

respect and  
understanding  
Goa  
Melbourne  
Racism and  
Lusaka  
Apartheid in  
Gleneagles  
Commonwealth  
London  
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# Commonwealth Declarations



The Commonwealth



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# Commonwealth Declarations



The Commonwealth

Commonwealth Secretariat  
Marlborough House  
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London SW1Y 5HX  
United Kingdom

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# Foreword

This collection of Commonwealth declarations reads in many ways like a musical score for the continuing symphony of Commonwealth connection and cooperation. There are recurring motifs and themes, which become ever more familiar and bold as they are explored and then built upon in new ways as the composition progresses.

Early on, the 1949 London Declaration marks the opening of a new movement, maintaining the familiar harmony, yet developing it in ways never before attempted – the transformation of an empire into a mutually supporting family of nations and peoples. It was this brief yet visionary declaration which brought into being the Commonwealth we know today. Indeed, as has been sagely observed, the collective will of Commonwealth leaders expressed in those few short paragraphs meant that nothing had changed and yet everything had changed.

Such dynamism combined with continuity has provided the basis and set the tone for the many pioneering and transformational developments of succeeding decades to which the documents brought together in this publication bear witness. The progress, impact and opportunity which they opened up were possible only because of the distinctive organic nature of Commonwealth collaboration. With roots going deep and branches spreading wide, the growing and interconnected networks which flourish among our nations and people have created a vibrant geopolitical ecosystem, the benefits of which extend outward and beyond the boundaries of our own membership.

As more and more nations have grown to maturity and become independent, awareness of how all are interdependent has also grown. Our shared understanding is that as we work closely together towards more sustainable development and to deepen democracy, all may give and all should gain. The result is that the Commonwealth shines as a beacon for multilateralism, working together to achieve practical progress for the good of all – the common weal. The cities and other locations which lend their names to these declarations speak of the inclusiveness of the Commonwealth, just as the range of topics listed in these pages convey its ambition and impact: from Agriculture and Apartheid through Sport and Technology Transfer to Women and Youth.

When we read, reflect and respond to the vision and determination to make an impact which these declarations represent, we are reminded that they are made in the name of all our people, by the governments which serve them. Carefully crafted to record agreement by our countries as to the basis on which collective action can be taken, they are living documents which enable us to carry forward our work and partnership for the peace and prosperity of our 2.4 billion people, and to protect our planet and its resources.

So it is telling that often the initial impetus towards agreement at the highest level by Commonwealth Heads of Government has had its origins among concerned individuals or communities in our member countries coming together and deciding to take action. The fact that this has then been swiftly translated into international declarations is a powerful affirmation of the opening words of our Charter: 'We the people of the Commonwealth'.

The readiness with which we mobilise collective action as new prospects for cooperation continue to open up demonstrates that the ability of the Commonwealth to adapt is matched by the agility with which it can respond to emerging needs and changing circumstances. Far more than mere words, these declarations are the song sheets of the Commonwealth, enabling our nations to sing to the same tune as we continue to dance in new ways to the ever-changing music of time.

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC  
Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

# Declaration Signed by the Five Prime Ministers

## United Kingdom, 1944

We, The King's Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, have now, for the first time since the outbreak of the war, been able to meet together to discuss common problems and future plans. The representatives of India at the War Cabinet and the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia have joined in our deliberations and are united with us.

At this memorable meeting, in the fifth year of the war, we give thanks for deliverance from the worst perils which have menaced us in the course of this long and terrible struggle against tyranny. Though hard and bitter battles lie ahead, we now see before us, in the ever growing might of the forces of the United Nations, and in the defeats already inflicted on the foe, by land, by sea and in the air, the sure presage of our future victory.

To all our Armed Forces who in many lands are preserving our liberties with their lives, and to the peoples of all our countries whose efforts, fortitude and conviction have sustained the struggle, we express our admiration and gratitude. We honour the famous deeds of the Forces of the United States and of Soviet Russia, and pay our tribute to the fighting tenacity of the many states and nations joined with us. We remember indeed the prolonged, stubborn resistance of China, the first to be attacked by the authors of world-aggression, and we rejoice in the unquenchable spirit of our comrades in every country still in the grip of the enemy. We shall not turn from the conflict till they are restored to freedom. Not one who marches with us shall be abandoned.

We have examined the part which the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations should bear against Germany and Japan, in harmony with our Allies. We are in cordial agreement with the general plans which have been laid before us. As in the days when we stood all alone against Germany, we affirm our inflexible and unwearied resolve to continue in the general war with the utmost of our strength until the defeat and downfall of our cruel, barbarous foes has been accomplished. We shall hold back nothing to reach the goal and bring to the speediest end the agony of mankind.

We have also examined together the principles which determine our foreign policies, and their application to current problems. Here too we are in complete agreement.

We are unitedly resolved to continue, shoulder to shoulder with our Allies, all needful exertions which will aid our Fleets, Armies and Air Forces during the war and thereafter to make sure of an enduring peace. We trust and pray that the victory, which will certainly be won, will carry with it a sense of hope and freedom for all the world. It is our aim that, when the storm and passions of war have passed away, all countries now overrun by the enemy shall be free to decide for themselves their future form of democratic government. Mutual respect and honest conduct between nations is our chief desire. We are determined to work with all peace-loving peoples in order that tyranny and aggression shall be removed or, if need be, struck down wherever it raises its head. The peoples of the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations willingly make their sacrifices to the common cause. We seek no advantages for ourselves at the cost of others. We desire the welfare and social advance of all nations and that they may help each other to better and broader days.

We affirm that after the war a World Organization to maintain peace and security should be set up and endowed with the necessary power and authority to prevent aggression and violence.

In a world torn by strife, we have met here in unity. That unity finds its strength, not in any formal bond but in the hidden springs from which human action flows. We rejoice in our inheritance of loyalties and ideals, and proclaim our sense of kinship to one another. Our system of free association has enabled us, each and all, to claim a full share of the common burden. Although spread across the globe, we have stood together through the stresses of two World Wars, and have been welded the stronger thereby. We believe that when victory is won and peace returns, this same free association, this inherent unity of purpose, will make us able to do further service to mankind.

16 May 1944

Issued at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Meeting,  
London, United Kingdom, 1-16 May 1944

# London Declaration

## United Kingdom, 1949

During the past week the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, and the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs have met in London to exchange views upon the important constitutional issues arising from India's decision to adopt a republican form of constitution and her desire to continue her membership of the Commonwealth.

The discussions have been concerned with the effects of such a development upon the existing structure of the Commonwealth and the constitutional relations between its members. They have been conducted in an atmosphere of goodwill and mutual understanding, and have had as their historical back ground the traditional capacity of the Commonwealth to strengthen its unity of purpose while adapting its organization and procedures to changing circumstances.

After full discussion the representatives of the Governments of all the Commonwealth countries have agreed that the conclusions reached should be placed on record in the following declaration: -

The Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, whose countries are united as Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and owe a common allegiance to the Crown, which is also the symbol of their free association, have considered the impending constitutional changes in India.

The Government of India have informed the other Governments of the Commonwealth of the intention of the Indian people that under the new constitution which is about to be adopted India shall become a sovereign independent Republic. The Government of India have, however, declared and affirmed India's desire to continue her full membership of the Commonwealth of Nations and her acceptance of The King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and as such the Head of the Commonwealth.

The Governments of the other countries of the Commonwealth the basis of whose membership of the Commonwealth is not hereby changed, accept and recognise India's continuing membership in accordance with the terms of this declaration.

Accordingly the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon hereby declare that they remain united as free and equal members of the Commonwealth of Nations, freely co-operating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress.

These constitutional questions have been the sole subject of discussion at the full meetings of Prime Ministers.

26 April 1949

Issued at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Meeting,  
London, United Kingdom, 22-27 April 1949

# Declaration by Commonwealth Prime Ministers

## United Kingdom, 1951

The Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Southern Rhodesia, and the South African Minister for the Interior, representing the Prime Minister of South Africa, desire, before concluding the present London Meeting, to state in simple terms some of the great principles which have inspired the discussions and strengthened mutual understanding.

Our historic Commonwealth, which comprises one-fourth of the world's population and extends over all the continents and oceans of the world, is singularly well constituted to enable it to study and in some measure to comprehend the vexed questions which beset the world. These do not fit neatly into old patterns. In Europe there are grave and urgent problems which must be solved, and in Asia the rise of new nations and new national unities must be recognised, if peace is to be secured on a basis of justice and prosperity.

The Commonwealth has the unique quality of embracing nations and peoples from every continent. Our own meetings have, therefore, given us special knowledge, and have left us with a special sense of responsibility.

We are, both jointly and severally, pledged to peace. This is not merely a pledge given to other nations; it is solemnly given to our own.

We believe that there are certain courses which must be pursued if real peace is to come.

First, the wounds of the last war must be healed; settlements with Germany and Japan should be made with speed.

Second, we must do what we can to understand those who appear to differ from us. The great antidote to war is hope; its greatest promoter is despair. When we say that war is not inevitable, we do not just mean that we shall prepare and be strong, and that our strength may deter aggression. We also mean that, in a world worn out and distorted by war, there must be an



overwhelming majority of the people of all lands who want peace. We must not despair of reaching them. In all our discussions we have made it clear to each other, as we now do to the world, that as Commonwealth Prime Ministers we would welcome any feasible arrangement for a frank exchange of views with Stalin or with Mao Tse Tung. We should, in the name of common humanity, make a supreme effort to see clearly into each other's hearts and minds.

We do not seek to interfere in the affairs of the Soviet Union or China or any other country; we are simply determined to retain the mastery of our own affairs, without fear of aggression.

It is with these considerations in mind that in the last few days we have directed our efforts to the securing of a cessation of hostilities in Korea, so that around the conference table the Great Powers concerned may compose their differences on a basis which will strengthen the United Nations and fulfil the purposes of the Charter.

We all have deep within us a faith in the existence of a purpose of justice in this world, and we believe it to be our duty to forward it by everything we do. Indeed, this sustaining, faith derives added strength from the fact that at our meetings it has been simply and sincerely expressed by men of different races, traditions and creeds.

We think it proper to declare once more that the Commonwealth countries, though they have a special and precious association which they value profoundly, do not regard themselves as some sort of exclusive body. They welcome co-operation with other nations. It has been their privilege to be able to work closely with the United States of America, whose efforts in the direction of assisting many war-stricken nations are warmly regarded, and whose practical support of the United Nations has contributed much to the strength of that organisation. We will at all times seek, by process of discussion, to promote the utmost harmony among ourselves and to arrive at common international policies with the United States, and with all other friendly and co-operative nations.

