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PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

**REPORT OF THE UGANDA'S DELEGATION TO
THE 68TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE,
BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS 5TH to 12TH OCTOBER 2025**

**CONFERENCE THEME: 'THE COMMONWEALTH:
A GLOBAL PARTNER' CONFERENCE**

OCTOBER 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Honourable Members, this Report is presented pursuant to Rule 34(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, hosted by the Parliament of Barbados and the CPA Barbados Branch, brought together over 500 Parliamentarians and parliamentary officials from across the Commonwealth (from 121 CPA Branches), 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 Conference reaffirmed the Commonwealth's commitment to strengthening democracy, building inclusive institutions, and tackling global challenges collaboratively. The Conference produced significant resolutions strengthening CPA governance, legal status, financial systems, and network structures while advancing broader goals on transparency, climate resilience, digital inclusion, and parliamentary independence.

The following Members and staff of Parliament represented CPA Uganda Branch:

NO	NAME	Constituency/ Department	Affiliation
1	Hon. Okupa Elijah/Leader of Delegation	Kasilo County	Independent
2	Hon. Laura Kanushu, MP	PwDs, National	NRM
3	Hon. Lukyamuzi David Kalwanga, MP	Bussujju County	NUP
4	Hon. Kayanga Baroda, MP	Kamuli Municipality	Independent
5	Hon. Bernard Odoi	Youth Eastern	NRM
6	Mrs. Rose Ikiror Semakula	Deputy Clerk, Parliamentary Affairs,	Staff
7	Ms. Geria Beatrice Gladys	Senior Principal Administrative Assistant	Staff
8	Ms. Nazaria Agasha	Aide to Hon. Laura Kanushu	Staff

Alongside the main conference, several key meetings took place, including the 41st CPA Small Branches Conference, the 9th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference, Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities network meetings, the 2025 CPA General Assembly, CPA Executive Committee meetings, and the 59th SOCATT meetings.

The CPA General Assembly was presided over by the CPA President (2024-2025), Senator Hon. Reginald Farley, JP, President of the Senate of Barbados.

In addition, at the 2025 CPA General Assembly, CPA delegates approved the nomination of Senator Hon. Sue Lines, President of the Senate of Australia (Australia Federal) as the new CPA Treasurer for a three-year term. The role holder oversees the finances of the Association and works closely with the Trustees and Finance team at the CPA.

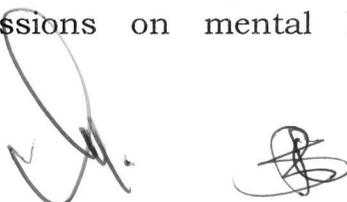
Delegates were also updated on the progress of the new legal status akin to an International, Inter-Parliamentary Organization following the UK Parliament passing the 'Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and International Committee of the Red Cross (Status) Act 2025' and progress on the UK Government's secondary legislation.

The 2025 CPA General Assembly also approved the Chief Pleas of Sark as a new CPA Branch. One of the smallest Legislatures in the Commonwealth, the CPA Sark Branch joins the CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIM).

2.0 OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 68TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

2.1 Statement by the Host Speaker

Delegates to the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) were welcomed by Hon. Arthur Holder, MP, SC, Speaker of the House of Assembly of Barbados. He commended the CPA's new international legal status and thanked the CPA Secretary-General for his efforts. He noted that the conference was being held at a critical time for the Commonwealth amid various political, social, environmental, financial, and technological challenges. He also acknowledged the work of the CPwD network and welcomed discussions on mental health for MPs, strengthening



parliamentary institutions, youth development, and addressing gang violence.

2.2 Other notable speakers included:

Hon. Ralph Thorne, MP and Leader of the Opposition in Barbados, highlighted the country's recent election of a new President as an example of "democracy in action" and the Caribbean's tradition of peaceful democratic transitions.

The Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee, Hon. Dr Christopher Kalila, MP (Zambia), thanked Barbados for hosting the 68th CPC and emphasized the Commonwealth's role as a global partner promoting democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. He noted that the CPA provides a platform for dialogue, peer learning, and sharing best practices among Parliaments.

CPA Secretary-General Stephen Twigg stated that the conference builds on the legacy of past generations and will consider a new strategic plan as the CPA transitions to its new legal status, while also thanking Barbados for its hospitality and leadership.

