ***A Collaborative Commonwealth: Unity, Diversity and Common Challenges***. Workshops and debates will be held during the conference on a wide range of topics including the role of the Commonwealth in fostering freedom of religion or belief; ending violence against women and girls; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Climate Change; and the radicalisation of young people.

Social Media: Twitter #2016CPC @CPA_Secretariat | Facebook.com/CPAHQ | Online www.cpahq.org

CPA Flickr Images Album: Images of the opening ceremony of the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference: <http://tinyurl.com/hljhxtx>

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Notes to Editors

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.



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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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