



# Commonwealth Association of Planners

3 February 2010

CAP Vice Presidents  
Presidents of Member Institutes

Dear Colleagues,

## **COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS : UPDATE ON COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING**

The past year was a very positive one for CAP, with a number of activities beginning to come together, and so I thought that it would be a good time to write to you to update you on what has happened. Specifically I want to report on the outcomes of CAP's attendance at CHOGM in Trinidad, as it is this link to our Heads of Government which makes our network unique.

Cliff and I were both able to attend CHOGM and can report that the CAP Americas workshop and Commonwealth People's Forum which preceded the Heads of Government meeting were both very successful from CAP's perspective. James Armstrong, CAP Vice-President Americas, and the Trinidad and Tobago Society of Planners did an outstanding job of convening the workshop which had the theme "Partnerships among the State, Civil Society and Private Sector in Planning and Development". The event was supported by the local Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment, with Minister Grolund-Nunes speaking in the opening session. Also speaking in the opening session was the Director of the Commonwealth Foundation, Dr Mark Collins. CAP made a very positive impression on these guests of honour and the profiles of our association, of our profession and of our discipline were all greatly enhanced as a consequence.

In addition, James had been able to get planners from many of the islands to attend, including some of the neighbouring Francophone islands, thereby extending the outreach and partnerships which are so important to our organisation. This event made it into national television news and onto the pages of the local press, and led to a young planner telling me that after the first day he went home so encouraged by what he had heard that he changed his

---

The CAP Secretariat:  
c/o The Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland  
57 Melville Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7HL  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 (0)131 226 1959  
Fax: +44 (0)131 226 1909  
Email: [annette.odonnell@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:annette.odonnell@rtpi.org.uk)  
Website [www.commonwealth-planners.org](http://www.commonwealth-planners.org)

President and Chief Executive Christine Platt (South Africa)  
Secretary-General Cliff Hague (UK)  
Vice-President (Americas) James Armstrong (Trinidad and Tobago)  
Vice-President (Europe) Clive Harridge (UK)  
Vice-President (East Africa) Bosire Ogero (Kenya)  
Vice-President (West Africa) Chijioke Odumuko (Nigeria)  
Vice-President (Southern Africa) Catherine Kulemeka (Malawi)  
Vice-President (SE Asia) Norliza Hashim (Malaysia)  
Vice-President (SW Asia) Mr. A. Karunathilake (Sri Lanka)  
Vice-President (Pacific) Sonia Kirby (Australia)  
Honorary Vice-President John Anderson (UK)  
Immediate Past President Professor Cliff Hague (UK)

face book page to tell his face book friends how proud he is to be a planner. The report on the outcomes of this workshop is presently being prepared and will be circulated as soon as it is ready.

The CAP America's workshop was followed immediately by the Commonwealth People's Forum at which CAP was able to address both the "Environment and Climate Change" and "Gender" Assemblies. Our presentations will be posted on the CAP website. At the end of each address we included a set of calls to Heads of Government. This is the key link which we often talk about, namely the importance of CAP being part of the strong and well established Commonwealth institutional structures which give us a conduit to Heads of government and a voice at CHOGM.

As you know, these institutional linkages also give us access to and a voice at the Inter-Ministerial Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS) which meets earlier in the year of CHOGM. CAP addressed CCGHS in March and so was able to make a direct link between these two important Commonwealth events through our reporting on the State of the Commonwealth Cities project. Attached is an extract from the final Port of Spain Civil Society Statement which covers the specific calls made by CAP. All of our submissions made it into the final statement and were presented to Heads of Government this past Saturday. This statement will inform the work of the Commonwealth for the next two years until CHOGM meets again in Australia in 2011. It can of course also be used by our member Institutes in lobbying your own governments, as most Commonwealth Heads of Government were at the meeting when this statement was presented to them.

The State of the Commonwealth Cities project was the main subject of our presentations as the timing of the first phase of this project was carefully co-ordinated so that it would be ready for CHOGM. The outcomes of the scoping stage of this project are completed and the report is expected to be published shortly. You will see that part of CAP's call to CHOGM was that this work be continued and reported on at every CHOGM from now on. Discussions with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Foundation on commencing the next stages of this work are scheduled for early next month in London.

Also reported on at CPF was the Gender Based Planning project, which was prepared in time for the Gender Roundtable at WUF a year ago, and the CAP Position Paper which has been distilled from the research and the outcomes of the WUF Roundtable. CAP has again been asked to report on our Gender work at the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro next month. CAP now hopes to obtain funding to source some examples of Gender Audits as a practical measure for implementing the principles which have been spoken about in our work to date.

The latest CAP newsletter is about to be circulated and further information on these projects, as well as on the CAP regional work, are reported on there. It is important for me however to acknowledge the exceptional work done on a voluntary basis by our Secretary-General, Vice Presidents and the National Institutes throughout the Commonwealth. I think that the following excerpt from an email from Dr Mark Collins, Director of the Commonwealth Foundation says it all:

*Many thanks for the opportunity to speak at this morning's opening of the Commonwealth Association of Planners Americas Regional Workshop in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. I must say it was a most impressive occasion, with 120 people from right across the Americas. I was particularly pleased to see the excellent balance of young and more experienced people*

*and it was clear that the many students in the audience would gain a great deal from the event. It was inspiring to have the Planning Minister opening the meeting and I thought your regional Vice-President, James Armstrong did a brilliant job.*

*A representative from UN-Habitat in Brazil, Erik Vittrup Christensen, told me that this regional branch of CAP is the only network of its kind in the Americas, and that it does excellent work.*

I look forward to what will be another interesting year for CAP. It was very pleasing to have ended last year on such a positive note.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Platt". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

**CHRISTINE PLATT**  
**President**

# Port of Spain Civil Society Statement to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

Extracts:

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE ASSEMBLY

### Human Settlements and Urbanisation

1. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: make human settlements a standing agenda item at CHOGM; support the proposed research programme 2011-2016 arising from the report 'The Commonwealth's Urban Challenge: Scoping the State of the Commonwealth Cities'; recognise the value of cities in wealth creation and the opportunities they create for poverty alleviation, as well as the challenges of uncoordinated urbanisation; support the key role played by local government and strategic, integrated planning in delivering sustainable urban development; support local climate change strategies, including emissions reduction initiatives; share know-how and develop capacity on appropriate planning and land management systems; share good practice about participatory slum upgrading and spatial planning; and apply development standards which are realistic and affordable.*

## GENDER ASSEMBLY

### National Governments

1. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to:*  
  
.....
  - e institute gender mainstreaming in all planning and development initiatives, particularly through a process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, to ensure that the wealth created by urbanisation is shared equally;*
  - f recognise that the state of the built environment impacts directly on both conditions for crime and violence, and that safety audits are a proven means of risk reduction, especially for vulnerable groups, as well as access to employment;*
  - g recognise that insecure tenure has a gender dimension and therefore Commonwealth governments must remove all impediments to purchase, ownership and succession to land and property;*  
.....