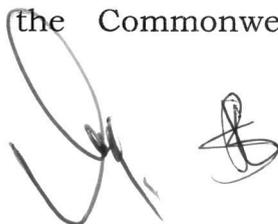
2.3 Address by the Commonwealth Secretary-General and Other Leaders

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Hon. Shirley Botchwey reaffirmed the central role of Parliaments within the Commonwealth. She emphasized that while governments propose policies, it is Parliaments that debate, amend, and decide—thereby safeguarding the democratic values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter. She noted that at a time when global democracy is under pressure, strong, inclusive, and accountable Parliaments are essential for building trust, legitimacy, and progress.

She highlighted the vital work of the CPA in capacity building, empowering women and young Parliamentarians, and protecting the integrity of democratic institutions.

2.4 Address by the Prime Minister of Barbados

The Prime Minister of Barbados, Hon. Mia Mottley, SC, MP, welcomed delegates. She expressed pride in Barbados, home to one of the oldest Parliaments in the Commonwealth, hosting the 68th CPC. She



underscored the importance of discussions on peace, democracy, and the climate crisis, which is especially urgent for the Caribbean. She called for building trust between Parliaments and citizens, strengthening partnerships, and acknowledged the growing calls for reparations across the Commonwealth.

2.5 Keynote Address

The Vice-Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Her Excellency Dame Sandra Mason, GCMG, SC, President of Barbados, officially opened the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. In her remarks, she called on Commonwealth Parliamentarians to work together to uphold the core values of the Commonwealth. She noted that the Commonwealth holds a special place in her professional life and praised its vast network for its ability to promote shared values globally.

Her Excellency highlighted the Commonwealth Charter, reaffirming the essential roles of the Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary. She commended the CPA for 114 years of service in supporting parliamentary democracy and promoting the work of Parliamentarians. Reflecting on the conference theme, she emphasized that the Commonwealth remains a beacon of multilateralism and a strong global partner. She further underscored the importance of education and advocacy, and welcomed the inclusion of youth in the CPC programme, noting that they are key to the future of the Commonwealth.

3.0 THE 68TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND THEMATIC SESSIONS

3.1 Conference theme: **‘The Commonwealth: A Global Partner.** At the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, delegates took part in a wide range of workshop topics including strengthening Parliaments to support democracy, leveraging technology and AI to transform Parliaments, examining the impact of climate change on global health and building trust in Legislatures.

The seven main conference workshops and Youth Roundtable were as follows:



A. Strengthening our Institutions to Support Democracy.

What can Parliamentarians do to ensure their institutions are best placed to promote democracy?

In times of profound democratic crisis globally, it is essential that institutions are upholding the standards that citizens expect and deserve. This interactive workshop examined how Parliamentarians can best serve their citizens by examining the institutions that serve them. Senior Clerks from the Australian Capital Territory, Anguilla, KwaZulu Natal and Maldives shared how their Parliaments are upholding best practice and evaluating their practices utilizing the updated CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures, which provide a guideline for how Parliaments can strengthen their institution to support democracy.

B. Leveraging Technology:

Enhancing Democracy through Digital Transformations and Tackling the Digital Divide across the Commonwealth.

Legislatures across the Commonwealth are navigating the profound opportunities and challenges presented by the digital age. While digital transformation offers significant potential to make institutions more efficient, transparent, and accessible, the persistent digital divide continues to risk excluding sections of society and deepening existing inequalities.

Against this backdrop, the workshop examined the broader challenges of digital inclusion, particularly within Commonwealth jurisdictions. It sought to move beyond theoretical discussions by focusing on practical approaches and actions that can support legislatures in harnessing digital innovation while ensuring that no citizen is left behind.

This workshop explored dual challenge, focusing on practical, innovative solutions that can enhance democratic processes for all.



C: Climate change and its threat to Global Health: Finding

Sustainable Solutions. What can Parliamentarians do to tackle the negative impact of climate change on health from a national and international perspective?

This workshop examined the dynamics between climate change and its direct impact on physical and mental health, and what role Parliamentarians can play to tackle this global challenge.

