

CPA News

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Commonwealth Parliamentary Association commemorates 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) joins citizens across the world to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ‘magna carta’ for all mankind, adopted by the UN General Assembly on this day in 1948. Parliaments are the cornerstones of national protection systems and play a critical role in ensuring a State’s compliance with their international human rights obligations and, critically, share a responsibility with other branches of State to protect, respect and fulfil human rights.



The CPA has engaged in the global discourse on a strengthened role for Parliaments and Parliamentarians in the field of human rights for a number of years. Between 2013 and 2016, the CPA, in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat, convened regional capacity building seminars for Parliamentarians, aimed at strengthening their understanding of their role in the promotion and protection of human rights at the national, regional and international levels. These seminars led to the adoption of three regional declarations: The *Mahé Declaration* (Africa), the *Kotte Declaration* (Asia) and the *Pipitea Declaration* (Pacific). The declarations commit Parliamentarians from the African, Asian and Pacific Regions to active engagement with international and regional human rights mechanisms. A joint report entitled ‘*The Global Human Rights Implementation Agenda: the role of national parliaments*’ was recently published by the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Human Rights Unit in partnership with the CPA and the Universal Rights Group. This publication recognised the longstanding collaboration of the CPA and the Commonwealth Secretariat in the area of building the capacity of national Parliaments in the implementation of human rights.

The CPA has marked the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in the latest issue of *The Parliamentarian*, the Journal of Commonwealth Parliaments which focuses on ‘human rights in the modern era’ and features articles on a wide range of human rights issues by leading Commonwealth Parliamentarians and global experts. The digital edition of the publication is available online via www.cpahq.org/cpahq/parliamentariancurrentissue.



The CPA also welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the Commonwealth Youth Orchestra and Choir (CYO) in using the CYO’s Commonwealth Music Competition 2018 as a means of using the arts as inspiration to deliver on the goals of the UDHR. To achieve this, one part of the competition will be to write a song that reflects the values of the UDHR. This demonstrates Commonwealth organisations working collaboratively to promote human rights in the Commonwealth.

Photo caption: The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan with Commonwealth Music Ambassador and the winner of the Commonwealth Music Competition 2016, Simon Haw, MBE at the launch of the Commonwealth Music Competition 2018 in Westminster.

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For further information about the **Commonwealth Youth Orchestra and Choir** (CYO), please visit <http://www.commonwealth-music.net/>

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association** (CPA), now in its 107th 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.

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