



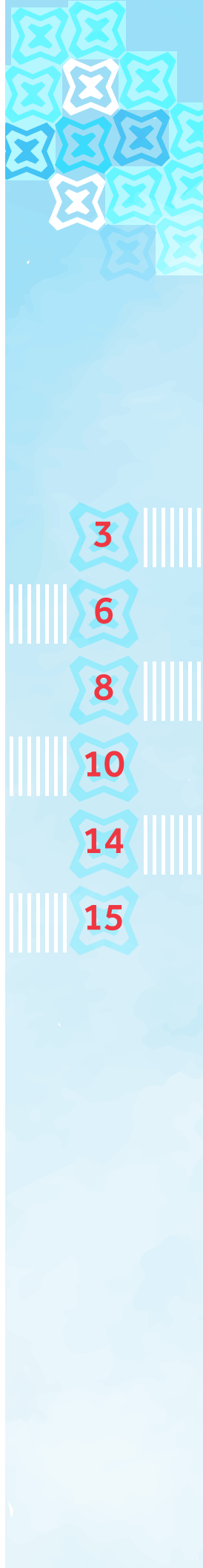
**COMMONWEALTH  
ELECTORAL NETWORK  
BIENNIAL CONFERENCE**

22-24 JUNE 2016 TRINIDAD & TOBAGO



**Commemorative  
Publication**

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# Commonwealth Electoral Network (CEN) Conference Trinidad and Tobago 2016



*Waterfront Photo, in Port of Spain Trinidad and Tobago.  
The CEN Conference takes place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel located at this venue.*

Electoral commissions from across the Commonwealth will meet in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, for an International Conference to advance Commonwealth Principles in Elections Management.

The Commonwealth Electoral Network's (CEN) 2016 Biennial Conference will identify guiding principles and practices for elections, drawing upon the experiences of election management bodies in the Commonwealth's 53 member countries.

The Conference is convened by the Commonwealth Secretariat led by the Commonwealth Deputy Secretary General, Dr. Josephine Ojiambo and will be hosted by

Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC) of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr Mark Ramkerrysingh, Chairman of the EBC will lead this country's delegation and says that "The Commonwealth Electoral Network is an important body in developing the capacity of electoral management bodies in the Commonwealth for the conduct of fair, credible and inclusive elections. It has also proven itself useful in providing a forum for the sharing of experiences among electoral management bodies which leads to an improvement in the functioning of these bodies which are so crucial to our democracies. We therefore look forward to the 2016 Biennial Conference with the expectation that it will further the vision and the purpose of the CEN".



## Programme

The 2016 Conference is intended to offer opportunities for debate, knowledge and information sharing among election practitioners and will focus on contemporary priorities and challenges faced by electoral management bodies such as ensuring equal access for all voters during elections. Such as maintaining the independence of electoral commissions, regulating election campaign finance, and managing the power of incumbent governments, as well as emerging issues such as the use of new technologies in elections including social media.



Delegates will also receive presentations by alumni of the Commonwealth's successful Junior Election Professionals programme, which over the last three years has been strengthening the expertise of the next generation of electoral administrators. Another key focus will be discussing practical ways to overcome barriers to participation by women in elections and politics.



**“ADVANCING  
COMMONWEALTH  
PRINCIPLES FOR  
GOOD ELECTORAL  
PRACTICE”**

The Theme for this year’s conference is “Advancing Commonwealth Principles For Good Electoral Practice.” The insight arising from discussions will be used to develop practical Commonwealth good practices guides for electoral issues of relevance to all of the Commonwealth Electoral Network which can contribute to the promotion and embedding of norms and principles.



# Message from the Commonwealth Deputy Secretary General



Election management bodies are at the epicentre of democracy: without them, it would simply be impossible to give life and meaning to the Commonwealth Charter, which recognises “the inalienable right of the individual to participate in democratic processes, in particular through free and fair elections, shaping the society in which they live.”