Our support of the United Nations needs no re-affirmation. The Commonwealth and the United Nations are not inconsistent bodies. On the contrary, the existence of the Commonwealth, linked together by ties of friendship, common purpose and common endeavour, is a source of power behind the Charter.

We of the Commonwealth recognise that the peace and prosperity of the free world cannot be assured while millions live in poverty. We are therefore resolved, while keeping our own economies strong, to promote economic and social development in the under-developed countries, by providing such financial and economic assistance as we can command and by making full use of our resources of scientific and technical experience. The Colombo Plan is practical evidence of this intention. The Commonwealth countries concerned will continue to contribute, to the full extent of their ability, towards the execution of this and similar schemes for developing economic resources and raising social standards.

In brief, the problem of peace is that of removing the causes of war; of easing tension and promoting understanding; of assisting those less-developed nations which need our aid; of being at all times willing to discuss our differences without foolishly assuming that all attempts to secure peace are a form of 'appeasement'. We will cultivate the friendships we now have, and hope that with wise approaches differences may become less and ultimately disappear.

But, while we say these things with a full heart, we are bound to add that, so long as the fear of aggression exists, we will have to strengthen our defences with all speed and diligence. This may well result in placing heavy burdens up on our peoples. It is our firm belief that the rule of law should govern human conduct; and we are prepared to accept whatever sacrifices may be necessary to uphold, with all other nations, those principles of international law and order which are essential conditions for world peace and progress.

12 January 1951

Issued at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Meeting,  
London, United Kingdom, 4-13 January, 1951

# The Declaration of Commonwealth Principles

## Singapore, 1971

The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of independent sovereign states, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace.

Members of the Commonwealth come from territories in the six continents and five oceans, include peoples of different races, languages and religions, and display every stage of economic development from poor developing nations to wealthy industrialised nations. They encompass a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.

Membership of the Commonwealth is compatible with the freedom of member governments to be nonaligned or to belong to any other grouping, association or alliance. Within this diversity all members of the Commonwealth hold certain principles in common. It is by pursuing these principles that the Commonwealth can continue to influence international society for the benefit of mankind.

We believe that international peace and order are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind; we therefore support the United Nations and seek to strengthen its influence for peace in the world, and its efforts to remove the causes of tension between nations.

We believe in the liberty of the individual, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, and in their inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which they live. We therefore strive to promote in each of our countries those representative institutions and guarantees for personal freedom under the law that are our common heritage.

We recognise racial prejudice as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society. Each of us will vigorously combat this evil within our own nation. No country will afford to regimes which practice racial discrimination assistance which in its own judgment directly contributes to the pursuit or consolidation of this evil policy.

We oppose all forms of colonial domination and racial oppression and are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality. We will therefore use all our efforts to foster human equality and dignity everywhere, and to further the principles of self-determination and non-racialism.

We believe that the wide disparities in wealth now existing between different sections of mankind are too great to be tolerated; they also create world tensions; our aim is their progressive removal. We therefore seek to use our efforts to overcome poverty, ignorance and disease, in raising standards of life and achieving a more equitable international society.

To this end our aim is to achieve the freest possible flow of international trade on terms fair and equitable to all, taking into account the special requirements of the developing countries, and to encourage the flow of adequate resources, including governmental and private resources, to the developing countries, bearing in mind the importance of doing this in a true spirit of partnership and of establishing for this purpose in the developing countries conditions which are conducive to sustained investment and growth.

We believe that international co-operation is essential to remove the causes of war, promote tolerance, combat injustice, and secure development among the peoples of the world; we are convinced that the Commonwealth is one of the most fruitful associations for these purposes.

In pursuing these principles the members of the Commonwealth believe that they can provide a constructive example of the multi-national approach which is vital to peace and progress in the modern world. The association is based on consultation, discussion and co-operation.

In rejecting coercion as an instrument of policy they recognise that the security of each member state from external aggression is a matter of concern to all members. It provides many channels for continuing exchanges of knowledge and views on professional, cultural, economic, legal and political issues among the member states.

These relationships we intend to foster and extend, for we believe that our multi-national association can expand human understanding and understanding among nations, assist in the elimination of discrimination based on differences of race, colour or creed, maintain and strengthen personal liberty, contribute to the enrichment of life for all, and provide a powerful influence for peace among nations.

22 January 1971

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Singapore, 14-22 January 1971

# The Lusaka Declaration of the Commonwealth on Racism and Racial Prejudice

## Zambia, 1979

We, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, recalling the Declaration of Commonwealth Principles made at Singapore on 22 January 1971 and the statement on Apartheid in Sport, issued in London on 15 June 1977, have decided to proclaim our desire to work jointly as well as severally for the eradication of all forms of racism and racial prejudice.

The Commonwealth is an institution devoted to the promotion of international understanding and world peace, and to the achievement of equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, sex, creed or political belief, and is committed to the eradication of the dangerous evils of racism and racial prejudice.

We now, therefore, proclaim this Lusaka Declaration of the Commonwealth on Racism and Racial Prejudice.

United in our desire to rid the world of the evils of racism and racial prejudice, we proclaim our faith in the inherent dignity and worth of the human person and declare that:

1. the peoples of the Commonwealth have the right to live freely in dignity and equality, without any distinction or exclusion based on race, colour, sex, descent, or national or ethnic origin;
2. while everyone is free to retain diversity in his or her culture and lifestyle, this diversity does not justify the perpetuation of racial prejudice or racially discriminatory practices;
3. everyone has the right to equality before the law and equal justice under the law;
4. everyone has the right to effective remedies and protection against any form of discrimination based on the grounds of race, colour, sex, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

We reject as inhuman and intolerable all policies designed to perpetuate apartheid, racial segregation or other policies based on theories that racial groups are or may be inherently superior or inferior.

We reaffirm that it is the duty of all the peoples of the Commonwealth to work together for the total eradication of the infamous policy of apartheid which is internationally recognised as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind and the very existence of which is an affront to humanity.

We agree that everyone has the right to protection against acts of incitement to racial hatred and discrimination, whether committed by individuals, groups or other organisations.

We affirm that there should be no discrimination based on race, colour, sex, descent or national or ethnic origin in the acquisition or exercise of the right to vote; in the field of civil rights or access to citizenship; or in the economic, social or cultural fields, particularly education, health, employment, occupation, housing, social security and cultural life.

We attach particular importance to ensuring that children shall be protected from practices which may foster racism or racial prejudice. Children have the right to be brought up and educated in a spirit of tolerance and understanding so as to be able to contribute fully to the building of future societies based on justice and friendship.

We believe that those groups in societies who may be especially disadvantaged because of residual racist attitudes are entitled to the fullest protection of the law.

We recognise that the history of the Commonwealth and its diversity require that special attention should be paid to the problems of indigenous minorities. We recognise that the same special attention should be paid to the problems of immigrants, immigrant workers and refugees.

We agree that special measures may in particular circumstances be required to advance the development of disadvantaged groups in society. We recognise that the effects of colonialism or racism in the past may make desirable special provisions for the social and economic enhancement of indigenous populations.

Inspired by the principles of freedom and equality which characterise our association, we accept the solemn duty of working together to eliminate racism and racial prejudice. This duty involves the acceptance of the principle that positive measures may be required to advance the elimination

of racism, including assistance to those struggling to rid themselves and their environment of the practice.

Being aware that legislation alone cannot eliminate racism and racial prejudice, we endorse the need to initiate public information and education policies designed to promote understanding, tolerance, respect and friendship among peoples and racial groups.

We are particularly conscious of the importance of the contribution the media can make to human rights and the eradication of racism and racial prejudice by helping to eliminate ignorance and misunderstanding between people and by drawing attention to the evils which afflict humanity. We affirm the importance of truthful presentation of facts in order to ensure that the public are fully informed of the dangers presented by racism and racial prejudice.

In accordance with established principles of International Law and, in particular, the provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, we affirm that everyone is, at all times and in all places, entitled to be protected in the enjoyment of the right to be free of racism and racial prejudice.

We believe that the existence in the world of apartheid and racial discrimination is a matter of concern to all human beings. We recognise that we share an international responsibility to work together for the total eradication of apartheid and racial discrimination.

We note that racism and racial prejudice, wherever they occur, are significant factors contributing to tension between nations and thus inhibit peaceful progress and development. We believe that the goal of the eradication of racism stands as a critical priority for governments of the Commonwealth, committed as they are to the promotion of the ideals of peaceful and happy lives for their people.

We intend that the Commonwealth, as an international organisation with a fundamental and deep-rooted attachment to principles of freedom and equality, should co-operate with other organisations in the fulfilment of these principles. In particular the Commonwealth should seek to enhance the co-ordination of its activities with those of other organisations similarly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

7 August 1979

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Lusaka, Zambia, 1-7 August 1979

# The Melbourne Declaration

## Australia, 1981

We, the Heads of Government here assembled, drawn from five continents representing a quarter of the world 's entire population:

1. Affirm our strong and unanimous conviction that all men and women have the right to live in ways that sustain and nourish human dignity;
2. Believe that this right imposes obligations on all states, large and small, not only in respect to their own people but in their dealings with all other nations;
3. Assert that the gross inequality of wealth and opportunity currently existing in the world, and the unbroken circle of poverty in which the lives of millions in developing countries are confined, are fundamental sources of tension and instability in the world;
4. As a consequence, assert our unanimous conviction that there must be determined and dedicated action at national and international levels to reduce that inequality and to break that circle;
5. Believe that for all these reasons it is imperative to revitalise the dialogue between developed and developing countries;
6. Declare that this will require a political commitment, clear vision and intellectual realism which have thus far escaped mankind and to all of which the Commonwealth can greatly contribute;
7. Believe that the dialogue must be conducted with a genuine willingness to accept real and significant changes commensurate with the urgency of the problems we now face;
8. Firmly believe that the choice is not between change and no change but between timely, adequate, managed change and disruptive, involuntary change imposed by breakdown and conflict;
9. Maintain that success will only be achieved as states recognise and give due weight to the essential inter-dependence of peoples and of states;
10. Declare that, while the most urgent humanitarian considerations demand action, self-interest itself warrants a constructive and positive approach to these great human problems by all governments;



11. Recognise that in the process of negotiations, nations must cast aside inhibitions and habits which have thwarted progress in the past and find new ways of talking constructively to one another so as to reach agreement on effective joint action;
12. Note that, as well as technical economic considerations, it is imperative that states keep in the fore front of their attention the larger moral, political and strategic dimensions of what is at stake;
13. Maintain that while the problems are formidable, they are not of such a weight that they will defeat our purpose, given political will and an understanding of the needs of different countries and groups;
14. Assert that what is at stake-in terms of how hundreds of millions will live or die; of the prospects for co-operation or conflict; and of the prospects for economic advance or stagnation-is of such vital importance in human terms that it would be an indictment of this generation if that political will and the readiness to find a creative compromise were not found;
15. Firmly believe that the issues are so important that they require the personal commitment and involvement of political leaders who, representing the will of their people, have the greatest power to advance the common cause of mankind;
16. Attaching the highest importance to the principles and objectives of this document, recognising the mutual interests and interdependence of all nations, declare our common resolve: to end the present impasse: to advance the dialogue between developed and developing countries: to infuse an increased sense of urgency and direction into the resolution of these common problems of mankind : and solemnly call on all leaders of all countries to join us in a commitment to taking prompt , practical and effective action to that end.

