

**Study Group on the Administration and Financing of Parliament  
Zanzibar, Tanzania, 25 – 29 May 2005**

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**THE INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY OF PARLIAMENT**

- All Commonwealth Parliaments should implement [The Commonwealth Principles on the Accountability of and Relationship Between the Three Branches of Government](#), especially those relating to the independence of the Legislature.
- Parliamentarians must be able to carry out their legislative and constitutional functions in accordance with their Constitution, free from unlawful interference.
- Parliamentarians should maintain high standards of accountability, transparency and responsibility in the conduct of all public and parliamentary matters.

**THE GOVERNANCE OF PARLIAMENT**

- Parliaments should, either by legislation or resolution, establish corporate bodies responsible for providing services and funding entitlements for parliamentary purposes and providing for governance of the parliamentary service.
- There should be an unambiguous relationship between the Speaker, the corporate body and the head of the parliamentary service.
- Members of corporate bodies should act on behalf of all members of the legislature and not on a partisan or governmental basis.
- The corporate body should determine the range and standards of service to be provided to Parliament *e.g.* accommodation, staff, financial and research services.
- Corporate bodies should promote responsible governance that balances the unique needs of Parliament with general legal requirements *e.g.* employment law, Freedom of Information and Occupational Health and Safety.
- The head of the parliamentary service should be appointed on the basis of merit and have some form of protected status to prevent undue political pressure.
- The head of the parliamentary service should be given appropriate levels of delegated authority.

**FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Parliaments should have control of, and authority to set out and secure, their budgetary requirements unconstrained by the Executive.

- The remuneration package for parliamentarians should be determined by an independent process.
- The corporate body should ensure that an effective accountability framework is in place.
- Corporate bodies should ensure regular monitoring of actual expenditure against the amount of money appropriated for parliamentary services.
- The corporate body should ensure compliance with generally accepted accounting standards.
- The head of the parliamentary service should have ultimate financial responsibility for the legislature.

### **PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE**

- Parliaments should be served by a professional staff independent of the public service and dedicated to supporting parliamentarians in fulfilling their constitutional role.
- The corporate body should ensure that the parliamentary service are properly remunerated and that retention strategies are in place.
- The statutory terms and conditions for the parliamentary service should be based on the needs of the legislature and not constrained by those of the public service.
- There should be a code of conduct and values for members of the parliamentary service.
- The parliamentary service should include not just procedural specialists but staff with specialized expertise *e.g.* finance, ICT, human asset management, research and communications.
- Effective recruitment on the basis of merit and equal opportunity strategies should be in place that will ensure that the parliamentary service is representative of the diversity of the wider community.
- Corporate bodies should promote an environment that encourages best practices for employee well-being.

### **PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

- The corporate body should publish an annual report on its work on behalf of the legislature including information on the audited accounts and budget estimates.
- There should be an information strategy detailing how the membership and operations of the legislature will be communicated to the general public.
- Parliaments should develop programmes to promote the general public's understanding of the work of the legislature and, in particular, to involve school children in increasing their awareness of citizenship issues.
- The corporate body should ensure that the media are given appropriate access to the proceedings of Parliament without compromising the dignity and integrity of the institution.