

1-3 November 2022

Conference on the Scrutiny of National Security Legislation

FINAL REPORT



CONTENTS & OUTCOMES

OUTCOMES

Delegates will have enhanced their capacity to effectively scrutinise and deliver oversight on national security (including cybersecurity) legislation in their legislatures and will be using new tools to help them adapt to a changing security landscape.

OUTPUTS

1

Delegates will have increased their knowledge of the security landscape across the Commonwealth.

2

Delegates will have enhanced their ability to effectively scrutinise national security legislation in their legislatures.

3

Delegates will have had the opportunity to widen their networks, creating open communication lines to work collaboratively with their peers, and share good practice in holding their executive to account.

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PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Members of Parliament from across the Commonwealth participated in CPA UK's Conference on the Scrutiny of National Security Legislation 1-3 November 2022 in the UK Parliament.

The Conference provided a platform for delegates to explore the security landscape across the globe and enhance their ability to effectively scrutinise and oversee legislation. Attending parliamentarians were also able to share their knowledge and practice on being more effective in their role and legislatures. This report aims to summarise the key themes and issues arising over the course of the Conference.

The programme included sessions on how to govern National Security, the role of parliament in legislating for this, and how to budget for National Security. It also looked at pressing issues like the climate crisis, cybersecurity, and Violence against Women and Girls in Conflict, asking how parliaments should adapt to respond and legislate for these less conventional challenges. The programme included a practice committee exercise on taking oral evidence from the government, exploring good practice with regard to research and effective questioning.

The Conference was the latest in a series of CPA UK programmes focused on the theme of security, following on from engagements such as the February 2022 Cybersecurity Workshop in Westminster, the series of virtual forums and webinars that took place in the lead up to the Glasgow COP26 Summit 2021, and the Africa Regional Trade and Security Workshop delivered in the Parliament of Ghana in January 2022.



UNDERSTANDING SECURITY

Throughout the Conference, speakers emphasised that concepts of security should go far beyond traditional ideas of defence and the military. Key to the effective development and implementation of security policy is avoiding overly narrow definitions.

The security landscape now includes areas of geopolitics that were not previously scrutinised, leading us to ask new questions.

Parliamentarians should see areas of policy related to the environment, health, energy, and the economy as part of national security strategies. With this in mind, speakers called for a better understanding of the nuances of issues like environmental and health security.

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Speakers highlighted oversight, accountability, and transparency as key to effective development and implementation of security policy, whilst also protecting commercial and national interests.

A key theme throughout the sessions was the balance between sharing sensitive information with the opposition to inform them of security matters and exposing said information to public discourse. There must be due consideration in choosing what to share with the opposition, with a focus on mitigating the public disclosure of sensitive information. There must be a procedure or process that both parties agree upon.

Speakers also raised the benefits of continuous bill amendment and scrutiny. It offers parliamentarians the opportunity to propose better and more effective legislation to the public, especially for long-term issues like national security.

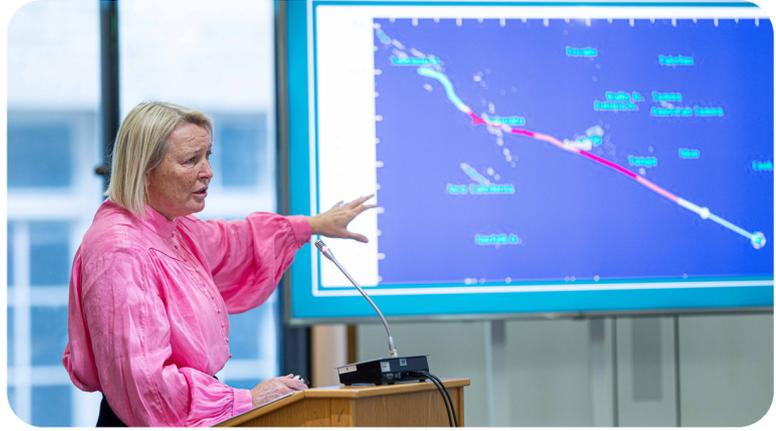
As such, scrutiny from the opposition should be welcomed as their role is to hold the government to account. There is a need for alignment from all sides (including the opposition, backbenchers, relevant committees, and a parliament's equivalent of a national security council) on national security matters - scrutiny makes this possible.

