



**RESOLUTIONS OF THE 47TH COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION (CPA) AFRICA
REGION CONFERENCE HELD IN BALACLAVA, MAURITIUS
BETWEEN 22ND AND 27TH AUGUST, 2016**

August, 2016

**RESOLUTIONS OF THE 47TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION (CPA) AFRICA REGION CONFERENCE
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We, delegates to the 47th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Africa Region), assembled at Intercontinental Hotel, BalACLava, Mauritius from 22nd to 27th August, 2016 representing national and sub-national branches of the CPA in the sub-regions, guided by our commitment to promote democracy, sustainable development, rule of law and good governance, peace, justice and strong political institutions, deliberated on the theme: - *“Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals: the role of Parliaments”*.

noted that on 25th September, 2015, 193 countries of the United Nations adopted a set of 17 goals and 169 targets with the objective of ending poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring prosperity for all by the year 2030;

acknowledged that the Sustainable Development Goals are essentially leveraging on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals adopted by 185 countries of the United Nations in September 2000 with a 2015 deadline to improve the lives of the world’s poorest of the poor;

observed that there is a co-relation between economic empowerment of women and sustainable development;

noted that forging partnerships between government and non-government actors is an important strategy that will ultimately increase stakeholder influence in terms of policy formulation, programme implementation, resource allocation, priority setting, monitoring and feedback mechanism as well as consensus-building;

also noted that water scarcity presently affects more than 40 per cent of people around the world, with a projection that by 2050, at least 1 in 4 people are likely to be affected by recurring water shortages;

recognised the paradox that although 60% of the African Continent is covered by transboundary river basins, one third of the population still suffers the challenge of acute water scarcity;

acknowledged that out of 2.4 billion people worldwide who have no access to proper sanitation facilities, 695 million are in Sub-Saharan Africa;

aware that the availability of clean water and sanitary facilities have clear linkages to health, food security, climate change and environmental disasters;

also aware that there is a nexus between peace building, conflict resolution and sustainable development;

concerned that curricula and other educational materials on Youth sexual and reproductive health in schools across Africa are either lacking or inadequate, leading to the incidence of unwanted pregnancies, early marriages and resurgence of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents;

also concerned that globalization and the internet revolution have unintended negative consequences such as the proliferation of pornographic materials amongst the youth;

aware that the government of Nigeria has so far rescued 55 of the 218 girls who were kidnapped since April 2014 at Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State of Nigeria;

acknowledged that education is one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and contributes to a country's social and economic wellbeing;

mindful that fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions are causing drastic changes in the climate and environmental pollution;

determined to evolving a parliamentary agenda for economic transformation in Africa through access to affordable and clean energy by the year 2030;

also determined to implement Sustainable Development Goals which seek to ensure universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix;

committed to the transformation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from the status of a Charity under the laws of the United Kingdom (U.K) to an International Organisation;

also committed to the principle of Sovereignty of nations, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association commended and supported the Government of Mauritius for the legitimate steps it has taken to challenge the Governments of the United Kingdom and United States of America for the occupation of the Chagos Archipelago, culminating in tabling the case for sovereignty of the Chagos Islands before the International Court of Justice by way of a U.N General Assembly Resolution;

do hereby RESOLVE to: -

- (a) **Economic Empowerment of Women as a Strategy for poverty reduction: forging partnerships between Government and Non-Government Actors**
- (i) **endorse** the United Nations post 2015 Development Agenda as a framework for social development, environmental sustainability and inclusive economic development;
 - (ii) **urge** governments in the Region to target economic empowerment of Women by ensuring more equitable access to public assets and services, employment opportunities, infrastructure, pro-poor and gender-sensitive programmes;
 - (iii) **further urge** governments in the Region to integrate gender perspectives in policy designing and programming, especially through quotas for women in decision making positions;
 - (iv) **advise** African governments to forge increased partnerships and dialogue with non-governmental actors to eliminate all cultural practices that hinder women from inheriting or owning land, homes and other assets or natural resources;
 - (v) **ensure that** gender dis-aggregation data and gender responsive budgeting become part of financial processes at all levels and in all countries in Africa;
 - (vi) **encourage** women currently in leadership positions to mentor young women and to create awareness campaigns aimed at combating negative gender stereotypes that limit women participation in politics;

- (vii) **urge** Parliaments to enact legislation prescribing the marriage age to be a minimum of 18 years;
 - (viii) **recommend** governments to adopt an inclusive educational system to eliminate the education gap between men and women;
- (b) **Policy options for ensuring access to water and sanitation for all by the year 2030**
- (ix) **urge** African Governments to respect and implement the several International Protocols and Conventions on responsible use of water such as goal 7 of Millennium Development Goals 2000, goal 6 of Sustainable Development Goals 2015, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational use of International Watercourses 1997, Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, 1992 and African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources 1969;
 - (x) **encourage** Parliaments to enact legislation to end open defecation, improve water quality by reducing pollution, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, provision of public sanitation facilities, support and strengthen the participation of local communities in integrated water and sanitation management;
 - (xi) **request** African Parliaments to formulate National Policies on Water development and sanitation to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation to majority of their citizens while considering affordability;
 - (xii) **further request** Governments and the Region to discourage citizens from establishing slum settlements and squatter camps as well as educate them on the hazards of poor sanitation;

