

A workshop in the
‘Deepening Democracy’ series

Commonwealth Workshop on
**DEMOCRACY &
SMALL STATES**

Valletta, Malta, 10–12 May 2000



COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION

Commonwealth Workshop on

DEMOCRACY & SMALL STATES

Valletta, Malta, 10–12 May 2000

Report, Agenda and List of Participants



COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION

The Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the Government of Malta in the organisation of this workshop.

This is the fourth workshop in a series on the theme *Deepening Democracy*: further details of the series are provided on page 20.

© Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, November 2000
All rights reserved

Photograph by courtesy of the Government of Malta
Designed by kcgan designs
Printed in the United Kingdom by Newnorth Print Limited

Copies of this publication can be obtained from:

Political Affairs Division
Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
Secretariat
Suite 700, Westminster House
7 Millbank
London SW1P 3JA

Tel: +44 (0)20 7747 6401
Fax: +44 (0)20 7930 2189
Email: info@commonwealth.int
(please quote reference PAD)
Web: <http://www.thecommonwealth.org>

Tel: +44 (0)20 7799 1460
Fax: +44 (0)20 7222 6073
Email: hq.sec@comparlhq.uk
Web: <http://www.comparlhq.org.uk>

Contents

Report	1
Agenda	14
Participants	15
Papers	19



Workshop participants meet the Hon Dr Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of Malta (*centre*) at his office in Valletta

REPORT

Introduction

Prior to the Opening Ceremony of the workshop on Wednesday, 10 May 2000, participants paid a courtesy call on the Hon Dr Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of Malta. In his welcoming remarks the Prime Minister said that the theme of the workshop was both important and relevant. Democracy needed to be nurtured. It was an ideal that all in government should work towards.

The Opening Ceremony took place at the Tapestry Chamber, in the Palace of the Grand Master of the Knights of St John, site of Malta's old Legislative Assembly. It was addressed by the Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of Malta's House of Representatives, Dr Lawrence Gonzi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Policy of Malta, Mr Arthur Donahoe, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Mr K Srinivasan, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General (Political). The Speaker welcomed participants to the Chamber. The Deputy Prime Minister said that democracy "is a process which is based on the respect for fundamental human rights, the rule of law and the checks and balances which are built into the system." He reiterated the need for commitment to these basic rights and values. Mr Donahoe and Mr Srinivasan welcomed participants, outlined the work that was being done by their respective organisations to deepen democracy in small states, and thanked the Government of Malta for supporting the workshop.

Session One – Overview

A brief outline of the Overview paper by Dr Paul Sutton was presented and discussion ranged widely over a number of the key issues concerning democracy and small states, the achievements of small states in this regard and the challenges they faced. There was consensus among participants that many of the concerns surrounding democracy and small states related to the question of scale and the difficulties faced by many small states where there were limited human and financial resources. It was agreed that nevertheless, the democratic ethic was firmly entrenched in most Commonwealth small states although there was need to strengthen democratic processes and practices. Participants concurred that democracy was an ongoing process and not simply a matter of elections. Several questioned whether the Westminster model, which many

Report

Commonwealth countries had inherited at independence, was the most appropriate form of democracy for small states. Other issues of concern included state power and its limits, patronage and nepotism. It was felt that majority rule should be balanced with the interests and sensitivities of minority groups, and there was need for greater involvement by the electorate in the democratic process. In this context the meeting considered that there should be greater emphasis on civic education and also recognised the media had an important role to play. There was also a need to guarantee greater participation by women in the democratic process. Democracy within political parties themselves was another issue that had to be addressed. Some participants were of the view that information technology offered new opportunities for bringing greater accountability and transparency into the democratic process.

Session Two – The Executive and the Legislature

The session began with an account of the history and different forms of democracy and its relevance to the contemporary scene. It was agreed that governments should be guided by democratic principles, and that ways should be found to prevent entrenchment of governments and to stimulate a vibrant Opposition. Innovations such as parliamentary committees and public hearings could encourage greater public participation and improve the quality of legislation. Many participants again questioned whether the Westminster model was suitable for small states. They discussed the powers of the Executive and emphasised the need for checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power. Some participants argued in favour of a bicameral parliament. Many supported measures for devolved power and stressed the importance of strong and adequately funded local government.