Parliamentary strength in developing effective national security and defence strategies comes from well-structured committees with accountability and a lack of partisanship. This idea of partnership formed another key theme throughout discussions. There must be input from the public, social partners, and other stakeholders at the committee level to scrutinise legislation and pass amendments.

The key role of committees is to obtain information based on real evidence and hold the government to account. Committees are important, even if their results are not immediate.

Governments may be reluctant to respond to scrutiny when dealing with emergencies, but the alternative of no scrutiny is worse - Ministers would act with impunity.





CYBERSECURITY

The relationship between power and technology has created a new space in geopolitics - the cyberspace must be understood as existing within this context. Speakers began by describing security threats posed by the cyberspace. It can be used to transgress borders without force, and countries used to controlling flows of information in their own countries are well placed to insert themselves into domestic information spaces (e.g. accessing voter information, distorting political discourse).

To understand cybersecurity and the threats towards it, parliamentarians must address what the cyberspace encompasses. Delegates were particularly interested in the vulnerabilities of national infrastructure to cybercrime like fraud and cyberattacks. There is a need for essential infrastructure and services to place a greater focus on cybersecurity protection. Cybercrime is increasingly organised, with no clear system for prosecution.

This cannot be seen as a singular issue. Cybersecurity should be seen as cyber safety for both public and private arenas. Speakers urged these two sectors to actively co-operate to ensure security in products and operations, with a vital need to set up co-operation between governments and businesses and information exchanges.

One way to engage with the cyberspace as political actors is through internet governance. This is the way domain names and IP addresses (internet identifications unique to each individual, like an ID or Passport) are co-ordinated. It is paramount that countries can access and manage this information, as there is an unexplored ecosystem of services buying and selling people's data.

THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Speakers identified two main ways that Climate Change is interwoven with peace and security. Firstly, in a physical-geographical way by impacting the ability to retrieve water and grow crops - if this remains consistent, countries will have issues feeding their population. Secondly, effects of climate change like floods and storms can impact the 'national critical infrastructure' - the structural organisation that enables a country to function in the normal way, like power and water. There is a need to reorganise the organisations that deliver these as they are mutually interdependent. Therefore, resilience plans must exist within and between them.

Climate change can only be addressed with clear internal parliamentary organisation, including strong leadership and an understanding of who is accountable for making progress on legislation. It is an all-encompassing issue and cannot be the responsibility of a single department; there must be a joined-up strategic approach, not a short-term tactical one.

Similarly, it was identified that there must be a shift in defence thinking from the short term tactical to the long term strategic when considering parliamentary responsibilities. It must be asked what the responsibility of the defence sector is in addressing increasing risks in certain areas because of climate change.

Delegates were particularly concerned with the clear knowledge gap between parliamentarians and experts. It's important to share the knowledge gained from those who have personally seen the impacts of climate change, either in their own lives or the lives of their constituents. Parliaments need academic partners to report on the real-life effects of climate change like crop yields and wheat prices. This technical knowledge and real experience informs a bigger picture that feeds into national security strategy.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CONFLICT

Women and girls are often at risk of increased violence during conflict, with sexual violence often used to intimidate communities and break up families. This includes forced marriage and pregnancy. Those who have been displaced are at a higher risk of being victims of violence and can be highly vulnerable to abuse from humanitarian workers and peacekeepers.