3 October 1981

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Melbourne, Australia, 1981, 30 September – 7 October

# The Goa Declaration on International Security

## India, 1983

As we meet together in India at the end of 1983, representing a quarter of the world's people from every continent and many regions, we have shared both our concerns and our hopes for international security. Despite differences of approach which affect the way we analyse and judge events, it is our perception that relationships between the world's major military alliances are in danger of becoming more confrontational. In the context of heightened tensions and a continuing build-up of nuclear arsenals, the future of civilisation as we know it could be threatened. None of our countries or peoples would be insulated from that fate.

We are alarmed by increasing disregard for the moral and legal principles which should govern the conduct of states; by the degree to which the ethic of peaceful settlement of disputes is being eroded and by the readiness of nations to resort to the illegal use of force.

At this time of crisis, we believe it to be imperative that the Soviet Union and the United States should summon up the political vision of a world in which their nations can live in peace. Their first objective must be to work for the resumption of a genuine political dialogue between themselves leading to a relaxation of tensions. We believe that Commonwealth governments can make a practical contribution in encouraging them to do so and in promoting a larger measure of international understanding than now exists.

Essential to that enlargement of understanding is the need to increase contacts at a variety of levels between the governments and peoples of East and West. A concerted effort is required to restore constructive dialogue to the conduct of East-West relations. Only thus can a climate of confidence be rebuilt in place of the prevailing one of fear and mistrust.

In all these pursuits we emphasise the supreme importance of political will. We therefore welcome Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's call for a new political dimension in the quest for international security. We support his efforts to restore active political contact and communication among all the nuclear weapon powers, and are willing to help these and other such efforts in all appropriate ways.

As Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has so consistently emphasised, the central issue in securing wider progress on disarmament is the stopping of the nuclear arms race. These are essential steps for progress in working towards a world released from the menace of nuclear weapons and their wider spread. If the resources released by disarmament were ploughed back in some measure into world development, the needs of the developing countries which are in the forefront of our concern could be significantly met.

We are concerned also over the diminishing capacity of international institutions to play an effective role in world affairs. Rejecting this negative trend, we pledge our renewed support for the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. There is, in our view, an urgent need to consider what practical steps can be taken to strengthen the United Nations system and to improve its capacity to fulfil the objectives of the Charter.

We are particularly concerned at the vulnerability of small states to external attack and interference in their affairs. These countries are members of the international community which must respect their independence and, at the very least, has a moral obligation to provide effectively for their territorial integrity. We have separately agreed on an urgent study of these issues. Additionally, however, we will play our part in helping the international community to make an appropriate response to the UN Secretary-General's call for a strengthening of collective security in keeping with the Charter.

Meeting here in India, we cannot emphasise too strongly our belief that an ethic of non-violence must be at the heart of all efforts to ensure peace and harmony in the world. That ethic requires dose adherence to the principle of peaceful settlement. Only by such a commitment on all sides will the world's people enjoy an environment of true international security.

Finally, we retain faith in human capacity to overcome the dangers and difficulties that threaten the world and to secure for all its people the prospect of a more peaceful international environment. We shall work together to fulfill that faith.

27 November, 1983

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
New Delhi, India, 23-29 November 1983

# The Nassau Declaration on World Order

## The Bahamas, 1985

1. On the Fortieth Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, we, the Commonwealth Heads of Government assembled at Nassau, recall to all countries and peoples the need for world order and the central importance of the United Nations system in which all should participate and from which all should benefit. In the world of today and of tomorrow, international co-operation is not an option but a necessity.
2. We believe that at this historic moment our world society should take stock of its considerable achievements as well as its failures, and allow hope and encouragement from the former to strengthen resolve in redressing the latter. Yet these very achievements make the more disturbing any movement away from multilateralism and internationalism, from a world aspiring to be governed by fair and open rules towards unilateral action and growing ascendance of power in all spheres: economic, political and military. We warn that a return to narrow nationalisms, both economic and political, in a climate of tension and confrontation between nations heightened by the nuclear arms race, invites again the dangers from which the world set out to rid itself at San Francisco in 1945. We issue that warning mindful that the nuclear menace imperils all peoples and nations and the very survival of our human species.
3. The conduct of relations between nations necessitates adherence to, and preservation of, certain accepted international norms and principles. A retreat from these norms and principles increases the threat to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of states. In particular, we are concerned that the world community face up to the nature and needs of small states, many of them among our membership, respond to their particular vulnerability with imagination and resolve and work to create an environment for their protection and support.

4. As a Commonwealth whose great majority live in poverty, we believe it imperative that the world community redouble its efforts to enlarge the prospects of social and economic advance for three-quarters of the human race. We recognise the progress achieved in developing countries in the last four decades through domestic effort and international support. However, the world must make better use of its collective resources to secure more equitable progress for all. In a global community of acknowledged and increasing interdependence between nations, which is undergoing rapid technological advance and which has the resources to meet the needs of all, the continuing disparities that divide the world's rich and poor are a daily reminder that only partnership and collective effort and recognition of economic realities will give a fresh thrust to growth and development for all. There is thus a pressing need to renew the consensus on international co-operation for development within the United Nations system and to revitalise multilateral institutions to meet the goals of our global society for sustainable economic growth within a framework of stability.
5. We recognise that the United Nations and its institutions are not without imperfections, but are convinced that the solution lies not in their rejection but in their rejuvenation. Using the system effectively is as important as changing it. We therefore welcome the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and others to enhance the effectiveness of the world body and its capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts, and pledge to work to this end.
6. In the spirit of international democracy, to which we attach importance, we hope that all nations will demonstrate the desire to seek accord and the will to negotiate constructively which are crucial to the success of global institutions. We believe that the Commonwealth's way of doing business, of seeking consensus based on equality and justice between nations, serves as an example for all.
7. Therefore, as leaders of the Commonwealth comprising one thousand million people and one third of the world's nations, and mindful that obligations devolve upon us separately and collectively:

We commit ourselves and our nations to work tirelessly in the pursuit of a world marked not by disorder and the use of competitive power but one governed by the principles of collective international co-operation and respect for the rights of all nations and peoples as the necessary foundation for lasting peace and assured economic and social development.

We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and precepts of the Charter of the United Nations and to the goal of strengthening the United Nations system as the central instrument of peace, security and co-operation among nations. As we ourselves categorically reject the use or threat of force as a means of settling disputes, we appeal to all governments to work to strengthen the institutions which contribute to orderly resolution of differences between nations and which sustain peace.

We rededicate ourselves to the principles of self-determination, non racialism, human freedom and equality, and co-operation between nations in the service of international understanding, development and world peace, which have guided the Commonwealth throughout its evolution.

We pledge ourselves to play a full part in revitalising international co-operation for development and concerted action to confront the crucial issues of international economic inequality.

We call upon the world community to construct a framework of collective security based on mutual trust and shared interest. All nations have a stake in disarmament. We therefore look for urgent agreement in reversing the arms race and on significant reductions, and eventual elimination, of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

We invite all peoples and nations to join in a universal effort to fulfil these objectives.

8. Believing that the theme of the Fortieth Anniversary celebrations, 'United Nations for a better world', expresses a profound need, we place the Commonwealth's proven qualities of understanding and bridge-building across the divides of race, religion and economic and political systems, at the service of the United Nations and of all efforts to make it more effective. We do so convinced that in the future of the United Nations lies the future of humanity.

21 October 1985

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Nassau, The Bahamas, 16 – 22 October 1985

# The Vancouver Declaration on World Trade

## Canada, 1987

1. The Commonwealth leaders representing a wide range of both developed and developing countries note with grave concern rising global protectionist pressures. Continuing implementation of protectionist measures would be counter-productive, would increase the risk of further exchange rate instability and would exacerbate the problems of development and indebtedness. Trade restrictions affect particularly the exports and growth prospects of developing countries and their ability to service debt, all of which in turn impact adversely on the economies of the industrial countries.
2. We welcome the progress of negotiations in the Uruguay Round covering a range of important subjects. We will work for a balanced outcome to develop a more open, viable and durable multilateral trading system to promote growth and development. We recognise the growing importance and the asymmetrical position of developing countries in the trading system. This underlines the need to give special consideration to their interests within the agreed framework of the Uruguay Round. It is essential that the Punta del Este commitments on 'standstill' and 'roll back' be fully respected and implemented.
3. We agree on the crucial need for reform of all trade-distorting agricultural policies, both domestic and international. We urge early action on agriculture in the Uruguay Round so as to reduce the uncertainty, imbalances and instability in world markets. This will benefit both developed and developing countries.
4. A strong, credible, working GATT is essential to the well-being of all trading countries and is the best bulwark against mounting protectionist pressures. The functioning of the GATT should be improved through enhancing its role in maintaining an open multilateral system and its capacity in the area of dispute settlement. We hope that the negotiations will make sufficient progress on agriculture and other key subjects to enable a mid-term ministerial review of the Uruguay Round as allowed for in the Punta del Este Declaration.

5. We welcome the assistance which the Commonwealth Secretariat is providing to member governments in the trade field, including the re establishment of a Trade Adviser's Office in Geneva and increased levels of technical support, and we request the Secretary-General to continue to give priority to work in this field. In addition, the larger states of the Commonwealth undertake to assist developing countries, including smaller states, through regular consultations and trade policy training programmes.