Panelists examined the profound health impacts of a warming planet across the Commonwealth, from the rising burden of vector-borne diseases to the devastating mental health consequences of extreme weather events. Delegates also discussed related questions and shared what their own Legislatures were doing.

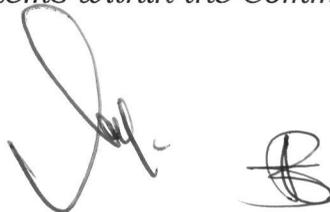
D: Building Trust and Transparency in Democracy:

Financial Transparency in Parliaments and Elections; are Parliamentarians building trust with their policies on financial transparency in elections and in their Legislatures.

In an era of declining public trust, the financial integrity of political institutions has become a defining measure of democratic legitimacy. Allegations of opaque campaign financing, weak parliamentary oversight and a misuse of public resources continue to challenge confidence in Commonwealth governments. Panelists from Canada Federal, Saint Lucia, Queensland and a financial expert from Nexus PFM Consulting explored how Parliaments can strengthen financial transparency in their internal operations and how electoral processes can be made more robust.

E: National Parliaments vs Provincial, Territorial and Devolved Legislatures:

Protecting and Preserving the Separation of Powers. How can Parliaments ensure the fair distribution of powers in multilevel governance systems within the Commonwealth?



This workshop examined the distribution of powers in multi-level governance systems within the Commonwealth, focusing on the balance between national and sub-national Legislatures. It emphasized the importance of institutional responsibility and non-encroachment, drawing on the Commonwealth Charter and the Commonwealth Latimer House Principles. Delegates also held group discussions looking at solutions, which could tackle unique and broader challenges faced by Parliaments.

F: The Role of the Commonwealth in Good Governance, Multilateralism and International Relations.

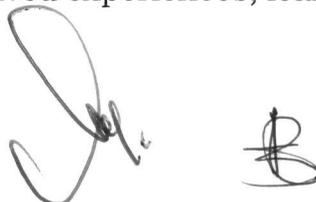
How can the Commonwealth strengthen good governance and remain a trusted voice in multilateralism and international relations?

This workshop explored how the Commonwealth can remain a credible actor in an increasingly fractured world by strengthening its commitment to good governance, championing multilateral cooperation and supporting Parliamentarians as key agents of international engagement. Drawing on the Commonwealth Charter, the Harare and Millbrook Declarations and the Commonwealth Latimer House Principles, the discussion highlighted how Parliaments can resist democratic backsliding, navigate geopolitical and economic turbulence and respond to global challenges such as climate change, Artificial Intelligence and disinformation.

G. Youth Roundtable: Staying Safe and Free to Thrive:

Empowering Young People to Overcome Modern Challenges - From Gang Violence to Cyber-Bullying Young people across the Commonwealth face a wide range of interconnected challenges - from the physical threats of gang violence and exploitation to the digital risks of cyber-bullying, online harassment and misinformation. These pressures can limit freedom to learn, participate and thrive, often leaving them vulnerable to harm, exclusion or disengagement from society.

The Youth Roundtable provided a platform for young people from Barbados to share lived experiences, learn from each other and work



with policymakers to co-create practical strategies for safety, resilience and empowerment.

Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from Northern Territories, Guernsey, Limpopo, Selangor, Tonga, Western Australia, Pakistan and the United Kingdom joined the discussion, which drew inspiration from Commonwealth commitments to youth development, human rights and digital inclusion, ensuring that young people's voices are central to shaping solutions.

H: A Look Ahead to CHOGM 2026:

*Championing the Human Factor from a Gender and Accessibility Lens
In preparation for the 2026 CHOGM that will be hosted by the government of Antigua and Barbuda.*

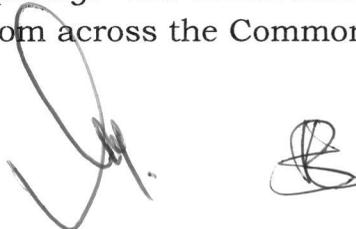
This workshop examined the significance of inclusion and representation of marginalized groups. Panelists explored how gender equality, accessibility and human rights can be further embedded into CHOGM outcome documents and policy, ensuring that the inclusion of those often underrepresented or marginalized is not an afterthought.

