

THE 4TH COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PARLIAMENT

6-10 September 2011

London



Youth Parliamentarians in front of the Commonwealth Secretariat Headquarter, with Commonwealth Secretary General Dr. William Shija and Commonwealth Dep. Secretary General Ms.Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba

Aim and Objectives

Aim: To hold a Youth Parliament with good representation from across the Commonwealth

Objectives:

- To give participants the opportunity to participate in a range of parliamentary processes
- To promote the benefits of parliamentary democracy
- To encourage participation in the political process
- To encourage 'Youth in the mainstream of Commonwealth thinking and activity'
- To educate the participants about the work and priorities of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
- To consider important policy areas for Commonwealth parliamentarians, with particular emphasis on Climate Change
- To encourage cross-cultural interaction and teamwork
- To involve and engage young Commonwealth Diaspora in the UK
- A gender balance of participants
- To encourage and facilitate future networking opportunities for participants

BACKGROUND

The 4th Commonwealth Youth Parliament (CYP) was held in London, UK from the 6th to 10th September. The CYP is being co-hosted by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariat (CPA Secretariat). A total of 200 young people were involved aged 18-29. The young people represent two groups; young people from around the Commonwealth nominated by their home Parliament and young people representing Commonwealth Diaspora communities in the UK. This is the fifth annual youth event in the House of Lords Chamber.

The CPA was founded in 1911 and so this year 2011 is celebrating its centenary. It includes over 180 parliaments and legislatures in Commonwealth countries. The CPA is the voice of parliamentary democracy across the Commonwealth.

The CPA Secretariat, based in Westminster, maintains close relations with all Branches and promotes liaison and cooperation among them. The CPA gives Commonwealth Parliamentarians the opportunity to contribute in a global setting to the development of best parliamentary practice and effective policy making, through sharing information and experiences and debating policy issues of global relevance.

Program

The official welcome and briefing session was on Tuesday 6th September, where the participants met the Rt. Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst who is the Chairperson of the CPA International and CPA UK, the Secretary General, CPA Secretariat Dr. William F. Shija and Mr Andrew Tuggey; Director CPA UK. The participants also get time to meet other participants.



The second day participants were briefed in their party groups, there were two parties the Young Democratic Party (YDP) is the Governing Party and the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA) is the official Opposition Party. Each party then elects its leaders as Prime Minister, Ministers, Leader of Opposition and shadow Ministers.

In the afternoon the participants were briefed on Oral Parliamentary Questions in the House of Commons (including Prime Minister's Question Time) and the House of Lords. This session was conducted by the Senior Clerk of the House of Commons, Miss Tracey Jessup and Ms Susannah Street who is the Registry Clerk, House of Lords. Throne speech was delivered by the Secretary General, CPA Secretariat Dr William Shija. Followed by a forum with the Speaker of the House of Commons, the youth asked him a lot of questions about the way in which he manages debates in the house and also maintain perfect order and most interestingly the challenges he faced in the job.

The main activity on the third day is the debate on the throne speech, this motion was selected by the Opposition Party.

Opposition motion:

1. That this house believes there should be free and compulsory education for all and vocational training up the age of 18 for all citizens.

The final day, morning session is committee Meetings. Participants volunteer to be in two committees and this was given especially to back benchers. The committees used the Parliaments

Committee Rooms to meet. The two committees were the *Youth Unemployment Committee* and *Sport Committee*.

After the lunch the main debate in the House of Lords on the motion:

‘This House believes that commonwealth land should reduce its Carbon Emissions by 10% by 2050’



The debate was chaired by the Lord Speaker Rt Hon Baroness D’Souza, the youth parliamentarians were joined by the Commonwealth Diaspora Parliamentarians on this day to debate on the issue. There were a lot of contributions for and against the motion, Solomon Islands fully support the motion since many of our islands are currently undergoing sea level rise because of all the activities carried out in the industrial west. Each participant was given 3 minutes to contribute to the debate, the opening speech was given by the Prime Minister and leader of Opposition.

The four day program was a full experience of the parliamentary procedures and debates in the house. Participants were given first-hand experience and feel of the world of politics. The range of Parliamentary activities were significant in preparing young politicians for the future, these activities include, caucusing, committee hearings, question time and finally to sit and debate in the House of Lords.