15 October 1987

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Vancouver, Canada, 13 – 17 October 1987



# Langkawi Declaration on the Environment

## Malaysia, 1989

1. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, representing a quarter of the world's population and a broad cross-section of global interests, are deeply concerned at the serious deterioration in the environment and the threat this poses to the well-being of present and future generations. Any delay in taking action to halt this progressive deterioration will result in permanent and irreversible damage.
2. The current threat to the environment, which is a common concern of all mankind, stems essentially from past neglect in managing the natural environment and resources. The environment has been degraded by decades of industrial and other forms of pollution, including unsafe disposal of toxic wastes, the burning of fossil fuels, nuclear testing and non-sustainable practices in agriculture, fishery and forestry.
3. The main environmental problems facing the world are the 'greenhouse effect' (which may lead to severe climatic changes that could include floods, drought and rising sea levels), the depletion of the ozone layer, acid rain, marine pollution, land degradation and the extinction of numerous animal and plant species. Some developing countries also face distinct environmental problems arising from poverty and population pressures. In addition, some islands and low-lying areas of other countries, are threatened by the prospect of rising sea level.
4. Many environmental problems transcend national boundaries and interests, necessitating a co-ordinated global effort. This is particularly true in areas outside national jurisdiction, and where there is transboundary pollution on land and in the oceans, atmosphere and outer space.
5. The need to protect the environment should be viewed in a balanced perspective and due emphasis be accorded to promoting economic growth and sustainable development, including eradication of poverty, meeting basic needs, and enhancing the quality of life. The

responsibility for ensuring a better environment should be equitably shared and the ability of developing countries to respond be taken into account.

6. To achieve sustainable development, economic growth is a compelling necessity. Sustainable development implies the incorporation of environmental concerns into economic planning and policies. Environmental concerns should not be used to introduce a new form of conditionality, nor as a pretext for creating unjustified barriers to trade.
7. The success of global and national environmental programmes requires mutually reinforcing strategies and the participation and commitment of all levels of society, government, individuals and organisations, industry and the scientific community.
8. Recognising that our shared environment binds all countries to a common future, we, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, resolved to act collectively and individually, commit ourselves to the following programme of action:
  - advance policies and programmes which help achieve sustainable development, including the development of new and better techniques in integrating the environmental dimension in economic decision-making;
  - strengthen and support the development of international funding mechanisms and appropriate decision-making procedures to respond to environmental protection needs which will include assisting developing countries to obtain access to and transfer of needed environmental technologies and which should take account of proposals for an International Environment Fund/ Planet Protection Fund;
  - support the work of the UNEP/WMO Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
  - call for the early conclusion of an international convention to protect and conserve the global climate and, in this context, applaud the efforts of member governments to advance the negotiation of a framework convention under UN auspices;

- support the findings and recommendations of the Commonwealth Expert Group's Report on Climate Change as a basis for achievable action to develop strategies for adapting to climate change and for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as making an important contribution to the work of the IPCC;
- support measures to improve energy conservation and energy efficiency;
- promote the reduction and eventual phase-out of substances depleting the ozone layer;
- promote afforestation and agricultural practices in developed and developing countries to arrest the increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide and halt the deterioration of land and water resources;
- strengthen efforts by developing countries in sustainable forest management and their manufacture and export of higher value-added forest products and, in this regard, support the activities of the International Tropical Timber Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation's Tropical Forestry Action Plan, as well as take note of the recommendations of the 13th Commonwealth Forestry Conference;
- support activities related to the conservation of biological diversity and genetic resources, including the conservation of significant areas of virgin forest and other protected natural habitats;
- support low-lying and island countries in their efforts to protect themselves and their vulnerable natural marine ecosystems from the effects of sea level rise;
- discourage and restrict non-sustainable fishing practices and seek to ban tangle net and pelagic drift net fishing;
- support efforts to prevent marine pollution including curbing ocean dumping of toxic wastes;
- strengthens international action to ensure the safe management and disposal of hazardous wastes and to reduce transboundary movements, particularly to prevent dumping in developing countries;

- participate in relevant international agreements relating to the environment and promote new and innovative instruments which will attract widespread support for protecting the global environment; and
  - strengthens national, regional and international institutions responsible for environmental protection as well as the promotion of active programmes on environmental education to heighten public awareness and support.
9. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, resolve to take immediate and positive actions on the basis of the above programme. In this regard, we pledge our full support for the convening of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development.
10. We call on the international community to join us in the endeavour.

21 October 1989

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 18 – 24 October 1989

# The Harare Commonwealth Declaration

## Zimbabwe, 1991

1. The Heads of Government of the countries of the Commonwealth, meeting in Harare, reaffirm their confidence in the Commonwealth as a voluntary association of sovereign independent states, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace.
2. Members of the Commonwealth include people of many different races and origins, encompass every state of economic development, and comprise a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.
3. The special strength of the Commonwealth lies in the combination of the diversity of its members with their shared inheritance in language, culture and the rule of law. The Commonwealth way is to seek consensus through consultation and the sharing of experience. It is uniquely placed to serve as a model and as a catalyst for new forms of friendship and co-operation to all in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.
4. Its members also share a commitment to certain fundamental principles. These were set out in a Declaration of Commonwealth Principles agreed by our predecessors at their Meeting in Singapore in 1971. Those principles have stood the test of time, and we reaffirm our full and continuing commitment to them today. In particular, no less today than 20 years ago:
  - we believe that international peace and order, global economic development and the rule of international law are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind;
  - we believe in the liberty of the individual under the law, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief, and in the individual's inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which he or she lives;

- we recognise racial prejudice and intolerance as a dangerous sickness and a threat to healthy development, and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil;
  - we oppose all forms of racial oppression, and we are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality;
  - we recognise the importance and urgency of economic and social development to satisfy the basic needs and aspirations of the vast majority of the peoples of the world, and seek the progressive removal of the wide disparities in living standards amongst our members.
5. In Harare, our purpose has been to apply those principles in the contemporary situation as the Commonwealth prepares to face the challenges of the 1990s and beyond.
  6. Internationally, the world is no longer locked in the iron grip of the Cold War. Totalitarianism is giving way to democracy and justice in many parts of the world. Decolonisation is largely complete. Significant changes are at last under way in South Africa. These changes, so desirable and heartening in themselves, present the world and the Commonwealth with new tasks and challenges.
  7. In the last twenty years, several Commonwealth countries have made significant progress in economic and social development. There is increasing recognition that commitment to market principles and openness to international trade and investment can promote economic progress and improve living standards. Many Commonwealth countries are poor and face acute problems, including excessive population growth, crushing poverty, debt burdens and environmental degradation. More than half our member states are particularly vulnerable because of their very small societies.
  8. Only sound and sustainable development can offer these millions the prospect of betterment. Achieving this will require a flow of public and private resources from the developed to the developing world, and domestic and international regimes conducive to the realisation of these goals. Development facilitates the task of tackling a range of problems which affect the whole global community such as environmental degradation, the problems of migration and refugees, the fight against communicable diseases, and drug production and trafficking.

9. Having reaffirmed the principles to which the Commonwealth is committed, and reviewed the problems and challenges which the world, and the Commonwealth as part of it, face, we pledge the Commonwealth and our countries to work with renewed vigour, concentrating especially in the following areas:
  - the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth:
    - democracy, democratic processes and institutions which reflect national circumstances, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, just and honest government;
    - fundamental human rights, including equal rights and opportunities for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief;
  - equality for women, so that they may exercise their full and equal rights;
  - provision of universal access to education for the population of our countries;
  - continuing action to bring about the end of apartheid and the establishment of a free, democratic, non-racial and prosperous South Africa;
  - the promotion of sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty in the countries of the Commonwealth through:
    - a stable international economic framework within which growth can be achieved;
    - sound economic management recognising the central role of the market economy;
    - effective population policies and programmes;
    - sound management of technological change;
    - the freest possible flow of multilateral trade on terms fair and equitable to all, taking account of the special requirements of developing countries;
    - an adequate flow of resources from the developed to developing countries, and action to alleviate the debt burdens of developing countries most in need;

- the development of human resources, in particular through education, training, health, culture, sport and programmes for strengthening family and community support, paying special attention to the needs of women, youth and children;
  - effective and increasing programmes of bilateral and multilateral co-operation aimed at raising living standards;
- extending the benefits of development within a framework of respect for human rights;
  - the protection of the environment through respect for the principles of sustainable development which we enunciated at Langkawi;
  - action to combat drug trafficking and abuse and communicable diseases;
  - help for small Commonwealth states in tackling their particular economic and security problems;
  - support of the United Nations and other international institutions in the world's search for peace, disarmament and effective arms control; and in the promotion of international consensus on major global political, economic and social issues.
10. To give weight and effectiveness to our commitments we intend to focus and improve Commonwealth co-operation in these areas. This would include strengthening the capacity of the Commonwealth to respond to requests from members for assistance in entrenching the practices of democracy, accountable administration and the rule of law.
  11. We call on all the intergovernmental institutions of the Commonwealth to seize the opportunities presented by these challenges. We pledge ourselves to assist them to develop programmes which harness our shared historical, professional, cultural and linguistic heritage and which complement the work of other international and regional organisations.
  12. We invite the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and non-governmental Commonwealth organisations to play their full part in promoting these objectives, in a spirit of co-operation and mutual support.
  13. In reaffirming the principles of the Commonwealth and in committing ourselves to pursue them in policy and action in response to the challenges of the 1990s, in areas where we believe that the Commonwealth has a distinctive contribution to offer, we the Heads



of Government express our determination to renew and enhance the value and importance of the Commonwealth as an institution which can and should strengthen and enrich the lives not only of its own members and their peoples but also of the wider community of peoples of which they are a part.

