

**28th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Committee Meeting
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
3 November 2024**

Report on Developments in the Caribbean, Atlantic and The Americas Region (CAA)

Please continue on separate sheets where need be

	Name & Region
<p>1. Data on the number of women representatives</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Statistics in legislatures, executive, company boards</p> <p>Changes in representation following elections</p> <p>Affirmative Action policies, as they relate to quotas, constitutional, legislative, electoral changes</p> <p>Political Party Reforms and appointments of women within the Party Structures</p>	<p>The CAA region comprises of 17 of the 51 small branches of CPA.</p> <p>Of these 17 parliaments, women parliamentarians in Guyana account for 39.4% of parliament and Dominica stands at 37.5%.</p> <p>Below is the data on the number of women representatives, as of September 2024, based on IPU data. Where no data is shown for Upper house, the parliament is unicameral. Information is pending for the 6 branches which are British Overseas Territories.</p> <p>Guyana -39.4%</p> <p>Dominica – 37.5%</p> <p>Grenada- 31.3% (Lower House) Upper house is 30.8%</p> <p>St. Kitts and Nevis – 31.3%</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago – 28.6% (Lower House) Upper House is 40.6%</p> <p>Jamaica – 27.4% (Lower House) Upper House is 38.1%</p> <p>Barbados- 26.7% (Lower House) Upper House is 38.1%</p> <p>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – 21.7%</p> <p>The Bahamas – 18% (Lower House) Upper House is 31.3%</p> <p>Belize – 15.6% (Lower House). Upper House (28.6%).</p> <p>Saint Lucia-11.1% (Lower House) Upper House is 45.5%</p>

	<p>Antigua and Barbuda – 5.6% (Lower House) Upper House is 41.2%</p> <p>While the CAA has a long way to go in improving its share of women parliamentarians particularly in the lower house, it is noteworthy that Barbados and Guyana both have a gender gap index at 0.77 and Jamaica is at 0.76 (Source: Global Gender Gap Report, 2024 – World Economic Forum)</p>
<p>2. Information on elections that were held this year</p> <p>Including: Data on women Members that won and/or lost seats or appointed to new positions</p>	<p>Montserrat held General Elections in October 2024.</p> <p>Several other territories are expected to have elections in 2025.</p> <p>Earlier in the year in Belize, 2 female appointments in the upper house were replaced with male representatives. This now results in 3 female senators out of 13 senators.</p>

<p>3. Status of the CWP in regional constitutions</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Updates in Regional Constitutional changes and/or challenges where applicable</p>	<p>The CAA regional CWP has a draft constitution that requires further updating before it can be tabled at the 2025 annual general meeting of the CAA for adoption.</p> <p>Proposed changes will address the quorum for meetings of the steering committee, definitions and the composition of the steering committee for compliance with the system of rotation established by the regional ExCo and the Regional Secretariat.</p>
<p>4. CWP Regional Structure</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Updates on changes and/or challenges to Regional CWP Structures</p>	<p>As per the draft constitution and what has been in practice, the CAA region of 17 branches is broken down into 3 categories (A, B, C).</p> <p>The Membership of the CWP CAA Region Steering Committee is comprised of 2 representatives from each Group in accordance with the system of rotation established by the CAA ExCo.</p> <p>The Chair and Steering Committee members comprise the Steering Committee. The Chair of the CWP CAA region's term is for three years and the position of Chair rotates from branch to branch in the region based on the rotation chart as established by the CAA ExCo and the Regional Secretariat.</p> <p>Belize concludes its chair role at the 67th CPC. As per the system of rotation, St. Vincent and the Grenadines should assume the new role of Chair for the next 3 years and a new regional steering committee should be established in accordance with the rotation chart.</p>

<p>5. Regional Conference – What role did CWP play?</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Updates on changes and/or challenges to holding a regular CWP meeting at CPA Regional Conferences</p> <p>Updates on Regional CWP activities</p>	<p>The CWP regional strengthening funds have been instrumental in the CAA region hosting annual regional workshops in St. Lucia (2021), Jamaica (2023) and Belize is scheduled for November 27th 2024. Workshops are in hybrid format.</p> <p>CWP presented at the CAA 14th CWP regional conference in Guyana (September 3rd and 4th) on the Gender Sensitive Parliament toolkit and provided information to parliamentarians present on how it works and how they can access assistance/guidance via CPA’s CWP secretariat.</p> <p>On November 27th, Belize with the assistance of the Regional Strengthening Funds will host a one-day forum for the region (hybrid format) on Ending Gender Based Violence promoting the awareness of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination and Violence against Women (CEDAW). In addition to the Regional Strengthening Funds, Belize is getting support from the UN based offices in Belize.</p>
<p>6. CPA International Executive Committee – does your region have a female Member?</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Updates on changes to Regional Representatives to the CPA International Executive Committee</p>	<p>Since the change in CPA constitution, one of the regional reps on the International Executive Committee is now a woman parliamentarian.</p> <p>For the CAA region, the female representative is Hon. President Dessima Williams (Grenada).</p>

<p>7. Initiatives linked to CWP Mission Statement <i>To promote the representation of women in CPA Branches and women's full and equal participation in all political and parliamentary leadership at all levels</i> undertaken by Parliaments and/or Regions</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Legislation, Resources, Gender Sensitive Parliament Self-Assessments, Inter-organisational strategies, Intra-Ministerial and Civil Society Cooperation and all other strategies.</p>	<p>The 14th CWP regional conference was held September 3rd and 4th 2024 in Guyana in the margins of the annual regional conference.</p> <p>The sessions at the conference included presentations on Gender Sensitive Parliaments, Healthcare access for Women and Girls and the Experiences of Women Presiding Officers in Parliaments.</p>
<p>8. The Contribution of women parliamentarians to The Parliamentarian journal article</p>	<p>Senator Hon. J Lashell Adderley , President of the Senate of The of Bahamas, contributed to the July 2024 Issue with the article "<i>Prioritising Economic Empowerment for women to achieve gender equality and poverty reduction in The Bahamas</i>".</p> <p>For the October publication, Hon. Cora Richardson Hodge of Anguilla contributed the article on "<i>The Nature of Good Governance in Small Jurisdictions</i>" by</p>

<p>9. Other</p> <p>Including, for example:</p> <p>Strategies to Overcome Gender Inequality</p> <p>Education Gender Quotas Leadership programmes Childcare Mechanisms to prevent political violence Equal access to Party resources Coordination with other like-minded Women’s organisations</p>	<p>Earlier in 2024 (August), Guyana passed into law its legislation on Family Violence.</p> <p>Belize in October introduced the bill to amend the Marriage Act to allow for the legal age of a marriage to now be set at 18 years (up from 16). A new Sexual Harassment legislation was passed in the House of Representatives.</p> <p>In February 2024, the National Women’s Commission Act was enacted. The National Gender Policy 2024 -2030 was approved in April 2024. It aims to promote an inclusive and progressive approach to working towards gender equality and equity. The main priority areas are: Health, Education, Income Generation for Women, Combatting Domestic Violence, Encouraging Women in Decision Making and Institutional Strengthening.</p>
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Any Additional Comments: The main challenge for the CAA region is getting updates and feedback from the branches to the Secretariat so that activities and data on CWP for each branch can be regularly updated which would provide for timely reports.

The Regional Secretariat is working with Branch Secretaries on updating the CAA website.