



The 27th Conference

of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC)

03 to 06 January 2024

Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort, Kampala



COMMONWEALTH SPEAKERS TO ASSEMBLE IN KAMPALA

By Vision Reporter

The Speaker of Parliament, Anita Among, has assured the world that Uganda is ready to host the 27th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC).

Among, who is the Chairperson of CSPOC Standing Committee on November 24, 2023 met with High Commissioners to brief them on the conference and later addressed a press conference.

She requested the High Commissioners to embrace the conference. "This conference can only be a success once you communicate to your speakers and presiding officers how ready we are, how secure the country is and how beneficial this conference will be for your country and Uganda," Among said.

"The Uganda we are in is the Pearl of Africa. When visitors come to Uganda, they have visited East Africa. When we host as Uganda, we host as East Africa," she added.

The conference will run



Speaker Anita Among (Front row, third right) with some of the High Commissioners at Parliament

between January 3 and 6, 2024 at the Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort.

The objectives of the conference are to foster, maintain and encourage impartiality and fairness on the part of speakers

and presiding officers of Parliament.

Among explained that the organising committee had identified suitable hotels for the delegates, who will also be entertained by traditional dancers

from different parts of the country.

Five topics are lined up for discussion at the conference, including one on, *Building Consensus for Parliamentary Business, the Role of Speakers and*

Presiding Officers.

She enumerated the benefits of the conference, such as; strengthening of ties between the Commonwealth Parliaments, increased awareness about Uganda's

peace, security, business and tourism.

The Speaker called upon the media to promote the good image of the country. President Yoweri Museveni will open the conference on January 4.



Lucien Lamoureux

LUCIEN LAMOUREUX: THE ARCHITECT OF CSPOC

By Vision Reporter

The late Honourable Lucien Lamoureux founded the Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) in 1969.

Lamoureux was the then Speaker of the House of

Commons of Canada. Lamoureux (August 3, 1920 - July 16, 1998) was a Canadian politician and Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada from 1966 to 1974.

He is the second longest-serving occupant of that office. Described as a lawyer, diplomat

and parliamentarian, he distinguished himself in his role as Speaker of the House of Commons, having served three times in the position, a remarkable precedent in itself.

Lamoureux served as speaker during two minority governments, 1965-1968 and 1972-1974,

experiences that required him to maintain authority and neutrality in a situation where no party had control of the House.

He became the longest serving Speaker in the history of the Canadian House of Commons, surpassing the record set by Rodolphe Lemieux.

In September 1973, Lamoureux announced that he would not run in the 1974 election, and retired from Parliament.

On October 12, 2009, Peter Milliken surpassed Lamoureux's record to become the longest-serving occupant of the speaker's chair.

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

By Vision Reporter

There are increasing concerns that parliaments have become places for politicians and not places for the public. Are our parliaments truly representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective?

The presiding officers of parliament represent the breadth of parliamentary systems in the Commonwealth and are from some of the smallest to the largest of nations.

Presiding officers have roles to play in security, e-parliaments and in leading innovation among others.

They have a role of promoting parliamentary diplomacy in the era of globalisation, ensuring executive accountability through the oversight role of parliament.

They address emerging challenges for speakers such as multi-party chambers, the minority and coalition governments and strengthening the independence of parliament.

It is inevitable that adversarial politics will play itself out in parliament, as both sides seek either to maintain its advantage based on majority. They try to demonstrate that the electorate made a serious error in rejecting them. Differences may be expressed in a civilised manner or may be the cause of hostile behaviour.

With that in mind, one may regard as necessary the accustomed repartee that has been associated with debates in parliament. What would sittings be without it.

When one considers the weighty responsibility that comes with representing the peoples' interest? It takes the edge off acerbic remarks which might otherwise do serious damage to peace, in the august chambers of parliament.

Modern technology has exposed physical assault in parliaments when passions become uncontrollable, to the amazement of those who are accustomed to using words as the weapon of choice rather than fists.

CURBING POLITICAL BIAS
Arbiters in parliament, which in some way

THERE ARE INCREASING CONCERNS THAT PARLIAMENTS HAVE BECOME PLACES FOR POLITICIANS AND NOT FOR THE PUBLIC. ARE OUR PARLIAMENTS REPRESENTATIVE?

PHOTO BY PARLIAMENT PRESS UNIT



The Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Thomas Tayebwa (Second left) attending the CSPOC 2023 in Australia

describes the role of speakers and presiding officers, are necessary and impartial ones at that. Every representative, elected or appointed, must have the assurance that political bias will not prevail in the conduct of parliamentary matters.

It is unreasonable, however, to expect that speakers and presiding officers will be free of personal political choices.

It is necessary for speakers and presiding officers to ensure that rules are observed and that order is maintained in their respective Houses. But this is not an end in itself. While it is clear that chaos must not be allowed in the conduct of the Parliament, keeping order cannot be the principal objective.

ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth is a family, large, diverse and far-flung. While the members may be separated geographically, every member is bound to one another by shared values of democracy, free speech, human rights, and the rule of law, even as each carves out its own unique path for itself and for its people.