Election management bodies carry the hopes and indeed the legitimate expectation of voters. Our Commonwealth citizens rightly demand credible elections and results that reflect their common will. Of course, there

are many challenges in the electoral process, from ensuring full and equitable access for all including women and minority groups, to ensuring incumbent governments do not enjoy unfair advantage over competitors for office. The world does not stand still, and we must also consider the impact of new technologies, which can both help and hinder elections.

That is why the Biennial Conference is of the Commonwealth Electoral Network (CEN) is such an important forum. The CEN continues to pursue practical gold standards in election administration, by drawing upon the expertise

of those who play an integral role in the exercise of democracy - the staff and commissioners of election management bodies. We look forward to active participation in discussions at the conference, drawing on the national experiences and learnings that can be shared with each other as our common wealth, and benefitting also from the contributions of global experts and partners.

We are particularly grateful to the Elections and Boundaries Commission of Trinidad and Tobago and its Chairperson, Mark Ramkerrysingh, for the hard work and generosity that are the foundations of this conference. The Commonwealth Secretariat is delighted to be working with the Commission to make the conference a success and to continue our support at the intergovernmental level for the CEN.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ojiambo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Dr Josephine Ojiambo**  
Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General

Commonwealth countries make up a third of the world's population and a large proportion of its democratic states. We have a great track record of promoting democracy globally, whether through our long-standing election observer missions or more recently through training the next generation of election management administrators under the Junior Election Professionals programme. Our work to advance democracy in the Commonwealth sets a direction followed by others outside our association.

Democracy is a hard-won goal which demands guiding principles and good practices. We look forward to advancing further these principles and practices together in the Commonwealth at this conference, setting a compass bearing for the wider world as we do so.



# History of the CEN Conferences



*Group photo of Delegates at the last CEN Conference in Nairobi, Kenya.*

The Commonwealth Electoral Network (CEN) was established in May 2010 in Ghana, after it was first endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 2009. Its aim is to facilitate experience sharing, create peer support mechanisms and embed good electoral practices in the Commonwealth's 53 member countries. Former Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamallesh Sharma said: "The Commonwealth's commitment to the network is recognition at global level of the pivotal role played by election management bodies in ensuring integrity of elections in member countries."

Elections are not the singular marker of a democracy. Nonetheless an election conducted according to internationally accepted standards is an important indication of the

health of a country's democracy. Although the framework and national circumstances of each country's democratic arrangements varies, and thus there is no one model to fit all instances. Internationally there is a common understanding of what constitutes a genuine and credible election. This is reflected in the various international and regional standards to which countries have committed themselves.

Additionally, while the shape and form of a country's election management body may also vary, the tasks it is charged to perform and the principles it should uphold are uniform. The quality of an electoral process invariably reflects the quality of the election management body, and the trust of and confidence in the outcome reflects the trust and confidence citizens have in the management of the process.





In the Commonwealth Charter, the people of the Commonwealth are committed to the value of democracy, notably “the inalienable rights of individuals to participate in democratic processes, in particular through free and fair elections in shaping the society in which they live”. In this regard, the Commonwealth is committed to advancing norms and principles for good governance including in electoral standards, as well as enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of election management bodies, thereby enhancing member countries’ capacity to hold credible elections which enjoy the confidence of the people. The last Biennial Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2014.



# Key Note Speakers and Bio-Data

## **The Honourable Dr. Keith Rowley Prime Minister**



Dr. Keith Rowley was re-elected to the House of Representatives of the 11th Parliament on September 7, 2015 and two days later was appointed Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the 7th person to hold this office. A geologist by training, Dr. Rowley has been the representative for Diego Martin West since 1991.

A former pupil of Bishop's High School, Tobago and a graduate of the University of the West Indies (Mona), Dr. Rowley first served in Parliament as an Opposition Senator from 1987-1990 (3rd Parliament), was appointed Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (4th Parliament), Minister of Planning and Development and Minister of Housing (8th Parliament) and Minister of Trade and Industry (9th Parliament). Dr. Rowley received his instrument of appointment as Leader of the Opposition on June 1, 2010, following the General Election for the 10th Republican Parliament.