The meeting also considered the role of the Opposition and ways of ensuring that it was effective and viable especially in circumstances where resource constraints and limitation of skilled individuals create a disadvantage. Many participants considered that the ‘first-past-the-post’ system might not be the most suitable for small states and cited cases where the Opposition was marginalised or weakened by this system. Some argued that the constitution should guarantee an effective and adequately funded Opposition to enable it

to make a meaningful contribution to the democratic process. The parliamentary committee system was seen as important in ensuring that decision-making was informed and influenced not only by the Government but also the Opposition. The meeting also considered, at some length, the issue of 'recall'. Many participants believed it was a necessary means of discouraging potentially corrupt governments, while others argued that the system was not viable in small societies. The meeting agreed that ways and means should be found to enable parliamentarians to become more active and work more effectively.

Session Three – Accountability and Transparency

Participants considered that there was a need for a culture of transparency and accountability in small states. In this context, mechanisms for accountability and oversight of the Executive were important. Emphasis was placed on the key role that could be played by parliamentary committees, an independent public service commission and other oversight bodies capable of providing scrutiny. In countries where these committees already existed their role should be strengthened by the provision of training. Other effective mechanisms were discussed, such as financial regulations governing the declaration of members' interests and assets, and laws governing the funding of political parties. Adequate remuneration of parliamentarians and senior public servants could deter or discourage impropriety. It was felt that there should be a system to prevent abuses especially in relation to patronage.

In this regard, it was recognised that in many small societies where there was a shortage of trained professionals there should be adequate checks and balances setting out the parameters within which the Executive could operate. It was also important for the posts of Independent Auditor and the Office of Ombudsman to be truly independent and not accountable to the Executive but to the Legislature or the public. Similarly, it was important to have in place a parliamentary Public Accounts Committee which was not only independent but also seen to be independent. In most Commonwealth legislatures it is the practice that a member of the Opposition chairs the Public Accounts Committee. Separation of powers was also paramount, with the Judiciary completely independent of the Executive.

Report

The meeting agreed that a strong and independent media as well as a strong Opposition were key to a transparent democratic system.

Session Four – Democracy, Good Governance and Development in Small States

Small states share a set of unique characteristics which help to shape political life in their societies. It was argued that small states were doing well in terms of their democratic practices and it was reiterated that the issue was therefore not how to make small states democratic but how to preserve and deepen democracy in small states.

In general, small states' governments have a more extensive role than in larger societies. The challenge is to ensure that these governments deliver the goods without becoming too pervasive. There was some discussion on the issue of term limitation for heads of state and government, with most participants in favour of this. However, others argued that given the limited human resources available in small states, in such instances people who left high office after a period specified, for example, by the constitution, should not be barred from holding such office in the future and should be allowed to contest for these posts after a suitable interval. There was also a perception that powerful personal interest is a threat to democracy in many small states, and it was important that the constitutional powers of senior government officials were defined as clearly as possible. In small-scale societies nepotism and patronage were likely to interfere with administrative decision-making and lead to the compromising of the autonomy and quality of the public service.

The point was also made that the public sector had a disproportionately large role to play in small states, both in terms of the number of people it employed and its share of the economy. As a result, the notion of public sector reform and the 'downsizing' of the state were issues with a political dimension and economic repercussions for a relatively large section of the population. It was important, therefore, that this idea was debated widely and a sizeable measure of general consent achieved before large-scale changes were implemented.

The idea was also put forward that small states might seek regional co-operation and integration as a means of enhancing their capabilities in areas such as education, legal and judicial systems, tax rules and environmental regulations. While it could be argued that such forms of co-operation could impact on the sovereignty of small states, the view was put forward that the benefits outweighed such considerations.

