

Commonwealth backs commitment to good local governance

Commonwealth Heads of Government have affirmed the *Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth principles on good practice for local democracy and good governance* (the Aberdeen principles) as one of the Commonwealth's core values and principles alongside key political principles such as the Harare Declaration.

The Aberdeen principles and the importance of local government in democratic governance were incorporated in the *Trinidad and Tobago Affirmation on Commonwealth Values and Principles*, agreed at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Trinidad and Tobago in November

This high level endorsement means that the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and its members can step up their advocacy and support for adherence to the principles – which include free and fair local elections, transparency, accountability and the principle of subsidiarity. The Aberdeen principles were the outcome of discussions at CLGF's 2005 Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Aberdeen. They present a set of standards for healthy local democracy and good governance.

The Heads of Government statement also welcomed CLGF's work with the Commonwealth Secretariat to promote best practice and democratic culture and their communiqué welcomed the Freeport Declaration, the outcome of this year's

Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Freeport, Grand Bahama in May 2009.

As a Designated Commonwealth Organisation, CLGF had an official delegation to CHOGM and was represented by: Mayor Murchison Brown, Chair of the Trinidad and Tobago

'Heads of Government noted the continuing work of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum to promote effective and transparent local governance in member countries. In this context they welcomed the CLGF's Freeport Declaration – *Improving Local Government: The Commonwealth Vision* as well as the CLGF's programme in the Caribbean and other regions of the Commonwealth.'

Association of Local Government Authorities and Mayor of Port of Spain; Dr Bishnu Ragoonath, University of the West Indies; and CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright. CLGF Vice-Chairperson Hon Hazel Manning, Minister of Local Government, Trinidad and Tobago, was also on hand to give additional support.

After the summit CLGF Chairperson Mayor Zenaida Moya-Flowers, said

"CLGF's mission is to support democratic local government throughout the Commonwealth. This affirmation of our principles for good local governance means that CLGF now has an even stronger mandate to do this. We hope that it will allow us and our members to extend or assessment and monitoring to

support national and local governments in improving local democracy."

"The communiqué welcomes CLGF developing a regional programme in the Caribbean and other regions of the Commonwealth. This supports the outcomes of the recent review of CLGF which recommended the strengthening of capacity-building programmes with our partners on a regional basis."



Preparing for CHOGM: Hon Hazel Manning meets Carl Wright

CLGF Board meets in Botswana

The 2010 CLGF Board meeting will be held in Gaborone, Botswana on 25-26 February 2010 preceded by a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 24 February. The meeting is being hosted by the Botswana Minister of Local Government and CLGF Board member Hon L T Mokalake.

CLGF is also supporting a two-day seminar on *Strengthening Local Government for Effective Service Delivery and Sustainable Development* for local government practitioners from Botswana on 22-23 February at which a number of Board members will make presentations to give an international perspective.

A meeting of local government ministers from Southern Africa will also take place in Gaborone alongside the CLGF meetings.

Hon James Burty David

With great sadness, CLGF has to report the untimely death of Hon James Burty David, Minister of Local Government of Mauritius and long-standing member of the CLGF Board. Mr Burty David died on 13 December and a state funeral was held on 15 December.

Secretary-General Carl Wright said: "I and all my colleagues at the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, are deeply shocked and saddened at the sudden and untimely death of our friend and colleague, James Burty David. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family, his colleagues and indeed the entire people of Mauritius. We have lost a true champion of local democracy in the Commonwealth who was always ready to assist.

Hon Burty-David hosted a meeting of the CLGF Policy and Resources Committee in Mauritius in October.

Commonwealth news in brief

Rwanda becomes Commonwealth's 54th member

Commonwealth leaders agreed to admit Rwanda as a member of the Commonwealth at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on 28 November 2009. They welcomed Rwanda as the 54th country member. Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamallesh Sharma visited Rwanda in January as the first official visit where he met with Rwandan President Paul Kagame, who he presented with a Commonwealth flag to mark Rwanda's admission to the association.

The CHOGM communiqué also refers to the possibility of Zimbabwe rejoining the Commonwealth when conditions are appropriate.

Pacific slow on gender balance

Progress towards achieving gender balance in the Pacific has been slow according to a recent report produced jointly by the CLGF, International Women's Development Agency and the United Nations Democracy Fund.

The report was launched at a meeting of the Fiji Local Government Association in Nadi at the end of January.

In terms of local government, the report says that on average local governments have higher representation of women, but nevertheless only 6.9 per cent in the Pacific compared to 20.9 per cent internationally. Women in senior management roles comprise less than 25 per cent of the workforce and only two out of 12 chief executive officers are women.

