

CPA News

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Commonwealth Parliamentary Association promotes a ‘Connected Commonwealth’ on Commonwealth Day 2019 and vital role of youth in combatting climate change through political participation

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has celebrated **Commonwealth Day 2019** both in London at the CPA Headquarters Secretariat and across the CPA’s nine Regions and over 180 Branches. The 2019 Commonwealth Day theme focuses on ‘A *Connected Commonwealth*’ which offers opportunities for the people, Parliaments, governments and institutions of the Commonwealth to connect and work together at many levels through far-reaching and deep-rooted networks of friendship and goodwill. Commonwealth Day 2019 also celebrates the 70th anniversary of the ‘modern’ Commonwealth which was established by the London Declaration on 28 April 1949.*



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth and Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, with members of the Royal Family, attended celebrations in London to mark Commonwealth Day 2019 and attended one of the largest multi-faith celebration services in Westminster Abbey.

Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP, Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon, together with the **CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP**, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta and the **CPA Secretary-General, Mr Akbar Khan** represented the CPA at the Abbey service. The service was also attended by Commonwealth High Commissioners, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland, QC and dignitaries from around the Commonwealth as well as senior politicians and 1,000 school children. *Please [click here](#) to read Her Majesty The Queen’s Commonwealth Day 2019 message.*

Also attending the Commonwealth Day service were young people from across the Commonwealth who earlier in the day participated in the CPA Commonwealth Day Youth Programme on the theme of ‘*The role of youth in combatting climate change through political participation*’. The young participants represented the following CPA Branches: **Falkland Islands; Gibraltar; Isle of Man; Jersey; Malta; Scotland; St Helena; Wales; United Kingdom; Canada; Ontario; Cayman Islands; Trinidad and Tobago; Turks and Caicos; Pakistan; New Zealand; Singapore; Malaysia.**

On Commonwealth Day 2019, the **Secretary-General of the CPA, Mr Akbar Khan** said: “*Commonwealth Day provides us with the opportunity to reflect on what the Commonwealth means to us and our communities. The Commonwealth can play a vital role in ensuring a better future for us all, today and for future generations. The*



2019 Commonwealth theme of ‘A Connected Commonwealth’ reminds us that only by working together can we secure a more sustainable, prosperous, fairer and secure Commonwealth for everyone.”

The CPA Youth Programme on Commonwealth Day 2019 was opened by the CPA Chairperson, **Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP** who spoke of the importance of this year’s 2019 Commonwealth theme of ‘A Connected Commonwealth’ for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association which promotes common goals for CPA Branches and the strengthening of Commonwealth Parliaments to achieve better democracies. The CPA Chairperson emphasised the need for young people to participate in politics in order to have a voice in the democratic process and also the need for all Commonwealth Parliamentarians to listen to young people in their respective jurisdictions to ensure that they represent youth voices. The CPA Chairperson said: *“Over one billion young people hold the key to unlocking the challenges that we face – beyond our respective borders. The CPA and the Commonwealth Secretariat are truly global organisations.”*

Keynote speaker, the **CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP**, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta spoke of the importance of tackling climate change for the 53 Commonwealth countries, especially its 31 small and developing states which are often the least polluting but the first casualties of climate change. He said: *“As former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says, when it comes to climate change, there is no plan B, since we do not have a planet B. Tackling the threats from climate change is a tremendous, unique opportunity in our history to show what humans have done best throughout the centuries: champion innovation and growth.”*

This was followed by a round table discussion on the theme of ‘The role of youth in combatting climate change through political participation’. The round table discussion included a wide range of views on climate change from CPA Commonwealth Day Youth participants and from Commonwealth Parliamentarians who joined the discussion including: **Rt Hon. Lord Chidgey**, Co-Chair of the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on the Commonwealth and **Lord Collins of Highbury**, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development. Other guests included **James Duddridge, MP**, CPA UK Chairperson and **Hon. Bodruddoza Md Farhad Hussain, MP** (Bangladesh).

During the evening of Commonwealth Day 2019, Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, the CPA Small Branches Chairperson, Hon. Angelo Farrugia, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Malta and Mr Akbar Khan, CPA Secretary-General together with six of the CPA Commonwealth Youth Programme participants attended the Commonwealth Secretary-General’s Commonwealth Day reception at Marlborough House in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

In addition, CPA Branches and Regions across the network of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association marked Commonwealth Day 2019 in many different ways. Reports of these activities will feature on the CPA website and in the next issue of *The Parliamentarian*. Commonwealth Day has been celebrated around the Commonwealth on the second Monday in March every year since the 1970s.

**The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association emerged from the Empire Parliamentary Association, founded in 1911, at a conference in London in October 1948, several months ahead of the London Declaration on 28 April 1949.*

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- **CPA news: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association promotes a ‘Connected Commonwealth’ on Commonwealth Day 2019 and vital role of youth in combatting climate change through political participation - <https://tinyurl.com/y6x84gvg>**
- **For images of the CPA Commonwealth Day Youth Programme 2019 please visit www.cpahq.org/cpahq/flickr.**

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**, now in its 108th year, 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.

Visit www.cpahq.org for further information.

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