20 October 1991

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 21 October 1991

# Ottawa Declaration on Women and Structural Adjustment

## Zimbabwe, 1991

1. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, believe that the challenges created by the changing world economic environment must be met through sound, equitable and effective adjustment policies at both national and international levels. These policies are vital for achieving the non-inflationary economic growth and sustainable development necessary to enhance human well-being. We endorse the broader approach to adjustment set out in the Commonwealth Expert Group's Report, *Engendering Adjustment for the 1990s*, including its three general principles of an emphasis on social equity and economic growth as well as efficiency; full integration of women into the decision-making processes; and a supportive international environment.
2. We appreciate the determined efforts being made by many governments, inside and outside the Commonwealth, to reform both policies and institutions. Moves towards the creation of a more supportive global economic environment are also greatly valued. But we accept too that much more needs to be done if women are to regain the advances they lost in the 1980s partly as a result of inappropriate structural adjustment policies.
3. We are convinced that it is both essential and possible to design and implement policies and programmes that will improve the effectiveness, acceptability and sustainability of adjustment efforts. Structural adjustment cannot be sustained, development will be limited and the costs of adjustment will continue to be borne disproportionately by women unless such policies and programmes fully integrate measures to ensure gender equity, greater concern for basic human needs and protection of the physical environment, and are adequately financed.

4. The full potential of the development process can only be reached if its economic and social aspects, including poverty reduction, are recognised as mutually supportive. It is especially important that programmes in primary health care, nutrition, family planning and education and training are not impaired. Greater advances for women in these areas must be maintained. Investment in the nutrition, health and education of a country's population is as crucial to the development of its economy and the well-being of its people as is any investment in physical capital.
5. The structural adjustment process provides important opportunities to re-evaluate the ways in which women and men from all parts of society can best contribute to and benefit from economic and social development. As compared to men, there are considerably more complex demands on women's time from their multiple roles as economic producers, mothers and caregivers, household managers and community organisers.
6. Adjustment programmes must be designed to ensure a more equitable sharing between women and men not only of the programmes' costs but also of the rewards and benefits accruing. It is only in this way that women's active participation and wide-ranging contributions to the economy - too often unrecognised because unpaid - can be brought into the process.
7. Therefore, we commit our governments and commend to others the following programme of action:
  - i. To reform social, administrative and legal structures to give women full and effective rights to land, finance and other resources. Such reforms will remove barriers to women's ability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from productive activity in a market economy.
  - ii. To invest in enhancing women's productive activities, especially in key areas such as enterprise development, agricultural production and food security. Improved access to appropriate technologies, extension services, transportation and training can increase productivity for women's own benefit and that of the economy as a whole.

- iii. To ensure that incentives to participate in new opportunities and growth sectors do reach women, and that market structures are created which are as open to women as they are to men. Particular support will be provided where necessary to enable women to take advantage of more open and competitive markets, including greater access to and more flexible and innovative terms of credit.
- iv. To ensure that public policy and expenditures are conducive to the provision of basic goods and services to support women's multiple activities. Increased public expenditure on nutrition, education and health programmes that support women is vital in ensuring they have time to make use of new productive capacity and respond to new market incentives. This is necessary for long-run human resource development. A particular priority is to increase access to schooling for girls. This will have positive effects on child health and survival, population growth rates, family well-being and economic productivity. Such emphases must be embodied in programmes that are accountable to women and responsive to their needs.
- v. To integrate women's interests more consistently into public policy, including the design and implementation of structural adjustment policies, through: increasing gender awareness throughout government; ensuring the full involvement of women in decision-making and operational processes at all levels; enhancing the capacity of women's bureaux to contribute effectively to economic analysis and project appraisal; encouraging effective channels for women and women's organisations to express their perspectives and concerns; and establishing steering committees within Ministries of Finance to ensure that gender issues are incorporated into all decisions relating to structural adjustment.
- vi. To improve the collection of data - quantitative and qualitative - and the development of methods and statistical indicators, globally and nationally, that could provide a better understanding of the economic activity of both women and men, and the consequent impact by gender of specific policies, paying particular attention to the possibility of differential impacts within households.

- vii. To encourage the international organisations of which we are members to join us in our endeavour to fully integrate the goal of equity between women and men in the structural adjustment process, to ensure that structural adjustment programmes are growth oriented, more long term, better financed, take account of measures necessary to ameliorate negative social impact, and, in all other ways, including improving market access for developing country exports and increasing external resource flows, to promote a more favourable international economic environment.

Submitted by the Third Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for 'Women's Affairs, Ottawa, Canada, 9-12 October 1990

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 21 October 1991

# The Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme on the Harare Declaration

## New Zealand, 1995

1. At Harare in 1991, we pledged to work for the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the association, namely democracy, democratic processes and institutions which reflect national circumstances, fundamental human rights, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, and just and honest government. We agreed at the same time to work for the promotion of socio-economic development, recognising its high priority for most Commonwealth countries. During our Retreat at Millbrook, we decided to adopt a Commonwealth Action Programme to fulfil more effectively the commitments contained in the Harare Commonwealth Declaration. This Programme is in three parts:
  - i. advancing Commonwealth fundamental political values;
  - ii. promoting sustainable development; and
  - iii. facilitating consensus building.

## I. Advancing Commonwealth Fundamental Political Values

### A. *Measures in Support of Processes and Institutions for the Practice of the Harare Principles*

2. The Secretariat should enhance its capacity to provide advice, training and other forms of technical assistance to governments in promoting the Commonwealth's fundamental political values, including:
  - assistance in creating and building the capacity of requisite institutions;

- assistance in constitutional and legal matters, including with selecting models and initiating programmes of democratisation;
- assistance in the electoral field, including the establishment or strengthening of independent electoral machinery, civic and voter education, the preparation of Codes of Conduct, and assistance with voter registration;
- observation of elections, including by-elections or local elections where appropriate, at the request of the member governments concerned;
- strengthening the rule of law and promoting the independence of the judiciary through the promotion of exchanges among, and training of, the judiciary;
- support for good government, particularly in the area of public service reform; and
- other activities, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and other bodies, to strengthen the democratic culture and effective parliamentary practices.

### ***B. Measures in Response to Violations of the Harare Principles***

3. Where a member country is perceived to be clearly in violation of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, and particularly in the event of an unconstitutional overthrow of a democratically elected government, appropriate steps should be taken to express the collective concern of Commonwealth countries and to encourage the restoration of democracy within a reasonable time frame. These include:
  - i. immediate public expression by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth's collective disapproval of any such infringement of the Harare principles;
  - ii. early contact by the Secretary-General with the *de facto* government, followed by continued good offices and appropriate technical assistance to facilitate an early restoration of democracy;
  - iii. encouraging bilateral *démarches* by member countries, especially those within the region, both to express disapproval and to support early restoration of democracy;

- iv. appointment of an envoy or a group of eminent Commonwealth representatives where, following the Secretary-General's contacts with the authorities concerned, such a mission is deemed beneficial in reinforcing the Commonwealth's good offices role;
- v. stipulation of up to two years as the time frame for the restoration of democracy where the institutions are not in place to permit the holding of elections within, say, a maximum of six months;
- vi. pending restoration of democracy, exclusion of the government concerned from participation at ministerial-level meetings of the Commonwealth, including CHOGMs;
- vii. suspension of participation at all Commonwealth meetings and of Commonwealth technical assistance if acceptable progress is not recorded by the government concerned after a period of two years; and
- viii. consideration of appropriate further bilateral and multilateral measures by all member states (e.g. limitation of government-to-government contacts; people-to-people measures; trade restrictions; and, in exceptional cases, suspension from the association), to reinforce the need for change in the event that the government concerned chooses to leave the Commonwealth and/or persists in violating the principles of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration even after two years.

### ***C. Mechanism for Implementation of Measures***

- 4. We have decided to establish a Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on the Harare Declaration in order to deal with serious or persistent violations of the principles contained in that Declaration. The Group will be convened by the Secretary-General and will comprise the Foreign Ministers of eight countries\*, supplemented as appropriate by one or two additional ministerial representatives from the region concerned. It will be the Group's task to assess the nature of the infringement and recommend measures for collective Commonwealth action aimed at the speedy restoration of democracy and constitutional rule.

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\* It was subsequently announced that the Group would comprise the Foreign Ministers of Britain, Canada, Ghana, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa and Zimbabwe.



5. The composition, terms of reference and operation of the Group will be reviewed by us every two years.

## **II. Promoting Sustainable Development**

6. We reaffirmed our view that the Commonwealth should continue to be a source of help in promoting development and literacy and in eradicating poverty, particularly as these bear on women and children. With a view to enhancing its capacity in this area, we agreed on the following steps:
  - i. to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity for undertaking developmental work through support for its various Funds and especially by restoring the resources of the CFTC to their 1991/92 level in real terms; and to provide adequate resources to the Commonwealth of Learning and to the Commonwealth Foundation;
  - ii. to support a greater flow of investment to developing member countries through such schemes as the Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative;
  - iii. to work for continued progress in assisting countries with unsustainable debt burdens and to promote enhanced multilateral concessional financial flows to developing countries; in particular, to support new and innovative mechanisms for relief on multilateral debt, such as the one proposed by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer at the 1994 Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in Malta, and reiterated subsequently;
  - iv. to support the Secretariat in facilitating the adoption by more Commonwealth countries of successful self-help schemes, with non-governmental agencies and others acting as catalytic agents, for mobilising the energies of people in alleviating poverty;
  - v. to support the efforts of small island developing states to mitigate the effects on their development of environmental change, natural disasters and the changing international trading system; and
  - vi. to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, which threatens large parts of the younger population of many countries, recognising that the effective exploitation of economic opportunities requires a healthy and educated population; and to provide further resources to

renew the core funding of the Southern African Network of AIDS Organisations (SANASO), along with increased funding for UNICEF initiatives in Southern Africa.

### **III. Facilitating Consensus Building**

7. We were convinced that the Commonwealth, with its global reach and unique experience of consensus building, was in a position to assist the wider international community in building bridges across traditional international divides of opinion on particular issues. We therefore agreed that there was scope for the association to play a greater role in the search for consensus on global issues, through:
  - i. use of their governments' membership of various regional organisations and attendance at other international gatherings to advance consensual positions agreed within the Commonwealth;
  - ii. use, where appropriate, of special missions to advance Commonwealth consensual positions and promote wider consensus on issues of major international concern; and
  - iii. use of formal and informal Commonwealth consultations in the wings of meetings of international institutions with a view to achieving consensus on major concerns.