3.2 The 41st CPA Small Branches Conference: Held from 7–8 October 2025, focused on strengthening parliamentary independence and capacity in small jurisdictions across the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Parliamentarians discussed strategies to address the unique challenges faced by small legislatures through workshops aimed at building parliamentary capacity, promoting knowledge sharing, and strengthening cooperation among member branches.

3.3 The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference

The 9th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference was held alongside the 68th CPC in Barbados under the theme “Parliaments since Beijing +30: Progress, challenges and the road ahead for gender equality.” The conference brought together women parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth to discuss issues



such as women's representation in Parliaments, gender sensitization, and the use of quotas to promote equality.

The meeting also marked 30 years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, where the United Nations adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on gender equality. Delegates participated in workshops, governance meetings, and development sessions aimed at strengthening women's political participation and advancing gender equality in Parliaments.

During the Conference, delegates elected Catherine Fife as the new CWP Chairperson—the first woman from the CPA Canada Region to hold the position—while Sasha Kazantseva-Miller was elected CWP Vice-Chairperson for a one-year term.

3.4 Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities

Hon. Laura Kanushu, MP (Uganda) and Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) and the Regional Champions, chaired a town hall event during the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Bridgetown to discuss how Parliaments can better engage local communities and civil society in promoting disability inclusion. The event highlighted the need for stronger consultation mechanisms and meaningful dialogue between legislators and disability advocates when shaping inclusive public policies.

During the meeting of CPwD Regional Champions, Isaiah Jacob was elected as the new CPwD Chairperson for a three-year term, while Liesl Tesch was elected Vice-Chair. The network also discussed priorities for the coming year, including the CPwD Capital Investment Fund, which supports Commonwealth Parliaments in improving accessibility.

- 3.5** The 59th Society of Clerks-at-the-Table General Meeting (SoCATT) was held alongside the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Barbados, bringing together Parliamentary Clerks and staff from across Commonwealth Parliaments to discuss legislative practices and share best practices.

The two-day meeting featured presentations on topics such as the role of Clerks in strengthening parliamentary governance, the use of technology and AI in Parliaments, procedural development, and administrative reforms. The meeting also approved the Society's 2024 accounts and agreed on proposals for the agenda of the 60th SoCATT General Meeting scheduled for 2026.

3.6 3rd Emilia Monjowa Lifaka Lecture

The 3rd Lifaka Lecture honours Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, the former Deputy Speaker of Cameroon and CPA Chairperson, recognizing her significant contributions to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

The Rt. Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados delivered the Lecture where she emphasized the critical role of Parliaments in protecting democracy and highlighted the severe impact of climate change on small island states.

She urged the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the wider Commonwealth to lead by example by strengthening democratic governance and ensuring that democracy benefits all citizens. The lecture also reaffirmed the importance of safeguarding citizens' rights, limiting excessive power, and building inclusive democracies that promote peace and prosperity.

4.0 RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 68TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

4.1 Conference Resolutions/Key Outcomes

On Strengthening Institutions to Support Democracy, Parliaments should;

1. Regularly evaluate themselves against the CPA Benchmarks.
2. Strengthen institutional independence and accountability mechanisms.
3. Enhance parliamentary processes to protect democratic norms.



On Leveraging Technology for Democracy & Addressing Digital Divide, Legislatures should;

1. Adopt digital tools to enhance transparency and efficiency.
2. Prioritize policies that close the digital divide.
3. Promote digital inclusion programmes for underserved communities.

On Climate Change & Global Health, Parliaments must;

1. Strengthen climate and health legislative frameworks.
2. Increase investment in climate-resilient health systems.
3. Promote cooperation and knowledge sharing on health impacts of climate change.

On Trust & Transparency: Financial Integrity in Parliaments & Elections;

1. Strengthen laws and practices on campaign financing transparency.
2. Improve parliamentary oversight and internal financial controls.
3. Promote public access to information on political finance.

On Separation of Powers in Multilevel Governance

1. Promote clearer separation and distribution of powers.
2. Foster collaboration while avoiding institutional encroachment.
3. Create mechanisms to resolve intergovernmental tensions.

On Commonwealth's Role in Governance & Multilateralism

1. Strengthen Commonwealth commitments to multilateral cooperation.
2. Support Parliamentarians in global engagement and advocacy.
3. Leverage Commonwealth instruments (Charter, Harare, Millbrook) for good governance.