Session Five – Parties, Elections and Electoral Processes

Participants agreed that the electoral process was critical to a functioning democracy. Discussion focused on the merits and shortcomings of various electoral systems. In particular, many speakers discussed what they considered as the limitations of the ‘first-past-the-post’ system in small states. This system has on a number of occasions resulted in only one party winning all contested seats in parliament, or the party with the majority of seats not necessarily being the party with the majority of the overall vote. However, there was widespread agreement that no one electoral system was perfect and that each state had to formulate and adapt its system in a way which suited its particular circumstances.

It was essential that elections were not only credible but also seen to be so, in order to strengthen public confidence in the result and encourage greater acceptance of public policy. In this context, it was considered desirable that the framework and mechanisms for elections were set out carefully, and preferably within the constitution. Some participants felt that electors who resided overseas should be allowed to vote, but that mechanisms must be in place to ensure that such a practice was not abused.

The delimitation of electoral boundaries in countries with small populations was seen as an important issue. Because of the small number of voters in these constituencies, changes to the boundaries were often likely to affect outcomes. Again, it was necessary to set out clear guidelines. Participants unanimously felt that more should be done to support voter education particularly among the young, and that there should be mechanisms to provide for the greater participation of women in the electoral process and to increase their representation at the parliamentary level.

Report

The role of election observers was discussed and agreed to be an important element in the electoral process. Participants emphasised that observation should commence well in advance of the elections and should continue well after polling day. In this context, they considered the role of domestic election observers to be important.

Session Six – The Rule of Law

The meeting agreed that the rule of law amounted to more than the independence of the judiciary and that it was pivotal to a functioning democracy. The independence of the judiciary was seen as a key element in any democratic society, and it was strongly argued that only a fully independent commission should make judicial appointments. The meeting considered the powers of the judiciary, with a number of participants expressing the view that the Courts should be empowered to override legislation and executive decisions if these contravened the constitution. Although such systems were already in place in a number of small states, it was often the case that judges were hesitant to make full use of their powers because of reluctance to displease governments. It was also felt that in many small states a shortage of trained professionals, the propensity for political appointments and the involvement of members of the judiciary in other areas of public and private life often compromised their independence and affected public confidence.

Participants also discussed the Final Court of Appeal. Many supported the idea of a regional body to replace the Privy Council. There was also discussion about the setting up of an International Criminal Court with many participants supporting the idea. Discussion covered such issues as corruption among lawyers and assistance to enable aggrieved individuals to take action against the state.

Session Seven – Freedom of Speech and Association

The meeting discussed the issue of freedom of speech and association and the rights and responsibilities of society and the individual; state domination of the media and access of political parties; the influence of foreign media in small states; and the responsibilities incumbent on the media itself.

Participants acknowledged that the right to freedom of speech and association was a basic human right, and must be guaranteed in any functioning democracy. Some participants argued that the independence of the media should be guaranteed in the constitution. Arguably, the media – in particular the broadcast media – play a more significant role in small states than in larger states. Again scale was an issue, as in many small states it was not commercially viable to establish an independent broadcast media, and state control of the media was often predominant. State domination of the media often meant that the Opposition was denied access. Participants agreed that the establishment of regional mechanisms and greater collaboration among existing regional media bodies would help to reduce costs and ensure independence of the media. The question of scale also related to the issue of choice as in many small states there are fewer media outlets and thus it is more difficult for an independent media to flourish. It was therefore important to create ways of providing for diverse sources of information, in order to prevent domination by state or foreign media. Again, regional collaboration among small states could help in this respect.

It was agreed that it is the responsibility of government to inform the public. There was thus a special relationship between parliament and the media. In small states parliamentary debates were important and received a greater audience on radio and television than in larger countries. However, parliamentary privilege was often abused to defame members of the public. While it was acknowledged that the key to freedom of expression is a strong independent media and that this should be guaranteed in a healthy democracy, it was also recognised that in small societies it was especially necessary for the media to protect the public through responsible reporting as the lack of anonymity sometimes compromised personal security. Participants unanimously agreed that a strong independent media authority with adequate resources to make it effective is desirable.