Like any family, they have had differences over the years, albeit supporting one another in difficult times and celebrated

THE CSPOC PROMOTES DEMOCRATIC AND PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS. IT PROVIDES A FORUM IN WHICH SPEAKERS OF COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTS CAN DISCUSS BEST PRACTICES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE LEGISLATURES

achievements. The governments, institutions and people connect on a number of levels. They work together to protect the natural environment, the ocean which they share and that connects many of

these nations. They cooperate on trade to encourage economic empowerment for all people, in particular women and youth and marginalised communities. They take part in academic

exchanges and friendly sporting competitions. They encourage young people to participate in sport for development and peace. The Commonwealth is an important tool for action for parliamentarians seeking change.

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

The Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth promotes democratic and parliamentary institutions. It provides a forum in which speakers of Commonwealth parliaments can discuss best practices in their respective legislatures.

This flexibility allows the presiding officers from large and small, old and newer countries of the Commonwealth to meet and discuss issues

from their own unique perspectives. They see and learn from one another and strengthen the Commonwealth bond.

They discuss a variety of themes; from transparency to adaptability, from security to inclusiveness, learn how their experiences have shaped their parliaments and how others can benefit from their knowledge.

All deliberations are aimed at ensuring that they clarify and re-affirm their roles in ensuring the core purpose and values of parliamentary democracy, namely transparency and accountability, are never compromised.

They use the opportunity to renew their contract with the citizens we represent by keeping the flame of hope that is at the centre of all democratic principles accessible, active and alive.

They can address the growing diversity among global citizens as evidenced by the increasing trend towards multi-party chambers and coalition governments.

In this way, they hope to emphasise the unique role of presiding officers in ensuring that these diverse needs and interests are equally addressed. The conference encourages participants to re-commit to the important role of democracy in global development, and inspires us to hold fast to its ideals, shared the world over.

These are; the right to live free from fear and want, as well as the right to yearn for lives marked by dignity, opportunity, security and justice.

PHOTO BY PARLIAMENT PRESS UNIT



Mathias Mpuuga, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament

PHOTO BY PARLIAMENT PRESS UNIT



Robinah Nabbanja, Prime Minister and Leader of Government Business in Parliament

FACES BEHIND CSPOC 2024

By Vision Reporter

Uganda was confirmed as the host of the 27th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth at the last (CSPOC) in Canberra, Australia in January 2023 where Speaker Anita Among was appointed as chairperson of the standing committee.

CSPOC membership is restricted to speakers and presiding officers of national parliaments of all independent sovereign states of the Commonwealth. It consists of 22 bicameral parliaments and 30 unicameral parliaments.

Following the commitment to host this conference, a coordination committee chaired by Abdu Katuntu (Bugweri County, Independent) and consisting of Mwine Mpaka (Mbarara South Division, NRM) and James Kaberuka (Kinkizi County West, NRM) was established to coordinate the preparations.

In addition, sub-committees consisting, Members of Parliament and technical staff were established to assist in the preparation of the various activities of the conference.

These are; conference management, conference secretariat and documentation, IT support, accommodation, transport, media and publicity, protocol, medical and first aid, entertainment, excursion and tourism, spouses and accompanying persons, gifts and souvenirs, security and accreditation.

Following the establishment and constitution of sub-committees, several meetings of the expanded coordination committee involving sub-committee chairpersons and secretaries and meetings with the various stakeholders in addition to the meetings of sub-committees have been held.

The entities involved in supporting the conference include: Civil Aviation Authority, Uganda Revenue Authority, Uganda Revenue Authority, Directorate of Immigration and Citizenship Control, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, and Uganda Tourism Board and

NATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE



Speaker Anita Among Deputy Speaker Thomas Tayebwa



Eric Musana



Juliet Achayo



Dan Atwijukire



Esther Afoyochan



Tony Awany



Prossy Akampurira



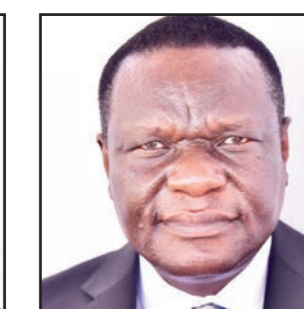
Charles Ayume



Lucy Akello



Henry Kibalya



Felix Okot Ogong

all security organisations that are Special Forces Command, Uganda Police Force and Internal Security Organisation. Budgets and work plans from the all sub-committees were discussed and harmonised to avoid duplication of activities and tasks. These were incorporated in the budget

of the Parliamentary Commission for the current Financial Year 2023/24. This high level event comes with increased tourism hits, and its attendant dividends for the small, medium and large scale investors across the tourism value chain. Speakers and presiding officers will hold bilateral

and multilateral meetings and these are expected to strengthen ties between the different parliaments around the Commonwealth. CSPOC enhances globalisation and creates opportunities for cooperation especially in areas of economics, public affairs, security and general Parliamentary diplomacy.