(c) **The role of Parliament in promoting peace, justice and strong socio political institutions**

- (xiii) **call on** Parliaments in Africa to promote peace, stability, human rights and rule of law regimes as important conduits for sustainable development;
- (xiv) **further call on** African Parliaments to enact legislations penalizing sexual violence, slave labour and torture as well as reduce the flow of drugs and illicit arms;
- (xv) **request** African Governments to establish and strengthen institutions that promote equal opportunities, national character, human rights and equity in the distribution of social services and opportunities, and to ensure that such institutions are properly funded, independent and functional;
- (xvi) **further request** African Parliaments to enact appropriate laws to strengthen independent Electoral Commissions to conduct free, fair and credible elections and to encourage participation by Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as well as other international organisations as observers;
- (xvii) **ensure that** Anti-Corruption Agencies are established in every jurisdiction in Africa to combat graft and corruption;
- (xviii) **also ensure that** African Parliaments participate in the process of entering into International Treaties, Protocols and Conventions;
- (xix) **encourage** African Parliaments to strengthen their conflicts resolution roles through their Public Petitions Committees;
- (xx) **request** Governments in the region to introduce Post trauma interventions to mitigate the suffering of victims of conflicts, crisis and wars;

- (xxi) **also request** Governments in the region to use music, arts, festivals and cultural heritage as a tool for promoting peace, unity and justice;
 - (xxii) **advise** African Governments to encourage freedom of movement for African people across the continent by abolishing visa entry requirements for citizens of African countries;
 - (xxiii) **continue the effort** to change the current status of the Association which inhibits its capacity to compete with other Associations for partner funding and participation in other multi-lateral formations;
 - (xxiv) **also advise** the Government of Mauritius to explore and exploit all legal, diplomatic and democratic avenues in their struggle to regain sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago;
- (d) **Introduction of sexual reproductive health education in schools as a tool for curbing sexually transmitted diseases and early marriages;**
- (xxv) **request** governments in the region to ensure integration of sexual reproductive health education in the school curricula;
 - (xxvi) **further request** governments in the region to ensure that instruction materials are age-appropriate, youth-friendly, medically accurate, culturally adapted and capable of fostering understanding of human sexuality, preventing sexual violence and transactional sex;
 - (xxvii) **prevail on** print and broadcast media to refrain from publishing inappropriate sexual materials;
 - (xxviii) **encourage** parents to inculcate family values in their children, especially respect for women and girls as well as to freely discuss sexual and reproductive health education issues with them;
 - (xxix) **urge** Parliaments in the region to strengthen legislation penalising rape, early marriages and all forms of child abuse and address other detrimental cultural and religious practices;

- (xxx) **ensure that** youths are included in policy development and implementation in an inclusive manner;
- (xxxi) **urge** the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and countries in the region to redouble efforts in terms of intelligence sharing and military action to rescue the Chibok girls from Boko Haram insurgents;
- (e) **A Parliamentary agenda for economic transformation in Africa through access to affordable and clean energy in Africa by the year 2030.**
- (xxxii) **urge** African countries to substantially invest in energy infrastructure and technology with a view to attaining increased access to affordable, reliable and modern energy for the greatest majority;
- (xxxiii) **further urge** African countries to forge inter-national cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology including renewable energy, energy efficiency and cleaner fossil fuel technology.
- (xxxiv) **emphasize** the need for exploring and exploiting the entire energy mix ranging from biomass, coal, wind, solar, fossil fuels and hydro-power in more responsible ways;
- (xxxv) **urge** all governments to seriously tackle the issue of deforestation which is actually paving an irreversible damage in Africa resulting in drought and other natural disasters;
- (xxxvi) **further urge** African countries to implement international protocols on renewable energy such as Abu Dhabi declaration on Renewable Energy for Accelerating Africa's Development and Sustainable Development Goals.

Adopted on Saturday, 27th August, 2016 in BalACLava, Mauritius

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

1. Hon. Polly Boshielo, MP (Speaker, Limpopo) - Chairperson
2. Hon. Dickson Tarkighir, MP (Nigeria) - Member
3. Hon. Veda Baloomoody, MP (Mauritius) - Member
4. Hon. Lobin Lowe, MP (Malawi) - Member
5. Hon. Kibalya Henry Maurice, MP (Uganda) - Member
6. Hon. Retselisitsoe Masenyetse, MP (Lesotho) - Member
7. Mr. Christopher Ashiekaa - Secretary.