Participants discussed the role of language as a measure of freedom of expression in democratic societies. All agreed that ‘language is power’ and that the denial of language relegates people to powerlessness. In this context, it was agreed that both the government and the media had a responsibility to meet the needs of minority language groups, especially in pluralistic societies.

Report

Session Eight – The Role of Civil Society

There was consensus that a vigorous civil society is essential to democracy in small states and that government should provide an enabling environment for it to flourish. It was also felt that there should be closer consultation between government and civil society to build such an environment. However, some participants believed care should be taken to ensure that any partnership between government and civil society did not have a negative effect on the credibility of civil society. One suggestion was that there should be a strong alliance between civil society and government agencies but not necessarily a partnership with government.

The proper funding of civil society including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) was seen as an issue. However, it was felt that in many small states government-funded NGOs were often used to promote the political agenda of the ruling party. Funding from international organisations also often carried conditions, which did not always accord with the priority of the NGOs.

It was acknowledged that in many small states the role of civil society had broadened to the extent that it had become essential to the functioning of the country. Many NGOs were now involved in the delivery of social services, voter education and civic education, as well as mediation and conflict resolution. Much was therefore expected of civil society at a time when funding was dwindling. There was awareness that to be effective, civil society needed to be more proactive. It was also recognised that the perception of civil society was not always positive. Many reasons were given for this, including the pervasive influence of government in small states, and lack of transparency, accountability and a clear mandate. There was also a perception in some countries that civil society had a ‘political’ agenda and poor professional ethics. It was felt that civil society could counteract this perception and instil public confidence through greater transparency, a clearer mandate and acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for the delivery of services.

The meeting agreed that civil society could play a key role in building regional networks especially in countries with small populations and in isolated communities. Such networks could help to mitigate the problem of funding

and would enhance the effectiveness of NGOs by creating a diversity of sources of initiatives and ideas.

The triangular relationship between the state, civil society and the market was also seen as important in a functioning modern democracy. However, in many small states the attitude of government towards civil society was at best 'benign neglect', and in many there was a lack of trust. In this context, some participants argued that the second chamber or upper house of parliament could be used to bring members of civil society into the parliamentary process.

Participants agreed that elected local government was important for democracy in small states and it was argued that there was no real democracy without the power of citizens. It was felt that local government provided the possibility for close alliance between civil society and government.

Session Nine – Sovereignty and Democracy

A lively debate ensued on the nature of sovereignty at the beginning of the 21st century. A number of speakers expressed the view that sovereignty was an increasingly illusive notion for small states that had to reckon with large and economically strong countries, international organisations and big conglomerates. Some speakers brought attention, for instance, to the fact that large multinational corporations had a greater turnover than the GNP of some of the small states in which they operated.

Some speakers, however, expressed the alternative view that sovereignty, while certainly under significant stress, was not a myth but a reality, amounting to the ability to steer one's country in a more or less desired direction. Others continued to disagree and argued that small states were limited in their ability to control their own destiny and had to play by the rules set out by the larger and more powerful global players.

Many believed that increased co-operation and further regional integration could allow small states greater leverage, and the ability to punch above their individual weight and be more effective in the pursuit of their interests on the global stage. While some participants thought that this compromised the older

Report

notion of 'single nation' sovereignty, many believed that this was a price worth paying. The potential economic and other benefits were thought to outweigh the presumed advantages of a narrow nationalism. Other speakers warned, however, that the option of regional small state co-operation was not open to all, since some small states were geographically isolated. A novel perspective centred on the possibility of recovering sovereignty through a process of transnational co-operation with diasporic communities strategically located in cosmopolitan centres. It was felt that this was an unexplored dimension with great potential benefits.

Some speakers expressed the optimistic view that in recent years international law rulings had been instrumental in providing support to some small states whose sovereignty had been threatened by foreign aggression. Such occasions were, hopefully, signs that the world was moving towards a rule-based global order, within which it would be more difficult to transgress the sovereignty of small states.