Over his Parliamentary career, Dr. Rowley has served on several Parliamentary committees. In 2004 he chaired the Joint Select Committee of Parliament which examined and made recommendations for the live broadcasting of Parliamentary debates.



## **Dr Josephine Ojiambo**

Dr Ojiambo began her tenure as Deputy Secretary-General (Political) at the Commonwealth Secretariat in January 2015, where she oversees the organization's political, human rights, rule of law and communications work.

Dr Ojiambo came to the Commonwealth Secretariat from the United Nations Population Fund where she has been serving as Chief of the Executive Board and External Relations Branch with responsibility for intergovernmental relations, and also for building strategic relations with UN agencies, civil society and the private sector.

She was formerly Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations. In her role as Ambassador, she notably engaged with a range of committees at the UN General Assembly on themes including international peace and security, human rights, humanitarian aid and south-south cooperation.

Dr Ojiambo has more than 25 years of experience in international relations, diplomacy, governance and policy advocacy. She brings a strong track record in leadership, strategic and operational management, and a rights-based approach to international development, democracy-building, and conflict resolution. Dr Ojiambo a qualified physician who practiced medicine, also trained in diplomacy and International relations.



## Mr Issack Hassan

Mr. Issack is currently the Chairperson of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) of Kenya. He graduated from the University of Nairobi with a Bachelor’s degree in Law (LLB), and thereafter proceeded to obtain a Post-Graduate Diploma in Legal Studies from the Kenya School of Law. He was admitted to the Bar as an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya. He has been in private legal practice since then. Mr. Issack is also a Certified Public Secretary of Kenya (CPSK). He has served as a Commissioner in the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission that drafted Kenya’s new constitution. He has also served as a Legal Consultant for the United Nations in Somalia as well as Legal Adviser to the Government of Somalia. He is the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Electoral Network (CEN) and a member of the Executive Committee of the Association of World Election Bodies (AWEB).



## Mr. Mark Ramkerrysingh

### Education and Qualification

1982	LL.B – University of the West Indies
1985	L.E.C. – Hugh Wooding Law School
1995	LL.M– Columbia University School of Law.

### Professional Experience

1986-1990	Lieutenant – Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (Coast Guard) – Legal Officer.
1990-1992	Legal Officer – Trinidad and Tobago Marine Petroleum Company (TRINTOMAR).
1993	Legal Officer – TRINTOC
1993-1994	Head – Legal Services – The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago (N.G.C.)
September 1995	Associate – Firm of Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan.
January 1998	Present ~ Partner – Firm of Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan.

### Associations and Committees

1988-2001	Member of the Board of Governors of The Institute of Marine Affairs.
2003-2009	Director of The United Way of Trinidad and Tobago
2012-Present	Director of American Life and General Insurance Company (Trinidad and Tobago) Limited now Pan-American Insurance Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited
2001- 2016	Commissioner – Elections and Boundaries Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
2016 – Present	Chairman – Elections and Boundaries Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago



## **Mr Marc Mayrand**

Marc Mayrand's was appointed as Chief Electoral Officer of Canada by the House of Commons on February 21, 2007. He became the sixth person to hold the office since the position was established in 1920.

Before heading Elections Canada, Mr. Mayrand had served as Superintendent of Bankruptcy since May 1997. After joining the Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy in 1982, he held a variety of positions of increasing scope and responsibility, including Deputy Superintendent, Programs, Standards and Regulatory Affairs and Deputy Superintendent, Operations. Before joining the federal public service and the Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy, Mr. Mayrand was a full-time professor at the University of Ottawa, Civil Law Section, where he taught Insolvency, Corporate/Commercial Law, and Public and Administrative Law.

## **Mr Craig Jenness**

Mr Craig Jenness is the Director of the Electoral Assistance Division in the Department of Political Affairs (EAD/DPA) with the United Nations Secretariat in New York. As Director, he advises the Secretary-General and the United Nations' Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities on matters relating to requests from Member States for electoral assistance. Mr Jenness assumed the post of Director of EAD/DPA in July 2006.

