

## **CPA AFRICA REGION**



**THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION**

**(AFRICA REGION)**

**RULES OF THE COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS (CWP) AFRICA  
REGION (2009)**

**as amended, 2015, Dares Salaam, TANZANIA**

**as amendment, 2016, Balaclava, MAURITIUS**

**as amendment, 2017, Owerri, Imo State, NIGERIA**

## THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

### (AFRICA REGION)

#### Rules of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region 2009

**WE**, the members of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region;

**AFFIRMING** that the social, political and economic status of the people of Africa, particularly women, be enhanced;

**CONCERNED** *that inadequate structures and mechanisms exist, to assist women as individuals, improve their socio-political economic status and enhance the collective lot of the region and also that illiteracy and poverty among the people of Africa has destroyed the integrity and confidence to fight and overcome the challenges for basic human needs;*

**AND REITERATING** our resolve and commitment to enhance women's social, political and economic wellbeing through-

- (a) collective action;
- (b) building the commitment and capacity of women to exercise their rights and to face challenges in proper perspectives;
- (c) sharing information, lessons learned and best practices;
- (d) undertaking research to highlight illiteracy, poverty and health in the
- (e) Region; and
- (f) cooperation with other organisations, civil society and the media with shared objectives;

**DO HEREBY ADOPT** these Rules for the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Africa Region:

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# **PART I**

## **PRELIMINARY**

1. **Title**

These Rules shall be cited as the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (Africa Region) Rules.

2. **Commencement**

The Rules shall come into operation upon adoption at an Annual Conference of the CWP.

3. **Application of CPA constitution**

Unless otherwise stated, relevant provisions of the CPA Constitution shall apply to the operation of the CWP and where an inconsistency exists between the Rules and the CPA Constitution, the provisions of the CPA Constitution shall prevail.

4. **Interpretation**

In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Chapter” means a CWP association at a National Branch or Sub-National Branch;

“CPA” means Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Africa Region);

“CWP” means Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (Africa Region)

“Host branch” means the National Branch or Sub-National Branch hosting a CWP event

“Member” means Member of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (Africa Region);

“Sub-Region” means Southern Africa, East Africa, West Africa or Central Africa as defined in CPA Africa Region Constitution.

## PART II

### MEMBERSHIP, AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

#### 5. **Membership**

Membership to the CWP is open to:

- (a) Female Parliamentarians; and
- (b) Former female Parliamentarians

#### 6. **Aims and objectives**

The aims and objectives of the CWP are to:

- (a) ensure that the fight against gender inequality is mainstreamed in the programs of CPA;
- (b) promote within the Commonwealth and beyond, the interests and gender perspectives of women of Africa;
- (c) promote gender equality and equity at all levels of human development;
- (d) promote respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms of individuals;
- (e) raise gender awareness in National and Sub-National Branches as defined in CPA Africa Region Constitution among both men and women;
- (f) lobby for increased representation of women in positions of power and decision making in Africa;
- (g) strive for the eradication of all factors that hinder the development and advancement of women;
- (h) lobby for the ratification and implementation of International and Regional instruments on the emancipation of women;
- (i) conduct research on women issues; and
- (j) promote the creation of partnerships between female and male Parliamentarians on the emancipation of women.

## 7. **Activities**

In pursuance of its aims and objectives, the CWP shall, among other things, carry out the following:

- (a) hold an Annual Conference, which shall have ultimate authority on the policy and management of CWP;
- (b) hold seminars and workshops as resolved by the Conference, which shall be hosted by a volunteer Branch;
- (c) arrange for meetings of the Steering Committee;
- (d) oversee the launch of Chapters;
- (e) publish reports; journals and newsletters on various activities relevant to the CWP;
- (f) raise funds for the implementation of projects of the CWP in line with its aims and objectives; and
- (g) invite, at its discretion and on such conditions such other organisations or persons to address Members to participate in its activities.

## **PART III**

### **SUB ORGANS OF CWP**

## 8. **Establishment of Sub-Organs**

The following sub-organs of the CWP are hereby established:

- (a) Chapters;
- (b) Sub-Regions
- (c) Annual Business Meeting, and
- (d) Annual Regional Conference.

## 9. **Composition of the CWP Steering Committee**

(1) The CWP Steering Committee shall be composed of the following Members:

- (a) CWP Chairperson;
- (b) CWP Vice Chairperson
- (c) CWP Sub-Regional Representatives; and

- (d) any other female Member of Parliament from the Region who is an Officer of the Association either at the Regional or International level.