Session Ten – Development and Democracy

There was consensus that without security it was not possible for development to take place. A strong functioning democracy could ensure security. Participants then discussed the changing global political environment and agreed that following the end of the Cold War many small states had lost their strategic importance and consequently some doors to grants and concessions have been closed. Their potential for development has been further compounded by globalisation.

While acknowledging the potentially positive benefits of globalisation, many participants believed that small states had become increasingly vulnerable to threats such as commercial crime and trade in illicit drugs. The problem of the transshipment of illicit drugs was of special concern for archipelagic states which do not have the human and financial resources to patrol their borders. In addition, many small states were concerned about the potentially negative effect on the morals of their young people of new phenomena such as satellite television, which they did not have the resources to regulate. Participants agreed that these problems not only contributed to an erosion of cultural and

social values but could also be detrimental to the social harmony and peace that were crucial for development.

Participants concluded the discussion by acknowledging that regional co-operation and more general co-operation between small states as well as the regular sharing of knowledge and information could all contribute to finding solutions to these problems. Greater regional integration would also benefit small states in negotiations with larger states on trade matters and other issues that affect their development.

Session Eleven – Conclusions and Proposals

At the end of the meeting, the Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General (Political) summarised what he felt were the main points arising from the discussion.

These included the view that no system is perfect: there are strengths both in the proportional representation and the first-past-the-post systems. Democracy can be a source of resilience; resilience comes from political and social systems and these should respond to the local political cultures that underpin them.

During the course of the workshop participants had asked whether there can be true democracy when there is limited female representation in parliament. It was felt that women often lacked the resources to contest elections.

Participants agreed that the strengthening of local government, transparency of elections, a responsible media and a strong opposition are all important. They also agreed that consensual politics on issues like foreign policy, education and health are desirable, and that the right of ‘recall’ could be considered.

There was also agreement on the need to broaden education for civil society as a whole. The alienation of the young from politics was viewed with concern.

There was consensus that good systems lead to accountability; this *inter alia* includes an independent auditor, effective institutions like parliamentary

Report

committees and an Ombudsman, independent judiciary and separation of powers. These should exist and not only on paper. There was also the view that media complaints councils, Integrity Acts and Codes of Conduct are useful for providing checks against irresponsibility, corruption and abuse of power. Accountability is also achieved by compliance with human rights laws. Strong links with a responsible media, which should receive full information, are also desirable.

Many participants considered that computer literacy may in future be the key to exercise of freedom of speech, and that in certain circumstances the right to silence and privacy may be as important as the freedom of speech.

Participants felt that there is a need in small states to overcome the fears and prejudices of government in their dealings with civil society and NGOs. At the same time, NGOs needed to be credible and professional. The growing role of NGOs in conflict management was noted, though it is important that NGOs should not appear to be having any special axe to grind. It was felt that it is necessary to carry further the discussions on the rights and obligations of the government, the market and civil society.

There was considerable discussion on the issue of sovereignty and democracy and it was argued that the concept of sovereignty, which implies *inter alia* 'identity' and 'autonomy', applies as much to small states as to larger countries. The ability to act in a sovereign manner may be limited in small states, for example by the activities of multinational corporations. It was argued that this problem could be one of critical mass and its resolution may lie in groups of small states jointly exercising aspects of sovereignty. There was consensus that the exercise of sovereignty is facilitated by a supportive legal international framework and by a democratic national base.

Participants considered that globalisation presents challenges and opportunities for small states. Outside influences can, however, be very damaging, for example drug trafficking, money laundering, and alien cultural and social aspects that affect traditional values. Internally, problems such as corruption grow faster. Participants also agreed that it is unlikely that assistance in balancing the advantages and disadvantages of development will come from

outside. Experience shows that larger countries will enter the equation only if it is in their interests to do so. However, some solutions may be found in regional co-operation and more general co-operation among small states. Small states must also draw on resources that are currently under-utilised; primary among these, is the contribution of women to economic and social life.