Cecilia Ogwal



Moses Magogo

COORDINATION COMMITTEE

LEADERSHIP OF #CSPOC 2024 SUB-COMMITTEES

- Hon. Martin Ojara Mpenduzi/Hon. Prossy Akampurira (Accommodation)
- Hon. Esther Afoyochan/Hon. Felix Okot Ogong (Conference Management/Conference Secretariat/Documentation)
- Hon. Maurice Kibalya/Hon. Esther Afoyochan (Entertainment, Excursion and Tourism)
- Hon. Cecilia Ogwal/Hon. Lucy Akello (Gifts, Souvenirs, Spouses and Accompanying Persons)
- Hon. Moses Magogo/Hon. Andrew Ojok (ICT Support)
- Hon. Eric Musana/Hon. Dan Atwijukire (Media and Publicity)

- Hon. Charles Ayume (Medical and First Aid)
- Hon. Dicksons Kateshumbwa/Hon. Juliet Achayo (Protocol)
- Hon. Charity Bainababo/Hon. Tony Awany (Security and Accreditation)
- Hon. Solomon Silwany (Transport)

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FACES BEHIND THE CONFERENCE

FROM PAGE III



Andrew Ojok



Charity Bainababo



Martin Ojara Mapenduzi



Dicksons Kateshumbwa



Solomon Silwany



Henry Waiswa, Deputy Clerk/Head of Uganda CSPOC Secretariat

THE CHARACTER OF CSPOC

By Vision Reporter

Since its inception, Canada has provided CSPOC with a secretariat to support its activities.

CSPOC brings together the Speakers and Presiding Officers of the national parliaments of the independent sovereign states of the Commonwealth.

CSPOC is an independent group and has no formal affiliation with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Commonwealth Secretariat or the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

CSPOC operates on a two-year cycle, holding a conference of the full membership every two years, usually early in January, and a meeting of the standing committee at the same time.

Currently, CSPOC membership consists of 74 Speakers and Presiding Officers of national parliaments from 52 Commonwealth Countries.

The Speaker of the Australian House of Representatives, Milton Dick, said during the 26th CSPOC held in Australia that the role of the conference is to ensure both sides, the Government and the Opposition have equal opportunity to express their views.

The 24th CSPOC was opened by President

Danny Faure of Seychelles on January 9, 2018 at the Savoy Hotel in Seychelles.

Faure said that the objectives of the CSPCO are critical for the continued development of member countries including; the maintenance, fostering and encouraging of impartiality on the part of Speaking and presiding officers of Parliaments.

Others are; the promotion of knowledge, understanding of parliamentary democracy and the development of parliamentary institutions.

Political commentators have noted that there are increasing concerns that Parliaments have become places for politicians and not places for the public.

Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Pandikar Amin Mulia, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Malaysia during a CSPOC conference



Phandu Tombola Chacha Skelemani - Speaker, Botswana

TECHNOLOGY HAS EXPOSED PHYSICAL ASSAULT IN PARLIAMENTS WHEN PASSIONS BECOME UNCONTROLLABLE

held in Malaysia on January 11, 2016 expressed concern about the unbecoming behaviour of MPs.

Technology has exposed physical assault in Parliaments when passions become uncontrollable, to the amazement of those who are accustomed to using words as the weapon of choice rather than fists.

Prof. George Maxwell Richards, the President of Trinidad and Tobago at the opening of the 21st CSPOC held on Monday January 9, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency



Bridgid Annisette-George - Speaker, Trinidad and Tobago

Hotel in Port of Spain, said that it is inevitable that adversarial politics will play itself out in Parliament.

This is because both sides seek either to maintain its advantage based on majority, or to demonstrate that the electorate made a serious error in rejecting them.

Richards noted that differences may be expressed in a civilised manner or may be the cause of rambunctious, if not hostile behaviour.

He further observed that arbiters in Parliament, which in some way describes the role of speakers and presiding officers, are necessary and impartial ones at that.

He emphasised that every representative, elected or appointed, must have the assurance that political bias will not prevail in the conduct of Parliamentary matters. But he added that



Alban Suman Kingsford Bagpin - Speaker, Ghana

it is unreasonable to expect that speakers and presiding officers will be free of personal political choices.

"It is necessary for speakers and presiding officers to ensure that rules are observed and that order is maintained in their respective Houses. But this is not an end in itself".

"While it is clear that chaos must not be allowed in the conduct of the Parliament, keeping order cannot be the principal objective," Richards explained.

Greg Fergus, the Speaker of the House of Commons during the 25th CSPOC held in Canada, said that the Commonwealth is a family, large, diverse and far-flung.

"While we may be separated geographically, every member is bound to one another by shared values of democracy, free speech, human rights, and the rule of law, even as



Nosiviwe Noluthando Mapisa-Nqakula - Speaker, South Africa

each carves out its own unique path for itself and for its people".

Fergus noted that like any family, we have had our differences over the years, but we have also supported one another in difficult times, and celebrated our achievements.

He said that CSPOC not only promotes democratic and Parliamentary institutions, it also provides a forum in which Speakers of Commonwealth parliaments can discuss best practices in their respective legislatures. In relation to that, this flexibility allows the presiding officers from large and small, old and newer countries of the Commonwealth to meet and discuss issues from their own unique perspectives.



Seah Kian Peng - Speaker, Singapore