On Youth Roundtable – Empowering Young People Against Modern Challenges

1. Co-create youth-led strategies for protection and empowerment.
2. Strengthen laws and programmes addressing online safety and violence.



3. Include youth voices in national policy design and implementation.

On CHOGM 2026: Inclusion through Gender & Accessibility, CHOGM outcome documents should;

1. Mainstream gender and accessibility.
2. Increase the representation of marginalized groups in policymaking.
3. Adopt people-centred and inclusive approaches in preparatory processes.

5.0 RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 41ST CPA SMALL BRANCHES CONFERENCE/WORKSHOPS

5.1 Conference Resolutions/Key Outcomes

On World Café Dialogue: Challenges, Priorities & Roadmap:

1. Reinforce oversight and scrutiny as pillars of trust.
2. Build resilience to climate, misinformation, and security threats.
3. Enhance digital capacity and inter-parliamentary collaboration.

On Public Accounts Committees (PACs): Roles, Challenges & Solutions

1. Establish PAC secretariats for expertise.
2. Reduce government dominance on PACs.
3. Increase disclosure requirements for Members.
4. Enhance public engagement in oversight.
5. Create a standing Commonwealth PAC agenda for future meetings.

On Work-Life Balance & Mental Health for Parliamentarians

Discussion on Stress from long hours, scrutiny, limited wellbeing support, Strategies for balance and continuous professional development.

1. Introduce parliamentary wellbeing programmes.
2. Encourage planning, prioritization and delegation.
3. Use CPA online academy for continuous learning.
4. Promote uptake of the CPA Mental Health Toolkit.



On Human Rights & Colonial Legacy Laws - Discussions on Whether colonial-era laws remain relevant or require repeal.

1. Reform colonial laws through inclusive, people-centred processes.
2. Uphold constitutional stability and international obligations.
3. Strengthen collaboration between Parliament, civil society and judiciary.
4. Commit to modernization of justice systems across the Commonwealth.

6.0 RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED DURING THE 9TH COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS (CWP) CONFERENCE/WORKSHOPS

6.1 Conference Resolutions/Key Outcomes

On Gender-Sensitive Parliaments, discussions were on; breaking systemic barriers to women's participation and using CPA Gender Sensitizing Guidelines.

1. Implement gender-sensitization frameworks in all Parliaments.
2. Conduct gender audits using the Seven-Step Field Guide.
3. Promote leadership pathways for women MPs.

On "Debate Not Hate": Digital Harassment Against Women MPs

Discussions were held on online abuse, misogyny, intimidation of women MPs and need for protections within political spaces.

1. Develop policies addressing cyber-harassment.
2. Promote respectful political discourse.
3. Create institutional safeguarding mechanisms for women MPs.

On Reforming Discriminatory Laws against Women

Deliberations were made on Review of discriminatory legal frameworks across the Commonwealth and the Launch of the new UN Women-CPA Handbook.

1. Use the new Handbook to identify discriminatory laws.
2. Commit to targeted legislative reforms.
3. Strengthen evidence-based reform and public accountability.



On a Joint Workshop (CWP/CPwD) – Women with Disabilities in Politics discussions were held on structural, cultural and personal barriers to political participation with reflections from women with lived experience.

1. Improve accessibility in political party systems and Parliament.
2. Promote affirmative measures for women with disabilities.
3. Create inclusive, barrier-free political environments.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The Members of the delegation extend their sincere appreciation to the Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament and the Clerk to Parliament for facilitating their participation in the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.

The delegation further prays that the House adopt this Report, and that the relevant Committees and Ministers critically study the resolutions with a view to adapting them for the improvement of service delivery.



Endorsement of the Report by the Delegation Members

NO	NAME	Constituency	Signature
1	Hon. Okupa Elijah	Kasilo County	
2	Hon. Laura Kanushu, MP	PwDs, Western <i>Nahorua</i>	
3	Hon. Lukyamuzi David Kalwanga, MP	Bussuju County	
4	Hon. Kayanga Baroda, MP	Kamuli Municipality	
5	Hon. Bernard Odoi	Youth Eastern	