Finally, there was the view that small states must look at questions such as how international co-operation can be enhanced to ensure the security of small states; how assistance may be obtained from the developed world at least cost to small states; and what small states should do to help themselves.

AGENDA

Wednesday 10 May

- Courtesy Call on the Hon Dr Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of Malta
- Opening Ceremony** Address by the Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta
- Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Policy of Malta
- Mr Arthur Donahoe QC, Secretary-General, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
- Mr K Srinivasan, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General (Political)
- Session One** Overview: Small States and Democracy
- Session Two** The Executive and the Legislature
- Session Three** Accountability and Transparency

Thursday 11 May

- Session Four** Democracy, Good Governance and Development in Small States
- Session Five** Parties, Elections and Electoral Processes
- Session Six** The Rule of Law
- Session Seven** Freedom of Speech and Association
- Session Eight** The Role of Civil Society

Friday 12 May

- Session Nine** Sovereignty and Democracy
- Session Ten** Development and Democracy
- 14 Session Eleven** Conclusions and Proposals

PARTICIPANTS

HE Mr Alexander Archer

High Commissioner
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
The Bahamas

Ms Grace Attard

President of the National Council of
Women, Malta

Mr Atanraoi Baiteke

Former Senior Public Servant,
Kiribati

Mrs Sheilabai Bappoo

Former Minister for Women's Rights,
Child Development and Family
Welfare, Mauritius

Ms Alix Boyd-Knights

Speaker of the House of Assembly,
Dominica

Mr George Brancker CBE

Former Clerk of Parliament and
Adviser to the Prime Minister,
Barbados

Mr Carmel DeGabriele

Chief Electoral Commissioner, Malta

Dr Musa P Dlamini

Dean, Faculty of Social Science,
University of Swaziland

Hon Mario Galea

Member of Parliament, Malta

Hilroy Humphreys

Minister of Commerce, Industry and
Business Development, Antigua and
Barbuda

Rev Professor Peter Serracino

Inglott

Chairman, Mediterranean Institute,
Malta

Mr Demba Jawo

Chairman, The Gambia Press Union

Senator Wendy Kinnard

President of the Legislation
Committee, Jersey

Professor Harold Lutchman

Vice-Chancellor, University of
Guyana

Mrs Elizabeth MacKenzie

Member of the Legislative Assembly
Prince Edward Island

Mr Alan John McCoy

Deputy Speaker of the Legislative
Assembly, Norfolk Island

Ambassador Marc Marengo

Special Adviser to the Ministry of
Tourism and Civil Aviation
Seychelles

Ambassador Vanias Markides

Former Diplomat, Cyprus

Professor Brian Meeks

Head, Department of Government
University of the West Indies,
Jamaica

Mrs Limakatso Mokhothu

Former President of the Lesotho
Council of Non-Governmental
Organisations, Lesotho

Participants

Mrs Constance Mompei

Clerk of the National Assembly,
Botswana

Mrs Ingenesia Murangi

Member, Electoral Commission,
Namibia

Hon Dr Kedrick Pickering

Member of the Legislative Council
British Virgin Islands

Mr Samuela 'Akilisi Pohiva

Member of Parliament, Tonga

Dato' Abdul Majid Rahim

Deputy Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brunei
Darussalam

Hon Misa Telefoni Retzlaff

Minister of Health and Former
Attorney-General, Samoa

Mr Cecil F Ryan

Head of the National Alliance of
Development Organisations
St Vincent and the Grenadines

Ms Dana Seetahal

Attorney-at-Law and Newspaper
Columnist, Trinidad and Tobago

Dr Ahmed Shaheed

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic
of Maldives

HE Mr Robert Sisilo

High Commissioner of Solomon
Islands to the United Kingdom

Professor Paul Sutton

Professor of Politics and Asian
Studies, University of Hull,
United Kingdom

Hon Ema G Tagicakibau

Assistant Minister, Prime Minister's
Office, Fiji Islands

Ms Leslie Ann Thomas

Clerk of Parliament, St Lucia

Hon Audrey Matura-Tillett

Member of Parliament, Belize

Mr Joe A Vella

Secretary of the Malta Press Club

Mr Henry Vira

Co-ordinator of the Pacific Islands
Association of Non-Governmental
Organisations (PIANGO), Vanuatu