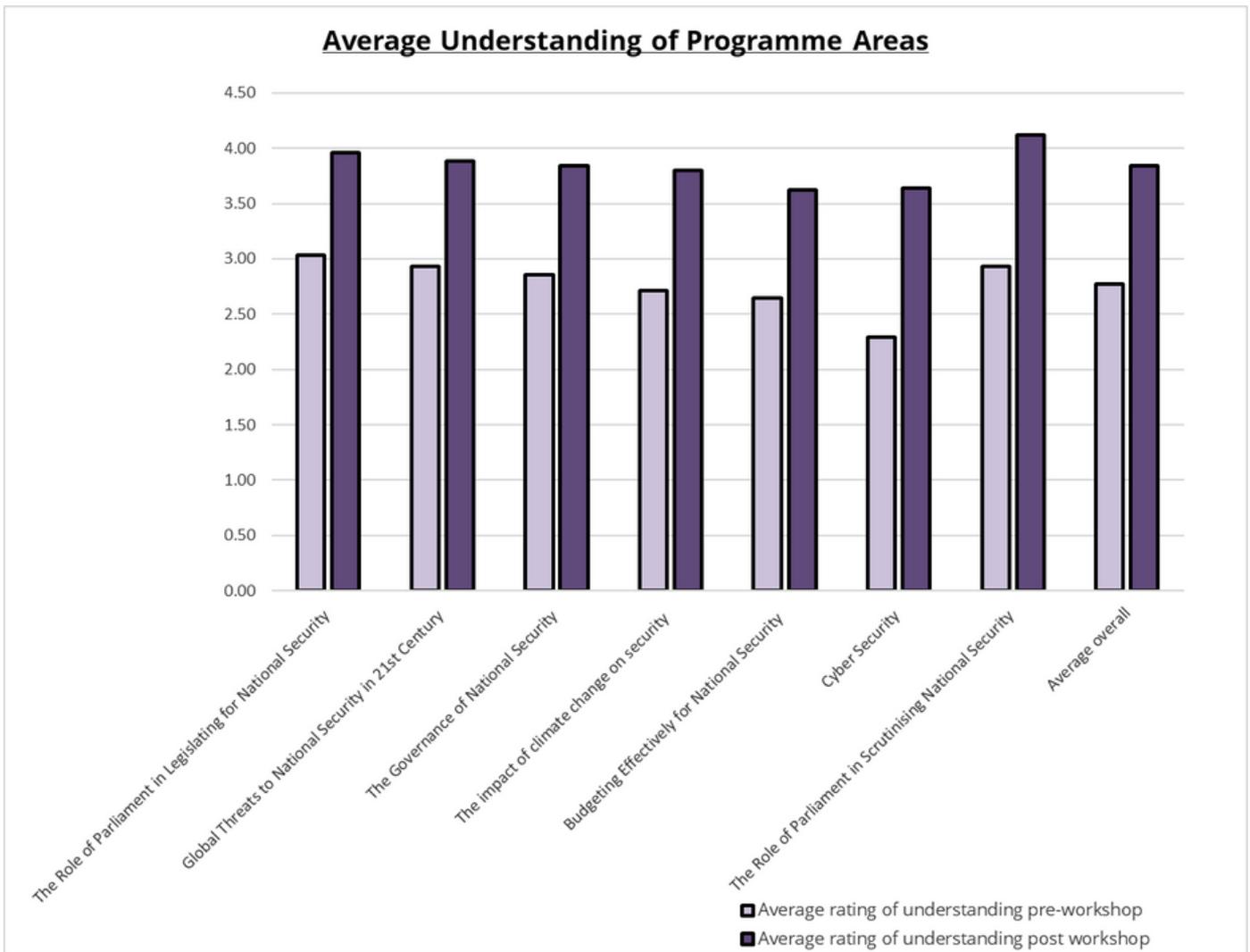
Discussions focused on the root causes of this violence. Speakers explained that gender based violence in conflict is based on gender norms that uphold male superiority. The conflict does not create these norms, but rather exacerbates them due to increased militarisation and stress, the collapse of community, and the normalisation of violence.

The majority of delegates were concerned with how to shift mindsets to target these norms and the root belief that men and women are not equal. Speakers emphasised the importance of working with community and religious leaders to examine the roots of sexual based violence, and urged for parliamentarians to carry out similar projects.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

At the beginning of the Conference, each participant completed a pre-Conference assessment and then completed a post-Conference assessment at the end, evaluating their own level of understanding of the seven areas explored in the programme. The scale of understanding ranged from (1) "None" to (5) "In-depth". Overall, participants found that they increased their knowledge in all seven areas, ranging from 30% to 58%, with an average of 39% across all areas, as illustrated in the below chart. Around 85% of participants found the Conference 'fully relevant' to their role and 16% stated 'partially relevant' while no one said 'not relevant'.



Participating Legislatures

Asia-Pacific



New South Wales,
Australia



Northern Territory,
Australia



Pakistan



Sri Lanka

Americas, Caribbean and Europe



Belize



St Lucia



Jamaica



Trinidad &
Tobago

Africa



Cameroon



Zambia



The Gambia



Kenya



Seychelles



Sierra Leone

UK Overseas Territories



Gibraltar



Cayman Islands



Turks and Caicos Islands

PROGRAMME

DAY 1: UNDERSTANDING SECURITY

TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2022

TIME

SESSION

0900-0925

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Delegates will be welcomed by Jon Davies, CPA UK's Chief Executive, and the Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, who will make the opening remarks.

Speakers:

Jon Davies, Chief Executive, CPA UK Branch

The Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP, Speaker of the UK House of Commons

0935-1000

Keynote Address

Alicia Kearns MP, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, UK House of Commons

Hon. Rhondalee Braithwaite-Knowles OBE KC, Trade Spokesperson and Attorney General, House of Assembly of the Turks and Caicos Islands

1000-1120

Session 1: Identifying Global Threats to National Security in the 21st Century

A session exploring contemporary threats to national security, including terrorism, cyber-attacks, nuclear proliferation, climate change, human, narcotic and arms-trafficking, and pandemics. Having identified prominent security challenges in their legislatures, comparing their approach when addressing such threats, and highlighting common themes, participants will also increase their understanding of topics such as arms control, non-proliferation issues, and underline the impact of international disarmament on national security and international stability.

Delegates will reflect on the following question: To what extent are states today able to protect their citizens?

Session Facilitator:

Axell Kaubo, Programme Manager and Security Theme Lead, CPA UK

Speakers:

Ms Lynda Voltz MP, Former Shadow Minister for Police and Counter Terrorism, New South Wales Legislative Assembly

1130-1230

Session 2: The Governance of National Security- A UK case study

A session examining the UK security apparatus. It will explore how an effective national security and defence strategy is developed, implemented, and adjusted to account for changing threats. It will also explore the role of key actors in this process, including the intelligence community, as well as the importance of ethics and accountability.

Session Chair

Axell Kaubo, Programme Manager and Security Theme Lead, CPA UK

Speakers:

Lord Sedwill, Chairman of the Atlantic Futures Forum and former National Security Adviser, UK House of Lords

The Rt Hon. the Lord Browne of Ladyton, Vice Chair of the Nuclear Threat Initiative and former Secretary of State for Defence, UK House of Lords

1230-1310

Session 3: Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in conflict

A session exploring human security, through the lens of gender-based violence in conflict. This session highlights the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls, as well as identifying existing mechanisms for raising awareness and providing more security and protection to the most vulnerable during conflicts.

Session Chair and Speaker:

The Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, Former Chair of the Sexual Violence in Conflict Committee, Member, UK House of Lords

Speakers:

Hon. Dr Seetha Arambepola, State Minister of Health, Parliament of Sri Lanka
Francesca Quirke, Programme Manager for Sexual and Gender-based Violence Interventions, Tearfund

1410-1515

Session 4: Security in a Time of Climate Crisis

This session will detail how climate change - and resulting severe weather events, human displacement, and diminishing natural resources – is posing new risks to global peace, detailing the ways in which national governments can adopt new approaches to provide climate security for all.

Session Chair and Speaker

The Rt Hon. Dame Margaret Beckett MP, Member of the National Security Strategy Joint Committee, UK House of Commons

Speakers:

Professor Rear Admiral Neil Morisetti, Professor of Climate and Resource Security, University College London

Saphia Fleury, Postgraduate Researcher, University of Hull

Dr. Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director, Scientists for Global Responsibility

1530-1700

Tour of Parliament

DAY 2: LEGISLATING SECURITY

WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2022

TIME

SESSION

0815

Recap of Day 1 and Introduction of Day 2's theme

Facilitated by Axell Kaubo, Programme Manager and Security Theme Lead, CPA UK

0950-1120

Session 5: Legislating for National Security: The Role of Parliament

This session will focus on how parliament influences and oversees the national security strategy, defence, and intelligence activities. In this session delegates will share knowledge on effective ways for parliamentarians to strike a balance between passing effective legislation on national security whilst protecting civil liberties and considering international conventions.

Speakers:

Maria Eagle MP, Member of the Intelligence and Security Committee, Member, UK House of Commons

Hon. Oscar Roberto Mira, Minister of National Defence and Border Security, National Assembly of Belize

1415-1530

Session 6: Cybersecurity- Building Partnership

This session looks at the growing cyber threats posed by foreign states and criminal groups, exploring how governments can protect themselves, citizens, and national infrastructure, and build useful cyber security partnerships.

Session Chair and Speaker:

Baroness Neville-Jones, Member of the National Security Strategy Joint Committee, UK House Lords

Speakers:

Emily Taylor, Associate Fellow, Chatham House

Lucas Kello, Associate Professor, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford

Simon Fell MP, Chair of APPG on Cyber-Security, UK House of Commons

1540-1640

Session 7: Budgeting Effectively for National Security

How best to prevent misuse of public funds? This session will explore the bodies and mechanisms involved in setting up a budget for national security, how these interact with each other, and the different stages involved in this process. The focus will be on establishing how large procurement projects are funded, and best practice for ensuring transparency, accountability, and value for money to tackle or reduce the risk of corruption.

Session Speaker:

The Rt Hon. the Lord Boateng, Member of the Lords Committee on International Relations and Defence, UK House of Lords

Guided Reflection

Facilitated by Axell Kaubo, Programme Manager and Security Theme Lead, CPA UK

DAY 3: PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY OF SECURITY

THURSDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2022

TIME

SESSION

1000-1010

Recap of Day 1 and Introduction of Day 3's theme

Facilitated by Axell Kaubo, Programme Manager and Security Theme Lead, CPA UK

1010-1130

Session 8: Scrutinising Security in a Committee Context

This session will provide an overview of the work of parliamentary committees, exploring good practice in regard to research, effective questioning and impactful reports

Session Chair and Speaker:

Hon. Keith Scotland, Chairman of the Committee on National Security, Parliament of Trinidad & Tobago

Speakers:

The Rt Hon. the Baroness Anelay of St. Johns DBE, Chair of the International Relations and Defence Committee, UK House of Lords

Harriet Deane, Clerk of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy, UK Parliament

Hon. Muhamed Kanteh, Standing Committee on Defence and Security, Parliament of The Gambia

1145-1215

Session 9: Briefing in preparation for the Committee Hearing Exercise

Delegates will be briefed and prepared for the Committee Exercise scheduled in the afternoon, including by drafting questions and agreeing on the approach to take at the hearing. This will also be an opportunity for questions to be asked and answered.

Facilitated by:

Hannah Stone, Committee Specialist, Foreign Affairs Select Committee, House of Commons, UK Parliament

Josh Drake, Programme Officer, CPA UK

1345-1500

Session 10: Committee Exercise: Taking oral evidence from the Government

Venue: Committee Room G, House of Lords

The exercise, using freeze frame methodology, will be facilitated by Hannah Stone, Committee Specialist to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, UK Parliament

1500-1530

Session 11: Final Reflections on the Committee Exercise

Facilitated by:

Hannah Stone, Committee Specialist, Foreign Affairs Select Committee, House of Commons, UK Parliament

Josh Drake, Programme Officer, CPA UK

1550-1605

Feedback Session on the Conference

Facilitated by Axell Kaubo, Programme Manager and Security Theme Lead, CPA UK

1605-1615

Closing Remarks

ABOUT CPA UK



Supporting and strengthening parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth

CPA UK supports and strengthens parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth. It focuses on key priority themes, including women in parliament, modern slavery, financial oversight, security and trade.

CPA UK brings together UK and Commonwealth parliamentarians and officials to share knowledge and experience through peer to peer learning. It aims to improve parliamentary oversight, scrutiny and representation and is located in, and funded by, the UK Parliament.



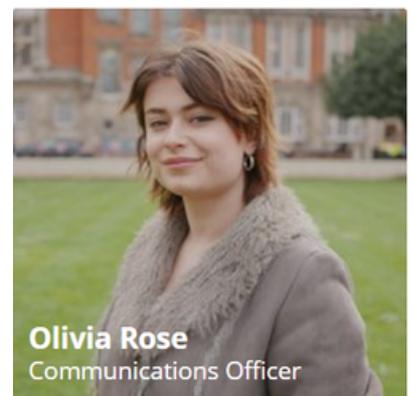
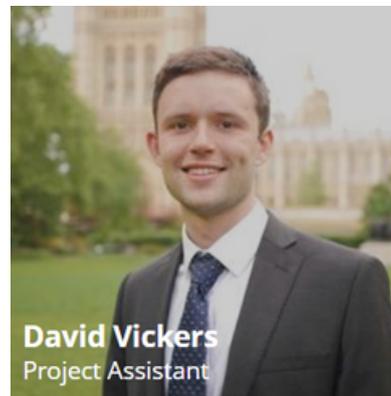
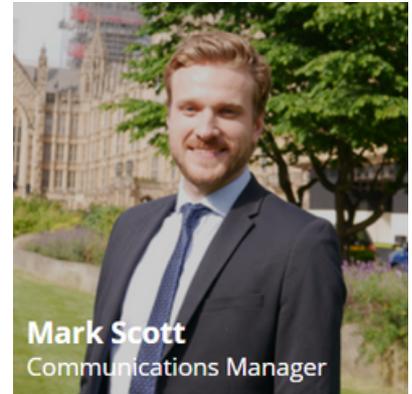
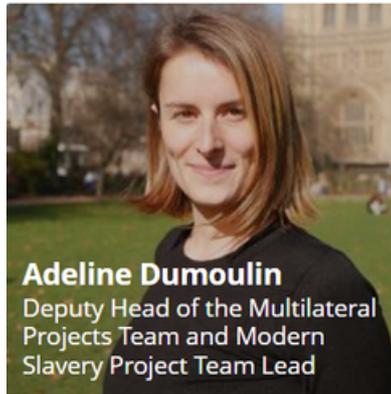
Building Stronger Parliaments and Advancing Democracy

CPA UK's core work is to build relationships with parliaments across the Commonwealth. This is achieved through a programme of parliamentary strengthening and capacity building activities.

CPA UK undertakes work at the request of other parliaments around the Commonwealth, and our tailored programmes include both individual country activities, and large scale projects and activities that bring together Commonwealth parliamentarians and clerks.

For more information about our work and activities, please visit our website: uk-cpa.org

CPA UK STAFF



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