



Press Release

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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker participates in the Commonwealth Day activities in London

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) celebrated Commonwealth Day 2019 both in London at the CPA Headquarters Secretariat and across the CPA's nine regions, and over 180 branches. The 2019 Commonwealth Day theme, 'A Connected Commonwealth' reflects the opportunities for the people, parliaments, governments and institutions of the Commonwealth to connect and work together at many levels through far-reaching and deep-rooted networks of friendship and goodwill. This year's celebration also marks the 70th anniversary from the London Declaration which on 28 April 1949 effectively gave birth to the Commonwealth.

CPA Small Branches Chairperson and Speaker Anġlu Farrugia, together with the CPA Secretary-General Akbar Khan and the Chairperson of the CPA International Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, represented the CPA at the service held on this occasion in Westminster Abbey. The service was also attended by Commonwealth High Commissioners, the Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland, QC and dignitaries from around the Commonwealth, as well as senior politicians and 1,000 school children.

Also attending the Commonwealth Day service were young people from across the Commonwealth who earlier in the day participated in the CPA Commonwealth Day Youth Programme with a theme of 'The role of youth in combatting climate change through political participation'.

Addressing young participants during a side event organised by the CPA, Speaker Farrugia spoke of the importance of tackling climate change in the 53 Commonwealth countries, especially its 31 small and developing states which are often the least polluting but the first casualties of climate change. He said that, "as former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says, when it comes to climate change, there is no plan B, since we do not have a planet B. Tackling the threats from climate change is a tremendous, unique opportunity in our history to show what humans have done best throughout the centuries: champion innovation and growth."

Speaker Farrugia also participated as a panelist in the roundtable discussion with the theme of 'The role of youth in combating climate change through political participation'. The discussion included a wide range of views on climate change from CPA Commonwealth Day Youth participants and from Commonwealth Parliamentarians who joined the discussion by giving an overview of the situation in the small branches and how they are affected by climate change: a rise in temperatures and increases in fresh water scarcity, forest fires, droughts and desertification as well as the phenomenon of migration. Speaker Farrugia also shared the situation in Malta and its role as a member of the European Union.