



**MALAYSIAN COMMONWEALTH
STUDIES CENTRE (MCSC)**
**CAMBRIDGE MALAYSIAN EDUCATION
AND DEVELOPMENT TRUST (CMEDT)**



**INAUGURAL INFORMAL WORKSHOP FOR
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONERS FROM AFRICA**

**Under the aegis of the Cambridge Conference on Electoral Democracy
and co-hosted by the Electoral Commission of Mauritius**

Le Paradis Beachcomber, Le Morne Peninsula, Mauritius

Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 November 2017

Participants are cordially reminded that the sessions of the workshop are confidential, operating informally under 'Chatham House rules'. In this way participants can be entirely frank and candid in their discussions and learn from each other's experience.

Sunday 26 November

Participants arrive in Mauritius.

7.30 p.m. Informal dinner in Le Brabant Restaurant, Le Paradis.

Monday 27 November: Day One

9.15 a.m. Participants convene in the Conference Room, situated on the ground floor (near the lobby and reception) of Le Paradis (*tea and coffee will be served*).

9.30 a.m. ***Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence***

9.45 a.m. ***Session I - Reflections on the 2017 elections in Kenya***

Here we will discuss and reflect on the issues which recent elections in Kenya have raised. There will be introductory contributions from senior colleagues with first-hand experience of these elections, before the issues are opened up for general discussion.

11.00 a.m. ***Break***

11.20 a.m. **Session I - Reflections on the 2017 elections in Kenya**

Discussions continued.

12.40 a.m. *Lunch in Le Brabant Restaurant, Le Paradis.*

2.00 p.m. **Session II - Current issues facing Electoral Commissioners in Africa**

Key challenges which many participants face in their particular jurisdictions will be the focus of Session II, issues which Professor Attahiru Jega will be invited to review as an introduction to our discussions.

They include the role of Commissions, the challenges to their independence, the resources at their disposal for the conduct of elections, as well as other issues, including the role of incumbent governments, the judiciary, and a range of problems such as intimidation, violence, money-power, partisan media coverage, difficult technological hurdles and the role of international donors and of observer missions (*this list being merely indicative*).

3.10 p.m. *Break*

3.30 p.m. **Session II - Current issues facing Electoral Commissioners in Africa**

Discussion continued.

5.00 p.m. *Close*

7.00 p.m. Pre-dinner reception in the Golf Club House, Le Paradis.

7.30 p.m. Formal conference dinner in the Blue Marlin Restaurant, Le Paradis.

Guest of Honour, HE Mrs Ameenah Gurib-Fakim GCSK, CSK, PhD, DSc, President of the Republic of Mauritius.

Tuesday 28 November: Day Two

9.15 a.m. Participants convene in the Conference Room, Le Paradis (*tea and coffee will be served*).

9.30 a.m. **Session III - Recapitulation of 'Day One's' discussions**

The focus of this session will be the positive steps forward which participants suggest, which may help Commissions, jointly or severally, to respond robustly to the challenges they face.

10.45 a.m. *Break*

11.00 a.m. ***Session IV - Next steps for the 'Cambridge group' and their colleagues in Commissions in Africa***

Participants in recent Cambridge Conferences on Electoral Democracy have identified opportunities for the Cambridge group to facilitate rapid, informal, discreet and candid peer support from one or more Commissioners (or ex-Commissioners) to another – always and only at the invitation of the Commissioner who requests such support.

The Cambridge group has limited resources, but it does have the ability (perhaps unique) to call upon the expertise of a wide group of serving and former Commissioners who are committed to supporting their colleagues throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. Experience suggests that where a Commissioner identifies that such peer support might be helpful, it will have the greatest impact if it takes place in good time, well before elections are under way.

Participants are invited to consider possible areas where such peer support could help, bearing in mind the schedule of elections in a range of countries in Africa during 2018 and 2019 (see Appendix).

12.30 p.m. **Concluding remarks and the way forward**

1.00 p.m. *Lunch in Le Brabant Restaurant, Le Paradis.*

2.00 p.m. **Mauritian cultural activity/sightseeing tour** (*please convene outside the reception/lobby*)

7.30 p.m. Informal dinner in Le Brabant Restaurant, Le Paradis.

Appendix

We understand that major elections (the list may not be definitive) are likely to be held, as follows:

2018

Sierra Leone (March - Presidential and Parliamentary);
Zimbabwe (July/August - Presidential and Parliamentary);
Rwanda (September - Parliamentary elections, after Presidential elections were held in August this year); and
Cameroon (September/October - Presidential).

2019

South Africa (April - Parliamentary);
Nigeria (April - Presidential and Parliamentary);
Botswana (October - Parliamentary);
Mozambique (October - Parliamentary);
Namibia (November - Parliamentary); and
Mauritius (December - Parliamentary elections).