Hon Laurina Waldron

Minister of State
Ministry of Communications and
Works, Grenada

Participants

OBSERVERS

Mr Tayeb Merchoug
Department of Political Affairs
United Nations

Mr Charles Vella
Commonwealth Trade Union
Council

MALTA

Mr Anthony E Borg
Director, Department of Multilateral
Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr John A Busuttill
Department of Multilateral Affairs

Mr Joseph Mangion
Department of Multilateral Affairs

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

Mr K Srinivasan
Deputy Secretary-General (Political)

Mr J P Sheppard
Director, Political Affairs Division

Ms Lorna McLaren
Senior Programme Officer
Political Affairs Division

Mr Mwambu Wanendeya
Assistant Public Affairs Officer
Information and Public Affairs
Division

Dr Totis Kotsonis
Senior Programme Officer
Political Affairs Division

Ms Charlene Lee Ling
Administrative Assistant
Political Affairs Division

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Mr Arthur Donahoe QC
Secretary-General

Mr Raja Gomez
Director of Development and
Planning

Participants

WORKSHOP CHAIRS

Hon Mario Galea
Member of Parliament, Malta

Mr Arthur Donahoe QC
Secretary-General
Commonwealth Parliamentary
Association

Mr K Srinivasan
Deputy Secretary-General (Political)
Commonwealth Secretariat

Mr J P Sheppard
Director
Political Affairs Division
Commonwealth Secretariat

PAPERS

- Development and Democracy
Sheilabai Bappoo
- Parties, Elections and Electoral Processes
Senator Wendy Kinnard
- The Executive and the Legislature
Senator Wendy Kinnard
- Development and Democracy
S 'Akilisi Pohiva MP
- The Unelected Senate in a Democracy
Dana Seetahal
- Democracy, Governance and Development in Small States
Dr Paul Sutton
- Accountability and Transparency – The Key to True Democracy
Senator Audrey Matura-Tillett
- The Role of Civil Society: Is Its Importance Being Taken Lightly?
Senator Audrey Matura-Tillett
- The Executive and the Legislature in Belize
Senator Audrey Matura-Tillett

DEEPENING DEMOCRACY

This was the fourth in a series of Commonwealth Secretariat workshops on the theme *Deepening Democracy*, whose purpose is to assist member countries in their efforts to make democracy as real and as deep as possible.

The first workshop – on *The Role of the Opposition* – was held in London in June 1998, in co-operation with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and with financial support from the United Kingdom Government. The second – the *Workshop of Commonwealth Domestic Election Observers* – was held in Jamaica in May 1999. A third workshop on *Gender and Democracy* was held in Namibia in February 2000. The reports of these workshops are available from the address below.

Future workshops will consider *Devolution and Decentralisation, Broadcasting and Democracy, Money and Democratic Politics, Accountability, Scrutiny and Oversight, Voter Registration and Electoral Systems*.

For more information on these and other Commonwealth Secretariat activities to promote democracy contact:

Political Affairs Division
Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 7747 6401

Fax: +44 (0)20 7930 2189

Email: info@commonwealth.int (please quote reference PAD)

DEMOCRACY & SMALL STATES

This is the report of the Commonwealth Workshop on *Democracy and Small States* which took place in Valletta, Malta, over three days in May 2000.

The workshop participants – government ministers, parliamentarians, diplomats, public servants, academics, electoral officials and figures in civil society from thirty-two Commonwealth countries – discussed key aspects of the democratic process in small states including the roles of the executive and the legislature, mechanisms for scrutiny, accountability and oversight, sovereignty and democracy and the culture of democracy.

The workshop was the fourth in the Commonwealth Secretariat's *Deepening Democracy* series and was jointly organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, in co-operation with the Government of Malta.



COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION