New CAA Council for 2016-2019

At a ceremony held at Lahore, Pakistan on Friday, 4th March 2016, Perit Vincent Cassar took over as the next President of the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) for the period 2016-2019. This followed a period of three years (2013-2016) as Senior Vice-President of the same Association to which post he was elected in 2013.

Perit Cassar succeeds Architect Rukshan Widyalankara of Sri Lanka who served as President from 2013-2016 and who will now sit on the CAA Council as the Immediate Past President.

The CAA, which had its first meeting in Malta in 1965 and thus celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, is made up of organizations that represent the body of architects in Member Countries of the Commonwealth. The local Kamra tal-Periti, of which Perit Cassar is a former President, is a full member of the CAA.

The CAA Council for 2013-2016 was present in Malta during CHOGM 2015 and took an active part in the events held during the meeting.

The other members on the new CAA Council (2016-2019) are Rukshan Widyalankara (Immediate Past President – Sri Lanka), Kalim Siddiqui (Senior Vice-President – Pakistan), John Geeson (Secretary/Treasurer – UK), Sithabile Mathe (Vice President Africa - Botswana), Dik Jarman (Vice President Oceania - Australia), Jalal Ahmed (Vice President Asia - Bangladesh), Peter Oborn (Vice President Europe - UK), Wycliffe Morten (Vice President Americas – St Kitts and Nevis), Jayantha Perera (Chair Communications – Sri Lanka), Christos Panayiotides (Chair Education - Cyprus), Chandana Edirisuriya (Chair Practice – Sri Lanka), Musa Sada (Alternate Vice President Africa - Nigeria) and Nadeesha Yahampath (Executive Director – Sri Lanka).

Perit Cassar, a graduate in Architecture and Civil Engineering from the University of Malta, joined the Public Service in 1973 as a Junior Architect and Civil Engineer with the then Public Works Department. In 1992, with the reorganization of the Public Works Department into the Works Division made up of a number of Departments, Perit Cassar was appointed as its first Director General, a position he actively occupied till 2003.

Following the Malta General Elections in April 2003 Perit Cassar was appointed as the Permanent Secretary within the Ministry for Youth and the Arts which portfolio included all aspects related to Youth, Sport, the Arts, Theatre, Music and Cultural Heritage. In February 2004 with the establishment of the Ministry for Urban Development and Roads, responsible for urban development and land transport, he assumed the responsibility for that Ministry as its Permanent Secretary.

Perit Cassar retired from Government service in June 2008 and since April 2013 holds the position of Chairman of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority.
Perit Cassar is a Fellow of the Institute of Civil Engineers (FICE) and a Fellow of the Institute of Health Estate Engineering Management (FIHEEM). He is a former President of the Rotary Club La Valette, former Chief Scout of the Scout Association of Malta and former President of the Kamra tal-Periti. He has also previously served as a member of the Executive Board of the Architects’ Council of Europe (ACE) as its Treasurer and Co-ordinator for Thematic Area ‘Environment and Sustainability’ besides representing the Kamra tal-Periti in the European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE).

At Lahore the CAA held its last Council meeting for the period 2013-2016 and this was followed by the first meeting for the period 2016-2019. During this event the CAA, in conjunction with the Institute of Architects of Pakistan, announced the winners of the Robert Matthew Award. This Award which commemorates CAA’s first President, Sir Robert Matthew, recognizes also the innovative contributions to the development of architecture in the Commonwealth context. The Award is given to an architect or architectural office making the most out-standing contribution having particular relevance to the country or region in which the architect or architectural office operates. This year’s Award was shared jointly by Grimshaw Architects of the UK and Pervaiz Vandal and Associates of Pakistan.

The members of the CAA also had the opportunity to attend the Institute of Architects of Pakistan Expo (IAPEx2016). Perit Cassar, together with Architect Sithabile Mathe, a member of the CAA Council, also attended a meeting with students of architecture from the various Schools of Architecture from around Pakistan and at which meeting they answered questions posed by the students.

Nadeesha Yahampath
Executive Director - CAA