Provinces now responsible for local government in Pakistan

Responsibility for local government in Pakistan was transferred to the provinces on 31 December 2009 as per the constitution. Local government elections, which has been due to be held in October, were postponed pending this transfer. Each province is now assessing its own local government legislation for the future, but in the meantime many are appointing administrators in place of the elected councils.

Provincial local government associations have now been set up in four provinces in Pakistan and these are pressing for early elections in each of the states. CLGF has been working closely with the Local Councils Association of the Punjab, which was the first association to be established, and with partners from Canada and the UK to support the call for local elections as soon as possible.

Partnerships for development

Secretary-General's introduction



CLGF had a resounding political success at the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting where, as is reported in this *Bulletin*, the role of local government and our own activities received significant endorsement from all Prime Ministers and Presidents. We must now build on this achievement by forming a range of strategic partnerships - an approach backed by these leaders.

By developing our current working partnerships we will now look towards a strategic partnership with a number of key organisations including: with the Commonwealth Secretariat, so as to maximise resources and avoid duplication; with other Commonwealth institutions such as the Commonwealth

Parliamentary Association, with which we have recently collaborated in Malawi; with the Commonwealth Foundation, which brings in civil society; and with key country and international development partners such as UNDP, UNCDF, UN-Habitat, the EU, UK DFID, CIDA, AusAID and NZAID. Our cooperation and partnership working is also now extending to new partners such as the Inter-American Development Bank with whom we are working in the Caribbean.

The focus of these partnerships will be the development of CLGF technical and other support for our members in the regions of the Commonwealth - Africa, Asia, Europe, the Pacific and the Caribbean. As Southern Africa is one

region where CLGF hopes to significantly expand its operations, I am very pleased that our 2010 Board meeting is being held in Botswana. Botswana is an African success story - in its political stability, its economic progress and its commitment to local democracy and decentralisation. Our important meeting in Gaborone is a reflection of the esteem in which the Botswana model of governance, and local governance, is held in the Commonwealth and beyond. I hope that it will also result in a much-strengthened CLGF programme in the region, designed to take forward the powerful mandate given to us by our leaders in Trinidad.

Carl Wright, Secretary General, CLGF

Responding to the review of CLGF

CLGF is beginning a series of regional consultation on its mission and vision to refresh its mission statement and strategic framework to develop a longer-term business and financial plan in response to the recent strategic review of the organisation.

The first consultation will take place with members from Africa alongside the forthcoming CLGF Board meeting in Botswana; other regional consultations will follow.

CLGF will also be consulting members and partners on its governance arrangements. It is also looking at how a shift to more regional projects will be reflected in the governance arrangements.

The review - to look at whether the

current structures and operation of CLGF is best serving its members needs - was initiated at the CLGF Board meeting in May. Professor Michael Clark and Prof Dinesh Mehta carried out the review, and reported their recommendations to the CLGF Policy and Resources meeting in October. This highlighted a number of areas where CLGF should be strengthened including refreshing the mission/vision and core values, review of governance arrangements and management structures, better communications with members and stakeholders, especially about CLGF's priorities and activities, and developing a medium-term financial plan to set a more robust financial base.

Progress on responding to the review recommendations will be presented to the CLGF Board in Botswana.

Support for Seychelles

CLGF has been supporting the Seychelles government in revising its decentralisation policy and local government legislation, which will include the establishment of democratic local councils, as part of its local government reform programme.

CLGF sponsored a visit by Mauritius Ministry of Local Government Permanent Secretary Mr B Boyramboli and a colleague from local government to provide technical advice on the reforms. The two countries have much in common as small island states in how to approach local government reform and further exchanges between the two countries are planned.



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Sharing good practice to strengthen local government

Six more projects are now under way as part of the UK DFID-funded Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme.

■ **South Africa-UK:** A new project between the Local Government Association for England and Wales (LGA) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) is now underway. A team of councillors and officers from both organisations are taking part in an extensive peer review of the operations of a national association of local government, to help support SALGA's role in strengthening South Africa local government.

■ **South Africa-India:** Two new projects have started between Mopani and Trivandrum, and Vhembe and Gondal.

Both projects focus on local economic development, with the former exploring links between sustainable agriculture and economic growth.

■ **India-UK:** Cardiff Council and Vadodara Municipal Corporation successfully completed their first project missions in December. The project draws extensively on the practical experience gained by Cardiff in their massive Cardiff Bay development project, applying this experience to the challenges of river and waterfront management in Vadodara.

■ **Ghana-UK:** In March, Kent County Council will undertake the first visit of their partnership with Mfantseman Municipal Assembly, to share experience on how to maximise the engagement of

local communities in local economic development activities, and develop strategies for supporting activities there.

■ **Jamaica-UK:** Kingston and St Andrew corporation are working with the London borough of Lewisham to develop their use of ICT to improve their services delivery, and better enable their engagement with the community.