12 November 1995

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Auckland, New Zealand, 10 – 15 November 1995

# Edinburgh Commonwealth Economic Declaration

## United Kingdom, 1997

1. Today's globalised world poses both opportunities and challenges. Expanding trade and investment flows, driven by new technologies and the spread of market forces, have emerged as engines of growth. At the same time, not all countries have benefited equally from the globalisation of the world economy, and a significant number are threatened with marginalisation. Globalisation therefore needs to be carefully managed to meet the risks inherent in the process.
2. We believe that world peace, security and social stability cannot be achieved in conditions of deep poverty and growing inequality. Special measures are needed to correct this, and in particular to help the integration of countries, especially small states and the Least Developed Countries, in the global economy and address the uneven development that threatens many countries. To redress these problems, we believe the following broad principled approaches should be pursued:
  - the world economy should be geared towards promoting universal growth and prosperity for all;
  - there must be effective participation by all countries in economic decision-making in key international fora;
  - the removal of obstacles that prevent developing countries playing their full part in shaping the evolution of the global economy; and
  - international regimes affecting economic relations among nations should provide symmetrical benefits for all.
3. We also believe that commitment to market principles, openness to international trade and investment, the development of human and physical resources, gender equality, and good governance and political stability remain major components of economic and social progress;

and that wealth creation requires partnerships between governments and the private sector. The Commonwealth, with its shared traditions and global reach, is uniquely placed to play a key role in promoting shared prosperity amongst its members.

## Trade

4. We welcome the progress made in recent years in dismantling trade barriers and establishing a rule-based international trading system. However, significant barriers to trade in goods and services remain, and the benefits of the expansion of world trade are still unevenly shared. We have therefore resolved to:
  - support expansion of duty-free market access with flexible rules of origin for the exports of the Least Developed Countries; work for a successor arrangement to the Lomé Convention which, without prejudice to the outcome, gives the ACP countries, particularly small states, adequate transitional arrangements; and in particular, encourage the EU and WTO members to accommodate the legitimate interests of the ACP banana producers and facilitate the diversification of their economies;
  - strengthen the multilateral trading system within the framework of the WTO, in order to prevent regional arrangements from becoming exclusive trading blocs and provide for the greatest flow of international trade on the basis of agreed rules which are fair and equitable; and support the full implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements;
  - oppose the introduction of new non-tariff barriers and the use of unilateral actions and bilateral pressures which run counter to the spirit of the WTO;
  - maintain the momentum towards freer trade through multilateral negotiations, as outlined in the built-in agenda and other issues under discussion in the WTO, including progress on agriculture and financial and other services, taking into account the interests of all countries at different stages of development; and
  - continue to support regional arrangements, consistent with multilateral liberalisation under the WTO, which promote the economic growth of their members.

Specifically we have decided to:

- establish a Trade and Investment Access Facility under the Commonwealth umbrella to assist developing countries with the process of adjusting to, and taking advantage of, the opportunities of globalisation. The new Facility will provide technical assistance to help countries identify and manage the potential economic and social impacts of trade in goods and services and investment liberalisation; identify new sources of revenue and market opportunities; and help countries fulfil WTO requirements. The Facility will be co-ordinated with the proposed WTO/UNCTAD/ITC integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance;
  - explore the scope for deepening trade relationships among Commonwealth members, and therefore request the Secretariat to report to us, before the 1999 CHOGM, on the scope and possible systems and mechanisms for improving trade among members of the Commonwealth, in ways which are consistent with the provisions of the WTO and regional trading arrangements;
  - launch a Commonwealth action programme to remove administrative obstacles to trade by simplifying and harmonising customs procedures, disseminating information and eliminating bureaucratic and technical hurdles;
  - examine the growing importance of 'electronic commerce' in trade and the developmental implications of the use of cyberspace for commercial and financial transactions; and
  - promote Commonwealth Export Training Centres for management training in exporting and other trade-related skills.
5. We welcome the recommendations of the first ever Commonwealth Business Forum held in London on 22-23 October 1997. We believe that the Forum can be an important link between the private and public sectors and foster vibrant private sector business links. It should continue to meet every two years. We are also arranging to set up a Business Council, under Lord Cairns and Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, made up of a small group of major private sector leaders from different regions of the Commonwealth, as well as other mechanisms, in consultation with the Commonwealth Secretary-General, to encourage greater private sector involvement in the promotion of trade and investment. In this context, we also agree to support and strengthen the work of the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM).

## Investment

6. We believe that investment flows can bring substantial benefits, and that sound macroeconomic policies and financial systems, strong regulatory and supervisory frameworks and political stability are essential in encouraging inward flows. At the same time, we recognise that volatility in such flows can greatly complicate economic management. They also remain concentrated in a few regions and countries. We agree to:

- encourage investment flows by establishing open and transparent investment regimes for business activity and by simplifying bureaucratic procedures and regulations;
- encourage capital exporting countries, where it is prudent, to consider relaxing restrictions on institutional investors to enable them to take advantage of portfolio diversification opportunities in emerging and new markets;
- support the development of regional and multilateral arrangements and infrastructure that take into account the realities of developing countries, and that can help to facilitate private capital flows;
- study the lessons to be learned from recent developments in currency markets and in particular on how countries can be protected from the destabilising effects of market volatility, including those resulting from speculative activities, and how the effectiveness of existing early warning systems can be improved; and
- support strengthening of global and regional mechanisms to help countries handle capital market volatility.

Specifically we have decided to:

- endorse the recommendations of the Commonwealth working group on the role of national and international policies in promoting private capital flows, and call for the rapid finalisation of a Commonwealth Code of Good Practice for national policies that attract and sustain private capital flows;
- welcome the launch of the Africa Fund, the Kula Fund for the Pacific, and the South Asia Regional Fund under the aegis of the Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative (CPII); and call for the extension of CPII to embrace additional regions and sectors;

- launch a Commonwealth investment promotion programme which will: help establish enabling environments for attracting private investment flows; encourage the creation of new mechanisms for risk insurance and guarantees; provide assistance for strengthening supervisory and regulatory frameworks; and improve the flow of information on investment opportunities; and
- encourage 'smart partnerships' involving the private and public sectors.

## Development

7. We welcome the improving growth prospects in many parts of the developing world, including evidence of recovery in Sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, we remain concerned at the persistence of extreme poverty in many countries and the lack of capacity to reduce it. We have therefore agreed to:
  - work to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015;
  - seek to reverse the decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows, recognising the role of ODA as an essential instrument of partnership for development and poverty reduction in developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries and small states, and for helping to create the conditions for increased trade and investment, including skills and infrastructure development;
  - work towards a comprehensive solution of the debt problem, and pursue vigorously the rapid implementation of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, in line with the Mauritius Mandate, which has the aim of enabling HIPC countries to have embarked by the year 2000 on securing a sustainable exit from their debt burden; as well as consider extending such relief to other developing countries, including small states, in similar circumstances; and
  - promote the role of micro-credit schemes in reducing poverty through increased assistance from the international community.
8. We welcome the Report of the Chairman of the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Small States and its recommendations for action based on the Commonwealth Report, *A Future for Small States: Overcoming Vulnerability*. In particular, we encourage international

financial institutions to review their graduation policies, consider broader criteria covering the special vulnerabilities of their smaller members, and establish a task force to address the concerns of small states. We endorse the recommendation to set up a small ministerial group to discuss small states' concerns with major multilateral agencies and to report to governments on the outcome as soon as possible.

9. We underscore the importance of good governance including increased openness in economic decision-making and the elimination of corruption through greater transparency, accountability and the application of the rule of law in economic, financial and other spheres of activity. We endorse the request by our Finance Ministers to the Commonwealth Secretary-General to establish an expert group to work on these issues.

## Environment

10. We have a shared interest in protecting our environment, a global resource in which all countries have a stake. The costs of protecting it should be borne in accordance with shared and differentiated responsibilities. It is therefore incumbent on the global community to strengthen co-operation to achieve sustainable development, so that we can protect our planet for future generations. In particular, we look to a successful outcome at the Kyoto Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change, involving realistic and achievable goals, significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and recognition that we all need to play a role.

We have therefore agreed to:

- endorse the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 as agreed by this year's UN General Assembly Special Session, particularly in respect of freshwater, forest resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries. We recognise that new and additional resources will be needed to implement the programmes and will use our best endeavours to provide these;
- underline the importance of a successful outcome at Kyoto, with all countries playing their part within the Berlin Mandate, and with developed countries pursuing vigorously an outcome that would produce significant reductions in their greenhouse gas emissions through the adoption of a protocol or other legal instrument;



- call on the Kyoto Conference to recognise that, after Kyoto, all countries will need to play their part by pursuing policies that would result in significant reductions of greenhouse gas emissions if we are to solve a global problem that affects us all;
- call for agreement at Kyoto to arrangements to monitor the reduction of emissions regularly;
- initiate action in the international community to strengthen disaster relief response and mechanisms for the provision of urgent and adequate assistance to small states that suffer the effects of natural disasters which are increasing in frequency and magnitude; and
- welcome the contribution of the Iwokrama International Rain Forest Programme in Guyana to the implementation of the Rio Agreements on forests, biodiversity and climate change, and agree to use our best endeavours to increase resources to sustain the Programme and catalyse further international funding.

## Conclusion

11. In pursuance of these commitments, we agree to enhance the Commonwealth's role in building consensus on global economic issues and on an equitable structuring of international economic relations.
12. We also agree to sustain and where possible increase bilateral assistance among our members; and to ensure the flow of resources to the Secretariat and its various Funds, especially the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC); and to the Commonwealth Foundation, Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the CPTM.
13. We believe the Commonwealth can play a dynamic role in promoting trade and investment so as to enhance prosperity, accelerate economic growth and development and advance the eradication of poverty in the 21st century. We plan to pursue this with vigour.

25 October 1997

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Edinburgh, United Kingdom, 24-27 October 1997

# The Fancourt Commonwealth Declaration on Globalisation and People- Centred Development

## South Africa, 1999

In today's world, no country is untouched by the forces of globalisation. Our destinies are linked together as never before. The challenge is to seize the opportunities opened up by globalisation while minimising its risks.

On the positive side, globalisation is creating unprecedented opportunities for wealth creation and for the betterment of the human condition. Reduced barriers to trade and enhanced capital flows are fuelling economic growth.

The revolution in communications technologies is shrinking the distance between nations, providing new opportunities for the transfer of knowledge and the development of skills-based industries. And technological advance globally offers great potential for the eradication of poverty.

But the benefits of globalisation are not shared equitably. Prosperity remains the preserve of the few. Despite the progress of the past fifty years, half the world's population lives on less than two US dollars per day. Many millions live in conditions of extreme deprivation. The poor are being marginalised. Expanded capital flows have also brought with them the risk of greater financial instability, undermining the hope that a commitment to open markets can lift the developing world, especially the least developed countries, out of poverty and debt.