Before joining EAD/DPA, Mr Jenness was appointed by the Secretary-General to serve as International Commissioner on the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq. As International Commissioner, he headed all UN electoral assistance to the Iraq Election Commission for the December 2005 General Elections. He was also a non-voting member of the Election Commission. Prior to assuming this post, Mr Jenness served in the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as the Senior Adviser to the SRSG. From 2001 to 2004 he was Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje. His previous experience includes missions with the UN and the OSCE in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Cambodia. Mr Jenness also served as Head of the OSCE's Election Support Team to Afghanistan during the parliamentary and provincial elections in 2005, as a member of the UN Expert Panel for the Afghanistan presidential elections in 2004 and as Head of the IOM Out-of-Country Voting Programme in Iran for the 2004 Afghan elections.

## **Mr Mark Stevens**

Mark Stevens is an election expert with a specialisation in election observation. He has over twenty years' experience and is currently an independent consultant working on election-related projects for a wide range of international institutions, including the Commonwealth, EU, Carter Center and IDEA. From 2007-2013 Mark was Head of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Democracy Section, managing the organization's electoral assistance and election observation programming during which time he also led on the establishment of the Commonwealth Electoral Network. Between 2002 and 2007, Mark was Director of the EU NEEDS project, which included drafting of the EU's Election Observation Handbook and Compendium of International Standards for Elections. Mark has worked on some 50 election observation missions for the OSCE/ODIHR, EU and Commonwealth. Most recently Mark was Deputy Chief Observer for the EU Mission in Myanmar and Election Expert for the EU Election Exploratory Mission to Zambia.

## **Ms Kate Sullivan**

Kate Sullivan has most recently been working as a UN electoral advisor, leading UNDP electoral teams in Myanmar, Yemen, Libya and Moldova. She previously worked on electoral and related issues in the Solomon Islands, Indonesia and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Kate has almost twenty years of practical electoral administration and policy experience, including as Head of Electoral Administration at the UK Electoral Commission and roles at the Australian Electoral Commission and International IDEA. She is a graduate of the Australian National University and the School of Oriental & African Studies at the University of London.

## **Mr Simon Gimson**

Mr Gimson is Director of the Political Division in the Commonwealth Secretariat, overseeing the Secretariat's political relationships with the 53 member states of the Commonwealth as well as its support for elections and advancing democracy. Prior to his appointment as Director, Political Division (July 2015), Mr Gimson served as Head of Office to the former Commonwealth Secretary-General, Kamallesh Sharma (January 2009-July 2015). Mr Gimson was previously a New Zealand diplomat with responsibility for development assistance programmes in small states of the Pacific region before postings to Papua New Guinea, and France where he was Permanent Representative to UNESCO. From 1993 to 1997 he was posted to the United Kingdom as Special Assistant to The Queen's Private Secretary.

## **Mr Neil Ford**

Mr Ford is Director of the Communications Division at the Commonwealth Secretariat, responsible for the brand and visibility of the organisation plus communication with external stakeholders through the organisation's websites along with mainstream and social media. Prior to joining the Commonwealth, Mr Ford was Director of Public Information at UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. His work in the UN System includes assignments with UNICEF in Nairobi and Dakar and the UN Population Fund in New York. Mr Ford began his career as a reporter with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), where he won a national journalism award. As one of the CBC's National News Reporters, he was responsible for training new journalists, and has worked as a media trainer in Arctic Canada, Namibia and the Kyrgyz Republic.

## **Fern Narcis-Scope BA, LLB, LEC**

Mrs. Narcis-Scope is a graduate of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill and St. Augustine campuses. She holds a Bachelor of Law degree (Upper Second Class Honours) and Legal Education Certificate, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree (Upper Second Class Honours) in History.

Her wide and varied experience includes positions as Legal Counsel/Corporate Secretary at several State Enterprises; Law Lecturer for seven years and Legal Officer at one of Trinidad and Tobago's Government Ministries. Ms. Narcis joined the Elections and Boundaries Commission of Trinidad and Tobago as its Senior Legal Officer and Secretary to the Board of Commissioners in April, 2010.