(2) The Member in paragraph (d) shall be an ex-officio Member.

## 10. **Functions of the Steering Committee**

The functions of the Steering Committee shall be to:

- (a) act as a conduit, and source of information, on CPA and CWP matters, between the CPA Africa Region Executive Committee and women in a Sub-Region;
- (b) encourage Women Parliamentarians to participate in the activities of CPA as delegates, panelists or plenary speakers;
- (c) lobby delegates to CPA Conference to consider electing a woman as a Regional Representative at a time determined in consultation with the host Branch, the agenda for a CWP Meeting or Conference;
- (d) ensure that at every Annual CPA Africa Region Conference, there is a gender related topic;
- (e) promote the formation of Chapters of the CWP in CPA Branches;
- (f) meet, prior to a Conference or Meeting, for purposes of assessing any progress made by the Chapters and to put forward proposals for further action; and
- (g) deliberate on reports submitted by Sub-Regional Representatives.

## 11. **Election of Office Bearers**

(1) Office Bearers shall be elected as follows:-

**(a) the CWP Chairperson shall be elected by the Annual Conference of the CWP and shall hold office for a term of three (3) years;**

**(b) The CWP Chairperson shall be elected by the Annual Conference of the CWP and shall hold office for a term of two (2) years;**

(c) CWP Sub-Regional Representatives shall be elected after every three (3) years by Sub-Regions rotating among the Chapters as

per the roster which ensures that at least two (2) Sub-Regional Representatives are at every election for continuity.

- (2) A person shall be qualified to be elected to any of the above offices if she is a Member of;
  - (a) the Legislature in which that Branch is formed; and
  - (b) a Branch of the CPA which enjoys full rights within the CPA.

## 12. **Functions of Office Bearers**

- (1) The Chairperson shall:
  - (a) be the official spokesperson of the CWP on all matters affecting the policy of Women Parliamentarians in the CPA;
  - (b) oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan; and
  - (c) perform such other functions as maybe required.
- (2) The Vice Chairperson shall perform the functions of the Chairperson as assigned.
- (3) Sub Regional Representatives shall:
  - (a) ensure Chapters are formed in all Branches and Sub-Branches;
  - (b) organize Sub-Regional Meetings and submit reports; and
  - (c) visit Chapters in their Sub-Regions to ensure they are functional.

## 13. **Chairperson to Preside at Meetings**

- (1) The Chairperson, or if absent, the Vice Chairperson, shall preside over the Meetings of the CWP Steering Committee.
- (2) In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, the Members of the CWP Steering Committee shall elect a Member from amongst themselves to act as a Chairperson and to preside over the Meeting.



## **PART IV**

### **CONFERENCE GUIDELINES**

#### **14. Conference Guidelines**

There shall be Conference guidelines to be adopted by the Conference and shall come into effect on such date as the Conference may decide.

#### **15. Notice of Conference**

The Regional Secretariat shall ensure that the notice of Conference, in writing, is received by each Branch not later than ninety (90) days before the date of the Conference.

#### **16. Arrival at Conference or Meeting**

(1) A CWP Steering Committee Member shall be required to arrive in a host country two (2) days before the commencement of the Conference or Meeting.

(2) The host country shall clearly indicate, in the invitation letters, the extent to which it shall meet the Conference expenses in respect of Steering Committee Members.

#### **17. Reports to Conference**

#### **18. Decisions of the Conference**

(1) Subject to paragraph (2) decisions of the Conference shall be by consensus.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), where consensus cannot be reached, a decision shall be made by simple majority vote by eligible Members.

- (3) In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote in addition to her deliberative vote.

## **PART V**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **19. Networking**

For purposes of co-ordination among CWP Steering Committee Members and Delegates, the secretary shall compile profiles of all CWP Members and ensure their distribution to all Members.

#### **20. Funds of CWP**

The funds of the CWP shall comprise of:

- (a) budgetary allocations from the Region;
- (b) donations from Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations;
- (c) donations from Delegates for social events at a Conference; and
- (d) donations from individuals.

#### **21. Branch on Suspension**

A Branch that is in abeyance or on suspension shall not be eligible to participate in the activities of the CWP.

#### **22. Amendment**

Any amendment to the Rules shall be effected at the Annual Conference and shall be supported by at least two-thirds of the Branches present and eligible to vote.