The persistence of poverty and human deprivation diminishes us all. It also makes global peace and security fragile, limits the growth of markets, and forces millions to migrate in search of a better life. It constitutes a deep and fundamental structural flaw in the world economy.

The greatest challenge therefore facing us today is how to channel the forces of globalisation for the elimination of poverty and the empowerment of human beings to lead fulfilling lives.

The solution does not lie in abandoning a commitment to market principles or in wishing away the powerful forces of technological change. Globalisation is a reality and can only increase in its impact. But if the benefits of globalisation are to be shared more widely, there must be greater equity for countries in global markets.

We call on all nations fully to implement the Uruguay Round commitments to dismantle barriers to trade for the mutual benefit of all. Moreover, recognising in particular the significant contribution that enhanced export opportunities can make for reducing poverty, we call for improved market access for the exports of all countries, particularly developing countries, and the removal of all barriers to the exports of the least developed countries.

Strong export growth remains a key element in the ability of developing countries to improve their living standards to the levels enjoyed in the industrialised world. We support efforts that would enable developing countries to build up their skills and manufacturing capacities, including the production and export of value-added goods, so as to enhance growth and achieve prosperity.

Likewise, we urge that the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting of WTO to launch the next round of global negotiations on trade be one with a pronounced developmental dimension, with the aim of achieving better market access in agriculture, industrial products and services in a way that provides benefits to all members, particularly developing countries. The Round should be balanced in process, content and outcome.

We fully believe in the importance of upholding labour standards and protecting the environment. But these must be addressed in an appropriate way that does not, by linking them to trade liberalisation, end up effectively impeding free trade and causing injustice to developing countries.

We also call on the global community to establish innovative mechanisms to promote capital flows to a wider number of countries; and to urgently initiate reform of the international financial architecture to minimise financial instability and its impact on the poor.

We believe that the elimination of poverty is achievable – but only if we take determined and concerted action at national and international levels. We reiterate our commitment to work for a reversal of the decline in official development assistance flows. Urgent action is also required to tackle

the unsustainable debt burden of developing countries, particularly the poorest, building on the recent initiatives agreed internationally. We believe such development assistance must be focused on human development, poverty reduction and on the development of capacities for participating in expanding world markets for goods and capital. Above all, we recognise the responsibilities of national governments to promote pro-poor policies and human development.

If the poor and the vulnerable are to be at the centre of development, the process must be participatory, in which they have a voice. We believe that the spread of democratic freedoms and good governance, and access to education, training and health care are key to the expansion of human capabilities, and to the banishment of ignorance and prejudice. Recognising that good governance and economic progress are directly linked, we affirm our commitment to the pursuit of greater transparency, accountability, the rule of law and the elimination of corruption in all spheres of public life and in the private sector.

We are concerned at the vast gap between rich and poor in the ability to access the new technologies, at the concentration of the world's research resources in market-driven products and processes, the increasing tendency to claim proprietary rights on traditional knowledge, and at bio-piracy. We call on the world community to use the opportunities offered by globalisation for adopting practical measures for overcoming these challenges; for example, by extending the benefits of global medical research through the provision of drugs at affordable prices to the poor in developing countries.

We welcome the spread of ideas, information and knowledge in building civil support for social equality, and in opposing all forms of discrimination and other injustices based on ethnicity, gender, race and religion. But, while better communications have increased human contact, there is for some a growing sense of social exclusion and a general failure of moral purpose. Persistence of inequalities faced by women, continued high levels of youth unemployment, lack of adequate support systems for the aged, children and the disabled in many parts of the world and increased threats to the diversity of cultures and beliefs all contribute to the undermining of just and stable society. We therefore call for a renewed commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination and to take measures that promote respect for the diverse languages, cultures and beliefs, and traditions of the world, which enrich all our lives.

Recognising that the full exploitation of the opportunities for development created by globalisation is not possible without security, political stability and peace, we commit ourselves, in partnership with civil society, to promote processes that help to prevent or resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner, support measures that help to stabilise post-conflict situations, and combat terrorism of all kinds.

Good governance requires inclusive and participatory processes at both national and international levels. We call on the global community to search for inclusive processes of multilateralism which give a more effective voice in the operations of international institutions to developing countries, and which recognise the particular vulnerabilities of small states.

We believe that the Commonwealth, an association of diverse sovereign nations reflecting different stages of development and united by common values, has a vital role to play in promoting consensus at national and international levels and in providing practical assistance for the creation of capacities needed to promote people-centred development. At the threshold of a new millennium, we look to the Commonwealth, and its family of organisations, to contribute significantly to making the above aspirations a reality.

14 November 1999

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Durban, South Africa, 12 – 15 November 1999

# The Coolum Declaration

## Australia, 2002

At the outset of this new millennium we, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Nations, meeting at Coolum, Australia, renew our enduring commitment to the values and principles which we share. We stand united in:

- our commitment to democracy, the rule of law, good governance, freedom of expression and the protection of human rights;
- our respect for diversity and human dignity; our celebration of the pluralistic nature of our societies and the tolerance it promotes; and our implacable opposition to all forms of discrimination, whether rooted in gender, race, colour, creed or political belief;
- our determination to work to eliminate poverty, to promote people-centred and sustainable development, and thus progressively to remove the wide disparities in living standards among us and overcome the special challenges facing our small state and less developed country members; and
- our collective striving after international peace and security, the rule of international law and the elimination of people-smuggling and the scourge of terrorism.

We reiterate in the strongest terms our condemnation of all forms and manifestations of terrorism. In the aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001 and following our statement of 25 October 2001, we solemnly reaffirm our resolve as a diverse community of nations individually and collectively to take concerted and resolute action to eradicate terrorism. We pledge to work together in fulfilling our international obligations to deny any safe haven for terrorists.

We cannot accept that nearly half the world's population should live in poverty, nor that disease, illiteracy and environmental degradation should continue to blight the lives of many of our people, nor the fact that in too many societies women continue to face discrimination. The benefits of globalisation must be shared more widely and its focus channelled for the elimination of poverty and human deprivation. We stress the importance of equality of access to economic opportunities and the need to apply new

international standards such as the OECD Harmful Tax Initiative evenly, equitably and without exception.

The Fancourt Declaration and the UN Millennium Declaration have laid a firm base for us to push back the frontiers of poverty and under-development. In pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, we call on governments to seize the opportunities presented by the Financing for Development Conference (Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, August/September 2002) to chart a more sustainable and equitable growth path for the world. We also welcome the groundbreaking proposal from Africa to tackle poverty through the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and will use our best efforts to support similar partnerships in other regions of the Commonwealth. More broadly, we call on all nations to work to reduce the growing gap between rich and poor, and to enhance international support to democracies fighting poverty.

Recognising the links between democracy and good governance on the one hand, and poverty, development and conflict on the other, we call on the Commonwealth Secretary-General to constitute a high-level expert group to recommend ways in which we could carry forward the Fancourt Declaration. This group should focus on how democracies might best be supported in combating poverty, and should report to the next CHOGM.

We are deeply conscious of the threat HIV/AIDS poses to hard-won social and economic progress in much of Africa and elsewhere. As leaders committed to each one of our citizens developing their human potential to the full, we pledge ourselves to combating this pandemic and the spread of other communicable diseases. We urge both the public and private sector, and international organisations, to join with us in a renewed effort to tackle the challenge HIV/AIDS presents to our countries and their people, and to humanity itself.

We recognise the particular vulnerabilities of small states, as well as the need for concerted action by the international community to address their special needs. We further appreciate the importance of systemic changes to respond to these needs, and we commit the Commonwealth to pursue innovative and practical support mechanisms for small states.

Many other challenges confront us daily. As leaders guiding our nations into the 21st century, we need a Commonwealth that both builds on our enduring values and adapts to our evolving needs. We seek a Commonwealth in tune with the future: an organisation which draws on its

history, plays to its strengths, vigorously pursues its members' common interests and seizes the opportunities open to it to shape a better world for our children.

We envisage a modern and vibrant Commonwealth working to serve its peoples, with a simplified structure and a clear focus on what it does best. We want the Commonwealth to be an effective defender of democratic freedoms and a peacemaker in conflict, and to work tirelessly in promoting people-centred economic development.

We have adopted the attached High Level Review Group (HLRG) Report which charts a clear future course for the Commonwealth in line with this vision. The HLRG Report sets out concrete steps to build a Commonwealth for the 21st century:

- ***we determine materially to strengthen the Commonwealth's capacity to support its members' pursuit of democratic values and the rule of law.*** We have clarified the conditions under which the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group will in future address serious or persistent violations of the Harare Principles, which go beyond the unconstitutional overthrow of member governments. A clear set of procedures – in which the Secretary-General and the Chairperson-in-Office will have an important part to play – will help ensure transparent and effective dealing with any member state concerned. We are committed to strengthening the Good Offices role of the Commonwealth Secretary-General and have agreed to strengthen the Commonwealth's work in supporting democratic practice, in resolving tensions, in conflict prevention and resolution, and in post-conflict rebuilding, working in consultation with regional organisations as appropriate.
- in pursuit of a more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalisation and in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, ***we are committed to forging new opportunities for our members in trade, in investment and in private sector development.*** We have agreed steps which will help our organisation better identify and promote its members' economic and development needs in an increasingly competitive international environment. We recognise the importance of enhancing market access in the global trading system, particularly for the poorest and smallest countries. To this end, we welcome and give our strong support to the agreement reached in Doha on the World Trade Organisation's new multilateral trade negotiations. Through an enhanced facilitation role, we want our organisation to help member states get better access to international assistance, and to focus the



Commonwealth's own related programmes more effectively on the assistance it is best-equipped to provide. We support the HLRG's strategy to bridge the information and communications technology gap between rich and poor.

- recognising that the Commonwealth's future lies in the hands of its youth, ***we have agreed to create a pan-Commonwealth 'Youth for the Future' initiative*** composed of four related components for technology and skills transfer, and for fostering youth enterprise. We seek to engage youth, young professionals and youth volunteers more closely, harnessing their skills and enthusiasm to make a major practical contribution to the work of the Commonwealth.
- ***we seek to rationalise and streamline the Commonwealth's governance and organisation to provide a simplified structure*** capable of responding more quickly and effectively to members' needs.
- we call on the many intergovernmental, professional and civil society bodies which help to implement our Commonwealth values, ***to join with us in building closer Commonwealth 'family' links, and strengthening consultation and collaboration***. We are convinced of the need for stronger links and better two-way communication and co-ordination between the official and non-governmental Commonwealth, and among Commonwealth NGOs. This will give Commonwealth activities greater impact, ensuring that every programme produces lasting benefit.

