

## Press Release

For immediate release, 15 March 2016

### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) marks Commonwealth Day 2016

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has marked **Commonwealth Day 2016** both in London at the CPA Secretariat and across the CPA regions and branches.

**Her Majesty The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth and Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association** attended celebrations in London to mark Commonwealth Day 2016 and attended one of the largest multi-faith celebration services in Westminster Abbey along with **Hon. Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP, Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee** and Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh accompanied by **Mr Akbar Khan, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**, Commonwealth High Commissioners, the Commonwealth Secretary-General and dignitaries from around the Commonwealth as well as senior politicians and 1,000 school children.



Also attending the service were 40 young people from across the Commonwealth who were attending the CPA Commonwealth Day Youth Programme on the theme of 'An Inclusive Commonwealth'. The young people represented the following CPA Branches: **Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, New South Wales, Alderney, Falkland Islands, Isle of Man, Jersey, Malta, St Helena, UK, Wales, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos, New Zealand and Malaysia.**

The CPA Youth Programme included a tour of the UK Houses of Parliament; a presentation by a High Commissioner in London - **Ms Peggy McLennan - Guyana Acting High Commissioner** – on the '*The Commonwealth in London: What does the work of a High Commissioner or UK Representative involve?*'; a presentation by two UK Members of Parliament on the work that they do in Parliament - **Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods MP** and **Mr Ian Little-Grainger MP**; an address on 'An Inclusive Commonwealth' by **Vijay Krishnarayan, Director of the Commonwealth Foundation.**

In addition, CPA Branches across the network of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association marked Commonwealth Day in many different ways. For example, the CPA Australian Capital Territory

#### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

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

T: 44-20-7799-1460 | F: 44-20-7222-6073 | Website: [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org) | Email [hq.sec@cpqh.org](mailto:hq.sec@cpqh.org)

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Branch hosted an event at the Canberra Museum and Gallery, bringing together High Commissioners and other representatives from Commonwealth member countries, school captains and principals from ACT colleges with **Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT.**

The UK Parliament marked Commonwealth Day 2016 in a number of ways including an adjournment debate in the main chamber of the House of Commons secured by the **Chair of CPA UK, Iain Liddell-Grainger MP** on the theme of 'Commonwealth Day' which debated the work of the CPA.

Commonwealth Day has been celebrated around the Commonwealth on the second Monday in March every year since the 1970s.

**-Ends-**

### **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.

Images are available via [https://www.flickr.com/photos/cpa\\_hq/sets/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/cpa_hq/sets/)

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### **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](mailto:jh@cpahq.org)

Visit the CPA Secretariat website at [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org)

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