

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY AT THE CAPACITY  
DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP FOR SECRETARIAT STAFF AND SCHEDULE  
OFFICERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION  
AFRICA REGION FROM 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, 2023  
ARUSHA, TANZANIA**

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**Mr. Jarvis Martiya,**  
Deputy Secretary General of CPA,

**Mr. Daniel Eliufoo,**  
Assistant Regional Secretary,

Resource persons

Workshop Participants

Invited Guests

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

First and foremost, I thank the Almighty God for making it possible for all of us to meet here in good health. Allow me at the outset to extend a very warm welcome to all participants to Tanzania in general and to our tourist city of Arusha in particular. I understand that the majority of participants had to travel long distances from your countries to reach Arusha. I request you to feel at home as you are among brothers and sisters. I welcome all participants to this important and historic capacity development workshop for secretariat staff and schedule officers of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association - Africa Region. You will all agree with me that we hardly find time to meet on our own. Indeed, on many occasions, we meet in conferences, Workshops and Seminars that involve only Members of Parliament. And in such occasions our role is always reduced to that of accompanying officials or delegation Secretaries. And as you all know, in those situations we normally do not speak except to listen and advise behind the scenes.

### **Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

I also wish to thank most sincerely the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) for the honour and importance he has attached to this Workshop. I am aware of the multiple demands competing for his time. Nevertheless, he has been generous to designate his immediate Assistant - the Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Jarvis Matiya to attend and facilitate this Workshop. Through you, Mr. Deputy Secretary General we thank him very much. Last but not least, I thank the Resource Persons for readily agreeing to come and facilitate this Workshop.

### **Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

One of the objectives of the CPA African Region is to promote transparency and accountability in the operation of the Region's organs and bodies in all member countries. To realize this objective requires concerted efforts of each and everyone in the Region: Members of parliament, the Regional Secretariat, Schedule officers and other stakeholders. Each one of us must be aware of his/her obligations and carry them out with dedication and professionalism. As secretariat staff and schedule officers, you are at the forefront of this mission, working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the smooth functioning of parliamentary activities. Your dedication and expertise enable parliamentarians to fulfil their roles effectively.

### **Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

The CPA Africa Region consists of three Regional bodies and four Regional organs as per Article 14 of the constitution. These bodies and organs convene meetings and conferences in which important decisions are made and resolutions adopted. The implementation of those decisions and resolutions is the responsibility of the Regional Secretariat in collaboration with schedule officers. In other words, the success of the Region is mandated to us. One of the pre-conditions to achieving this mammoth responsibility is to have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding of our roles. This workshop has therefore been

organized to enhance our skills, knowledge, and understanding of various areas that are relevant to your roles. The skills and knowledge gained from this Workshop will enable you to serve the needs of our member parliaments better and strengthen parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth.

**Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

As you are all aware, the CPA promotes good governance, democracy, and human rights across our diverse member countries. As secretariat staff and schedule officers, you are at the forefront of supporting the work of parliamentarians and facilitating effective parliamentary processes. Your dedication and expertise are vital in ensuring our member parliaments can fulfil their democratic mandate.

**Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

Furthermore, I would like to emphasize that this workshop is not just about acquiring new knowledge and skills. It is also about building relationships and networking with a view to fostering collaboration. I am convinced that the connections you make here can serve as valuable resource throughout your careers. By working together, sharing ideas, and supporting one another, we can strengthen our collective efforts towards promoting good governance, democracy, and accountability across the Commonwealth.

**Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

As I have highlighted earlier in my remarks, this workshop has been designed to provide valuable insights, tools, and techniques to enable you to excel in your roles. Over the course of this workshop, you will have an opportunity to engage in interactive sessions and learn from experienced facilitators and experts in parliamentary affairs. In this respect, the topics covered in this workshop have been carefully selected to address key areas of importance for secretariat staff and schedule officers. These include: -

- (a) An overview of the role and functions of CPA Scheduled Staff/liaison officers;
- (b) Team Building and Effective Work Coordination in the context of CPA;
- (c) Effective Report Writing and Research Skills; and
- (d) Effective Professional Development and Programme Coordination in the CPA.

I am hopeful that recommendations that will arise out of discussions will go a long way in improving your operations. For my part, I wish to assure you that I will do my utmost to implement those recommendations.

**Workshop Participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

The Swahili have a saying “Kawia ufike” translated, better late than never. For far too long, our focus in terms of training has concentrated on members of Parliament. That is fine because they need capacity building to be able to carry out their constitutional mandate of law making, representation and oversight. We also need to give sufficient attention on upskilling the staff (the permanent members) to enable them become custodians of institutional memory. I will therefore endeavor to organize Seminars and Workshops like this one in future whenever need arise, and resources permit.

**Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed in one way or the other in making this Workshop a success. Your dedication and hard work have made this event possible, and I am confident it will be a resounding success. I also commend the EALA for hosting us in these beautiful premises.

**Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

To conclude, I wish to once again, reiterate my warm welcome to all of you to this beautiful city of Arusha, famously known as **Geneva of Africa**. I request you all to make the most of this opportunity for professional development. Take advantage of the

knowledge and expertise available to you during this workshop. Let us strive to enhance our skills, broaden our perspectives, and ultimately contribute to advancing parliamentary democracy in the Commonwealth. Together, let us strive towards building stronger and more effective parliaments that can truly represent the aspirations of our people.

**Workshop participants, Ladies and gentlemen,**

Before I officially declare the workshop open, I have one earnest request to make. Arusha Town is a gateway to our Northern tourist circuit. From here one can travel with ease to our famous world class tourist attractions such as the Magnificent Ngorongoro Crater, the Serengeti National Park and the Kilimanjaro- the highest free standing Mountain in the World. I therefore argue you to find time after this Workshop to sample the beauty of the natural heritage we are endowed with.

After those remarks, I now have the pleasure to declare the Workshop for Secretariat officials and Schedule officers officially open.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Nenelwa J. Mwihambi, *ndc*  
**REGIONAL SECRETARY**

14<sup>th</sup> November, 2023