■ **Sierra Leone-UK:** Hastings Borough Council have begun work under the Good Practice Scheme with their namesakes, Hastings in Western District, Sierra Leone. This project will build the councils' historic links, and aid in the development of a strategy for improving the region's waste management.



A delegation from Mbombela municipality, South Africa, including the mayor, visit one of Sunderland City Council's job linkage centres which have helped place 10,000 local people into local jobs over the last 11 years. The delegation visited Sunderland in December to share experience and see what lessons can be learned from Sunderland's success in creating employment as part of CLGF's Good Practice Scheme. They are hoping that the information gleaned during the visit will help them tackle their own 43 per cent unemployment rate. They also went to a training centre to see examples of the employability programmes the council runs.

And for Sunderland, the boot is on the other foot: with Mbombela's largest city, Nelspruit, preparing to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Sunderland, hoping to be named as a 2018 World cup host city, was able to benefit from their experience to help with their preparations.

Good practice for Papua New Guinea

A new three-year programme has been agreed for the Australia - Papua New Guinea (PNG) Good Practice Scheme for 2010-2013. The programme is designed to help build capacity at local government level and improve the management and delivery of services to communities in PNG. It is being managed from the CLGF sub-office in Port Moresby.

The programme will build on previous Good Practice Scheme programmes there, linking councils in the two countries to share skills and jointly implement practical projects to enhance the urban quality of life through improved governance, accountability and service delivery by local government in PNG.

The four partnerships that were built up in the first phase of the scheme (Mount

Hagen-Orange, Lae - Cairns, NCDC-Townsville and Alotau-Nossa) will be consolidated and new projects introduced and supported. The programme will also support the PNG urban Local Level Government Association and disseminate learning and outcomes from the technical partnership projects through information sharing and training seminars.

News in brief

Study visits to UK highlight community leadership

This February, CLGF is hosting two delegations from CLGF member Indian Ministry of the Panchayati Raj, the ministry responsible for the rural local councils. The groups will be making visits to UK councils, including Birmingham City Council, Kent County Council, and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, as well as meeting with key figures at the England and Wales LGA, the Audit Commission, and Government Office of the West Midlands. These study visits have been developed in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and UNDP, as an opportunity for participants to share expertise on multi-level government and community leadership.

Strengthening support for councils in Zimbabwe

CLGF, the Local Government Association of England and Wales (LGA), and the Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA - which brings together the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe and the Association of Rural District Councils) are holding a roundtable in Harare on 18-19 February to strengthen a programme for technical support to councils, restoring local infrastructure and helping community-level reconciliation. CLGF has been working with ZILGA and the LGA to identify the areas where support is most needed, provide capacity support of ZILGA and liaise with external partners and potential funders. The EU and other donors have already agreed some funding. Several non-Commonwealth associations, including from the Netherlands and Sweden, will participate in the event.

CLGF joins expert group on sub-national finance

CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright has been invited to be a member of a technical expert group on sub-national finance and fiscal sustainability set up by the Inter-American Development Bank and attended its first meeting in Washington on 21-22 January. This reflects a greater IDB focus on decentralisation and capacity-building in the Americas, and the Caribbean.

Pacific urbanisation documentary

A documentary on urbanisation in the Pacific called *City lights are calling* was launched in December 2009, in Suva.

The documentary was a collaborative project between the FSPI and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum Pacific Project, with technical assistance provided by the SPC and funded by NZAID.

The documentary will help the central governments, stakeholders and those living in urban centers to understand the complexity of the challenges faced by local governments and councils and the need for them to play their part in supporting their local governments and councils in tackling the challenges of urbanisation.

Malawi makes progress on local governance

CLGF, in partnership with the Malawi Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, and in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, organised a national workshop on building effective local governance and democracy in December as part of a programme of assistance and advice to the Malawi government on strengthening local government.



Hon Goodall Goodwe

The workshop was an opportunity for MPs who had participated in the study visits to Uganda and Zambia to share and discuss their recommendations. They highlighted the need to clearly define the roles of all stakeholders in local government – councillors, officials and traditional leaders. The MPs also recommended that a parliamentary committee be established in Malawi to help MPs to play a more strategic oversight and monitoring role in the future.

Speaking at the event, Hon Goodall Goodwe, Minister of Local Government, re-emphasised the Government's commitment to decentralisation, and his aim to see

an improved local government, better able to deliver more effectively in line with the expectations of local communities across the country.