She brings to the position a comprehensive knowledge of the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago, Public Corporate Governance, Public/ Administrative Law; and Governmental procedures and practices.

# Commonwealth Electoral Network (CEN) Conference Delegates 2016

	Antigua & Barbuda	Miss	Lorna Simon		Mozambique	Mr	Paulo Isac Arsenio Manuel Cuinica
	Bangladesh	Mr	Mohammad Abu Hafiz		Namibia	Adv	Notemba Tjipueja
	Barbados	Mrs	Angela Taylor		Nigeria	Mrs Mrs	Blessing Obidegwu Amina Zakari
	Belize	Mrs	Josephine Tamai		Pakistan	Mr	Abdul Qayyum
	Botswana	Dr Mrs	Dintle Sparkie Rapoo Keireng AuntieZuze		St Kitts & Nevis	Mr	Imru Nassibou Sellassie Butler
	Cameroon	Dr	Samuel Azu'u Fonkam		Saint Lucia	Mr	Michael N Flood
	Canada	Ms Mr	Madeleine Dupuis Marc Mayrand		St Vincent & The Grenadines	Ms	Kadean Williams
	Dominica	Mr Mrs	Gerald D. Burton Vincentia Adrien		Samoa	Mr	Mathew Lemisio
	Fiji	Mr	Mohammed Saneem		Seychelles	Mr	Hendrick Gappy
	Ghana	Miss	Dorcas Crentsil		Sierra Leone	Mr	Albert Massaquoi
	Grenada	Mr	Alex Phillip		Solomon Islands	Mr	Alphonsus Pero
	Guyana	Mr Mr Dr	Vishnu Persaud Keith Lowenfield Robert Stephen Surujbally		South Africa	Mr	Terry Tselane
	India	Mr Mr	Om Prakash Rawat Nikhil Kumar		Sri Lanka	Prof	Ratnajeevan Hoole
	Jamaica	Mr	Orrette Fisher		Swaziland	Mr	Shadrack George Bafana Dlamini
	Kenya	Mr Mr	Mohamed Hussun Alawi Ahmed Issack Hassan		Trinidad & Tobago	Mr Mr Mrs	Mark Ramkerrysingh Ramesh Nanan Fern Narcis-Scope
	Kiribati	Mr	Teewaa Tonaeka		Tuvalu	Ms	Limasene Teatu
	Lesotho	Mrs	Pontso Mamatlere Matete		Uganda	Mr Dr. Mr	Joshua Sebintu Wamala Kiggundu Badru Malimbo Sam Asiiimwe Rwakoojo
	Malawi	Mr	Willie Kalonga		Vanuatu	Mr	Joe Johnson Iati
	Maldives	Mr	Ahmed Sulaiman				
	Mauritius	Mr	Mohammad Irfan Abdool Rahman				

# Commonwealth Secretaries General over the Years



*Former Secretary General*  
**Chief Emeka Anyaoku**



*Former Secretary General*  
**Arnold Smith**



*Former Secretary General*  
**Sir Shridath "Sonny" Rampha**



*Former Secretary General*  
**Sir Don McKinnon**



*Former Secretary General*  
**Kamallesh Sharma**

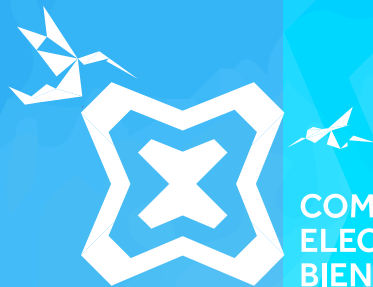


*Secretary General*  
**Patricia Scotland**  
*Present*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Elections and Boundaries Commission of Trinidad and Tobago wishes to thank the members of our Local Planning Committee and the Commonwealth Secretariat for their efforts in organizing this event. We further wish all visiting delegates a successful 2016 Conference and do enjoy our country's hospitality.



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ELECTORAL NETWORK  
BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

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The Commonwealth  
Electoral Network



ELECTIONS &  
BOUNDARIES  
COMMISSION  
Partners in Democracy

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