

SPECIAL EDITION

Death of Sir Robin Vanderfelt (1921-2007), Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from 1961 to 1986.

Sir Robin Vanderfelt, who served as Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for 25 years until his retirement in 1986, died on 29 October after a brief illness.

Sir Robin guided the Association through a period of extensive expansion as former colonies gained independence and continued as active members of both the Commonwealth and the CPA. The challenges he handled with aplomb are underlined by the fact that during his tenure the membership of the Association rose from 71 Branches to more than 130.

Under his guidance, the CPA also established itself as a Commonwealth organization distinct from both the United Kingdom Parliament and the intergovernmental Commonwealth.

CPA Secretary-General Dr William Shija expressed his condolences to the family of Sir Robin. He said that his death was a great loss and that he had been a highly distinguished servant of both the Commonwealth and the international parliamentary community. He was a man held in high regard by all those who worked with him within the CPA family and admired his integrity, patience and kindness.

Sir Robin Vanderfelt attended the University of Cambridge and in World War II served in India and Burma. In 1949, he became Assistant Secretary to the United Kingdom Branch of the CPA, a position he held for 10 years, before becoming Branch Secretary between 1960 and 1961.

A funeral service will be held on 6 November in Salisbury, United Kingdom, followed by an Open Memorial Service, at which the CPA Secretariat will be represented by members of staff.



Sir Robin Vanderfelt (centre) with former Secretaries-General Dr the Hon. David Tonkin (left) and Mr Arthur Donahoe, QC (right).