



**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION  
AFRICA REGION SECRETARIAT**

Parliament Building,  
P. O. Box 941, Dodoma, Tanzania  
Tel: (+255-26) 23 22761-5  
E-mail: cpa.secretariat@bunge.go.tz

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5<sup>th</sup> March, 2025

Branch Presidents,  
Officers of the Association,  
Branch Secretaries,  
**CPA AFRICA REGION.**

**RE: RESOLUTIONS OF THE 3RD COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH  
DISABILITIES (CPwD) AFRICA REGION CONFERENCE LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**

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As you are aware, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Africa Region, was held from 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at Ciela Resort, Lusaka, Zambia.

I have the pleasure to circulate the Resolutions of the aforementioned Conference for your kind attention and necessary action.

Furthermore, kindly be reminded that, all Member Branches will be required to submit a report on the progress made in implementing these Resolutions before the next CPwD Africa Region Conference.

Baraka I. Leonard  
**REGIONAL SECRETARY**

## CPA AFRICA REGION



**RESOLUTIONS OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> CONFERENCE OF COMMONWEALTH  
PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES (CPwD) AFRICA REGION  
FROM 25<sup>TH</sup> TO 27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2025 AT CIELA RESORT  
IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**

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## RESOLUTIONS OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> CONFERENCE OF COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES (CPwD) AFRICA REGION

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The 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Africa Region was held from 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at Ciela Resort and Spa in Lusaka, Zambia, under the theme “**Breaking Barriers: Building Inclusive Parliaments for Persons with Disabilities**”. The conference brought together parliamentarians from national and sub-national branches, committed to the ideals of the Commonwealth generally and CPA Africa Region in particular.

**RECOGNIZING** the fundamental human rights and freedoms of all persons, including persons with disabilities, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa; and other relevant international instruments;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the valuable contributions of persons with disabilities to society and the imperative of their full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including political and parliamentary processes;

**EXPRESSING CONCERN** that persons with disabilities continue to encounter barriers hindering their effective participation in parliaments in the Commonwealth Africa Region;

**EMPHASIZING** the critical need for inclusive and accessible parliaments for persons with disabilities, both as members and as the public;

**WELCOMING** the progress made by some parliaments in the Africa Region in advancing the inclusion of persons with disabilities, while recognizing the need for sustained and intensified efforts;

**REITERATING** the commitment of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) to promoting good governance, democracy and human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities;

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Africa Region, having thoroughly considered the four thematic topics, hereby **RESOLVES** as follows:

## **Topic 1: Technology, Digitization, and its Use for Empowerment and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the African Context**

1. **Encourage** African Parliaments to leverage technology and digitization to empower and include persons with disabilities, ensuring accessibility of parliamentary information, processes, and services through assistive technologies, accessible websites, and universally designed digital platforms.
2. **Urge** African Parliaments to undertake comprehensive capacity-building programs to equip parliamentarians and staff with the skills and knowledge necessary for the effective utilization of assistive technologies and accessible digital platforms.
3. **Further urge** African Governments to collaborate with organizations of persons with disabilities and technology experts to prioritize the development and implementation of impactful digital inclusion strategies.
4. **Furthermore urge** African Governments to include disability mainstreaming discussions on Artificial Intelligence.

## **Topic 2: Accessibility in Action – Designing Physical Spaces for Inclusive Parliaments**

1. **Advise** African Parliaments to adhere to universal design principles in the construction and renovation of parliamentary buildings, ensuring physical accessibility for all persons with disabilities, including ramps, elevators, accessible chambers, accessible restrooms, and clear, universally understood signage.
2. **Further advise** African Parliaments to regularly conduct accessibility audits to proactively identify and address barriers within the physical environment.
3. **Urge** African Governments to undertake meaningful consultations with persons with disabilities prior to procuring any equipment or aids for use by persons with disabilities.

## **Topic 3: Policy Pathways – Effective Strategies for Implementing Disability Inclusion in Parliament**

1. **Encourage** African Parliaments to develop and implement comprehensive disability inclusion policies and action plans, aligned with the CRPD, articulating clear goals, targets, and measurable indicators for monitoring progress.
2. **Further encourage** African Parliaments to ensure that disability inclusion policies encompass all facets of parliamentary work, including employment, parliamentary procedures, and public engagement.

3. **Urge** African Parliaments to allocate adequate financial resources to ensure the effective implementation of disability inclusion policies.

#### **Topic 4: Culture Shifts – Changing Attitudes Towards Disability in Political Institutions**

1. **Advise** African Parliaments to implement awareness campaigns and training programs to combat stigma and negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities among parliamentarians, staff and the general public.
2. **Encourage** African Governments to promote initiatives that showcase the contributions and capabilities of persons with disabilities thereby fostering a culture of respect and inclusiveness of persons with disabilities.
3. **Urge** African Parliaments to actively champion disability rights and advocate for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.
4. **Further urge** African Parliaments to enact legislation that promote inclusiveness of persons with disabilities in the political and other spheres of life.

#### **General Resolutions**

1. The CPA Africa Region Secretariat in collaboration with CPA Headquarters shall continue to support and facilitate the work of the CPwD Network Africa Region, providing necessary resources and technical assistance to parliaments in implementing these resolutions.
2. African Parliaments shall report to the Regional Secretariat on the progress of the implementation of these resolutions.
3. The CPA Africa Region Secretariat shall include a segment for Members to report back on the implementation of the resolutions of the previous Conference.
4. The CPA Secretariat shall circulate proposed topics of the next Conference to members to reflect emerging issues, at least one month before the next Conference, for approval.
5. This Conference calls upon all Commonwealth Parliaments in the Africa Region to fully implement these resolutions and actively contribute towards building genuinely inclusive Parliaments for persons with disabilities.

These resolutions were adopted on **Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025** by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Africa Region , held in Lusaka, Zambia.

### **Resolution Committee**

1. Hon. Hicklin Madeleine Bertine, MPL- South Africa - Chairperson
2. Senator Crystal Asige - Kenya
3. Hon. Joel Chibuye, MP – Zambia
4. Mr. Thomas Shawa – Tanzania
5. Mr. Alexander Kafwata – Zambia