The Malawian participants from local and central government and civil society welcomed the opportunity to exchange views and experiences with practitioners from Zambia, Uganda and South Africa. Mayor Capa from South Africa highlighted the importance of the elected mandate at a local level, and the resulting direct accountability to the people. Colleagues from Zambia and Uganda focused on the potential role that local government associations can play in supporting councillors and in ensuring that the

views of local government can be part of the policy making process; Namumba Mpatanji cited the recent involvement that the Zambia Association had recently had in the constitutional review process and Hon Iga from Uganda emphasised the importance of clarity of roles between MPs and councillors.

Following this, in January CLGF expert Michael Sander visited the country to provide technical advice and support to the government on amending legislation so that local government elections can take place in Malawi this year; there have been no democratically elected councillors there since the councils were dissolved in 2005.



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- Cllr Leonard B Bihondo, Chairman, Association of Local Authorities of Tanzania
- Cllr John Karazaarwe, President, Uganda Local Government Association, Uganda (*alternate*)
- Hon Ibrahim Jalo-Waziri, National President, ALGON, Nigeria
- His Worship Cllr Herbert A George Williams, Mayor, Freetown City Council, Sierra Leone (*alternate*)
- Hon Senator Lindiwe Dlamini, Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Swaziland
- Hon L T Mokalake, Minister of Local Government, Botswana (*alternate*)
- Hon. Adolf Mwesige, Minister of Local Government, Uganda +
- Hon Celina Ompehi Kombani, Minister of State for Regional Administration and Local Government, Tanzania (*alternate*)
- Hon Daouda S Kamara, Minister of Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development, Sierra Leone (*alternate*)

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- Mayor Milton Brown, Association of Local Government Authorities, Jamaica (*alternate*)
- Mayor Ms Zenaida Moya-Flowers, Belize City Council (*Chairperson*)+
- Mayor Murchison Brown, Chairman, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Local Government Authorities (*alternate*)
- Hon Hazel Manning, Minister of Local Government, Trinidad and Tobago (*Vice-Chairperson*)+
- Hon Senator Julian Francis, Minister of Housing, Informal Human Settlements, Physical Planning and Land Surveys, St Vincent and the Grenadines (*alternate*)
- Hon Robert Montague, Minister of State for Local Government, Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica +
- Hon Bryan Woodside, Minister of State for Lands and Local Government, The Bahamas (*alternate*)

Asia-Pacific

- Muhammad Ghazanfar, Finance Secretary, Local Councils Association of Punjab
- Mayor Upul Nishantha, President, Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities, Sri Lanka (*alternate*)

- Cllr Lawrence Yule, President, Local Government New Zealand +
- Cllr Geoff Lake, President, Australian Local Government Association (*alternate*)
- Hon Kouraiti Beniato, Minister of Internal and Social Affairs, Kiribati
- Hon Anthony Albanese, Minister for Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Australia (*alternate*)
- Dato' Seri Kong Cho Ha, Minister of Housing and Local Government, Malaysia

- Hon Ahmed Mujthaba, State Minister, Maldives (*alternate*)

Europe

- Lord Hanningfield, Local Government Association of England and Wales, UK +
- Dr Lazaros Savvides, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Cyprus (*alternate*)

Members at large

- Cllr Rodney Berman, Leader, Cardiff Council, UK
- Cllr April Crowther-Gow, President, Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities
- Mayor Irving John, Castries City Council, St Lucia (*alternate*)
- Father Smangalis Mkhathswa, President, United Cities and Local Government of Africa
- Ratu Peni Volavola, former Mayor of City of Suva, Fiji (*alternate*)

Associates

- Assoc Prof Graham Sansom, Centre for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, Australia +
- Dr Philip Amis, International Development Dept, University of Birmingham, UK (*alternate*)
- Dr Bishnu Ragoonath, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago
- Prof P S Reddy, University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa (*alternate*)

Co-opted

- Hon Joseph Yieleh Chireh, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana
- Hon Dr Eustarckio Kazonga MP, Minister of Local Government and Housing, Zambia
- Hon Kumari Selja, Minister for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation and for Tourism, India

Ex-officio

- Basil Morrison (*Immediate Past Chairperson*)+
- Carl Wright, *Secretary General* +
- Simon Baker, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, UK *Hon Treasurer*+

What's on..

February 2010

- 24 **CLGF Africa members consultation on strategic review**
- 24 **CLGF sub-committee on strategic review, Gaborone, Botswana**
- 25 **CLGF Policy and Resources Committee meeting, Gaborone, Botswana**
- 25-26 **CLGF Board meeting, Gaborone, Botswana**

March 2010

- 22-26 **World Urban Forum, Right to the City—bridging the urban divide, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; www.unhabitat.org/WUF**

April 2010

- tbc **CLGF Inclusive Cities Network forum, Hyderabad, India**

May 2010

- 24-25 **CLGF European members meeting, Malta**

For further information visit www.clgf.org.uk or contact: info@clgf.org.uk.