We cherish our shared history and are proud of what we have achieved together over the years. We are convinced that acting on the recommendations of the HLRG Report will better equip the Commonwealth to meet the challenges of the future. Our common values and unique ways of working together provide a special strength in this, which we treasure. We call on our Secretary-General to work assiduously with the Chairman-in-Office, the new governing mechanisms and the wider Commonwealth family to translate the outcomes of the review into a practical reality which benefits all our people.

As we plan for our future, we congratulate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her completion of fifty years as the Head of the Commonwealth. We are grateful for her dedication in the service of the Commonwealth and her strong commitment to the association for over half a century.

5 March 2002

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Coombermere, Australia, 2 – 5 March 2002

# The Aso Rock Commonwealth Declaration

## Nigeria, 2003

1. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Nations, meeting at Abuja, Nigeria, from 5 to 8 December 2003, commit ourselves to strengthen development and democracy, through partnership for peace and prosperity. Building on the landmark Declarations in Singapore, Harare and Fancourt, we are committed to democracy, good governance, human rights, gender equality and a more equitable sharing of the benefits of globalisation.
2. We recognise that the Governments of the Commonwealth are partners sharing a fundamental responsibility for the development, security and well-being of their people. We acknowledge their central role in guaranteeing stability, good economic management and governance, and in promoting sustainable growth and development.
3. We welcome the Report of the Commonwealth Expert Group on Development and Democracy which was constituted following the 2002 Coozum Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). We have noted its key recommendations for Commonwealth actions, focusing on how democracies can best be supported in combating poverty.
4. We believe that efforts aimed at eradicating poverty and improving governance are essential for greater international equity and global peace and security. We recognise that the Millennium Development Goals have mobilised governments, international institutions and civil society to reduce poverty with renewed vigour and commitment.
5. We recognise that globalisation has significant potential benefits for all. However, the world is characterised by uneven development, and we therefore stress that globalisation must provide real opportunities for developing countries to transform their economies and societies through diversification for the benefit of their people. It is the strategic goal of the Commonwealth to help their pre-industrial members to transition into skilled working- and middle-class societies, recognising that their domestic policies must be conducive to such transitions.

6. We further recognise that while development and democracy are goals each in its own right, they must be mutually reinforcing, with a clear 'democratic dividend', in terms of delivering tangible benefits to people. We are convinced that broad-based prosperity creates the stability conducive to the promotion of democracy; and that strong democratic institutions better promote development.
7. Accordingly, we commit ourselves to make democracy work better for pro-poor development by implementing sustainable development programmes and enhancing democratic institutions and processes in all human endeavours. We recognise that building democracy is a constantly evolving process. It must also be uncomplicated and take into account national circumstances. Among the objectives we seek to promote are the following:
  - i. a participatory democracy characterised by free and fair elections and representative legislatures;
  - ii. an independent judiciary;
  - iii. a well-trained public service;
  - iv. a transparent and accountable public accounts system;
  - v. machinery to protect human rights;
  - vi. the right to information;
  - vii. active participation of civil society, including women and youth;
  - viii. substantially increased and more effective financial resources;
  - ix. adherence to the internationally agreed targets of 0.7 per cent of Gross National Product for development assistance;
  - x. financing and realisation of the Millennium Development Goals; and
  - xi. increased democracy at the global level, including enhanced participation and transparency in international institutions.

### **Promoting Free and Fair Trade**

8. We fully commit ourselves to an effective, equitable, rules-based multilateral trading system, developed under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation, to support pro-poor development and democracy. To this end, we have issued a separate Statement on Multilateral Trade, which is annexed to this Declaration.

## Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals

9. We reiterate our collective commitment and determination to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially in regard to health and education. We welcome the efforts of the Commonwealth to attain the MDGs, in particular for poverty eradication, through technical assistance programmes in developing member countries. We affirm our enthusiasm and resolve to increase aid levels to support the MDGs. We welcome the initiative of the United Kingdom for an International Finance Facility, and call upon other developed countries to consider this and similar options to alleviate poverty in developing countries. We commit ourselves to support appropriate private sector initiatives to promote foreign direct investment and capital flows to developing member countries.

## Role of Women

10. We recognise the critical role which women play in development and resolve to ensure that development processes empower women to play that full role.

## Action Against Corruption and Recovery of Assets

11. We recognise that corruption erodes economic development and corporate governance. We welcome the successful conclusion of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and urge the early signature, ratification and implementation of the Convention by member states. We pledge maximum co-operation and assistance amongst our governments to recover assets of illicit origin and repatriate them to their countries of origin. This will make more resources available for development purposes. To this end, we request the Secretary-General to establish a Commonwealth Working Group to help advance effective action in this area.

## Debt Management

12. We recognise that the debt burden constitutes a major obstacle to allocating resources to key socio-economic sectors in developing member countries. We also acknowledge the need for a deeper, broader and more flexible approach to debt relief and debt cancellation for developing member countries, to achieve long-term debt sustainability and release resources, particularly for health and education. We welcome the advisory and consensus-building work of

the Commonwealth Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Ministerial Forum and encourage its efforts to achieve HIPCs' sustainable exit from debt. We support the provision of additional resources through topping-up at the completion point under HIPC and a more comprehensive approach to address unsustainable debt.

## **Financing for Development**

13. We believe the Commonwealth should lead the international community in ensuring that the official development assistance target is achieved. Recognising that poor member countries urgently need increased resources for pro-poor development, we call on the international community to respond positively through the following measures:
  - i. improve aid effectiveness through reductions in tied aid, increased direct budgetary support and implementation of the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation;
  - ii. support social safety nets to reduce the impact of poverty on the most vulnerable groups and to mitigate the transition costs of reforms designed to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of economies;
  - iii. strengthen the capacity of the international financial architecture to assist poor countries to address the impact of exogenous shocks such as a sharp deterioration in their terms of trade and natural disasters;
  - iv. encourage the private sector to play a major role in the promotion of trade and investment; and
  - v. encourage greater participation of poor and vulnerable groups in the preparation of poverty reduction strategy papers for the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and wider donor community.

## **Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC)**

14. We note the commendable assistance provided by the CFTC to the development efforts of our member countries and commit ourselves to continued support for the Fund. We agree that the resources available to the Fund should be enhanced and on no account be permitted to decline below their current levels in real terms.

## Health

15. We are committed to combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases which remain a threat to sustainable development. We recognise that diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis are not only health problems but are also development issues. The high incidence of such diseases can also reverse the development process. We continue to believe that strong political leadership and education remain crucial components of the multi-sectoral response to combating HIV/AIDS. The threat from HIV/AIDS is especially great in Sub-Saharan Africa, which has two-thirds of the world's 40 million persons living with HIV/AIDS, and in the Caribbean. We call for reforms at the national level to create effective health delivery systems, as well as adequate external support to achieve this. We welcome the recent World Trade Organisation agreement on affordable drugs and call for its interpretation and implementation in a manner that makes appropriate drugs available at low cost to poor countries.

## Education

16. We affirm that education, whether formal or informal, is central to development in any society and is of the highest priority to the Commonwealth. In an increasingly divided and insecure world, education must play a crucial role for people, both young and old, for them to optimise their opportunities and to bridge divides.
17. We commend all efforts by Commonwealth organisations and agencies to develop greater education resources and to create an enabling environment to foster an enterprise culture. We encourage all governments, noting the value of distance education and the benefits of technology, to draw upon best practices throughout the Commonwealth and welcome the increased support for education in the Commonwealth through the new Centre for Commonwealth Education at Cambridge University.

## Youth

18. We recognise that more than 50 per cent of the population of the Commonwealth is below 30 years of age. All Commonwealth efforts to achieve the MDGs must reflect this demographic reality by including young people in development and democracy.

## **Combating Illicit Trafficking in Human Beings**

19. We recognise the growing problem of human trafficking, especially in women and children. We are committed to combating this scourge through international co-operation and we call on member countries which have not yet done so to ratify the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and Protocols.

## **Partnership for Peace and Prosperity**

20. We strongly reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism, international co-operation, partnership, and productive working relationships between government and civil society organisations. We also reaffirm our commitment to enhance global democracy, by ensuring that international institutions reflect the voice of their developing country members and are themselves models of good practice in democratic accountability, participation and transparency. We recognise that the Commonwealth as an association has distinctive strengths and comparative advantages that could be effectively utilised for the mutual benefit of member states. We therefore urge greater partnership within our community.
21. Furthermore we urge all countries to implement their commitments under the Monterrey Consensus and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
22. We commend the African Union for taking the bold step to address development and good governance through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In this regard, we support the Commonwealth Secretariat's activities in developing a comprehensive programme of assistance to support the efforts of Commonwealth countries in Africa.
23. We recognise that conflict and instability erode the prospects of development. We are therefore committed to help mobilise international support and resources for conflict prevention, resolution and management. We also commit ourselves to efforts to curb illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to support prompt response in providing international assistance to conflict areas.

## Conclusion

24. We urge the Commonwealth Secretary-General to direct resources to support the priorities identified in this Declaration. We also urge relevant Commonwealth Ministerial Meetings to give additional momentum to these priorities, and request the Secretary-General to provide a report on progress made to the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

8 December 2003

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Abuja, Nigeria, 5 – 8 December, 2003



# Malta Declaration on Networking the Commonwealth for Development

## Malta, 2005

1. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, meeting in Malta from 25 to 27 November 2005, firmly believe that our Commonwealth is a rich, globally representative, relevant and dynamic network of nations and peoples, well equipped to respond to the pressing challenges of our time.
2. Ours is a network of governments and peoples, nurtured by shared values, institutions and conventions, as well as a common working language and history of collaboration. These attributes provide a platform on which to build and consolidate the foundations of democracy in our societies as well as to redress social and economic disparities in a co-ordinated and effective manner.
3. We reaffirm that democracy and development are organically interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Democratic governance facilitates sustainable development. At the same time, poverty and inequity can place democracy in peril. We therefore reiterate our firm commitment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and are deeply concerned by the uneven progress attained so far.
4. We are determined to intensify our efforts to meet the MDGs and their associated targets, and to help one another to do so. We are mindful in particular of the Goal to develop a global partnership for development. In this regard, we are committed to making available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies (ICTs), in partnership between the public and private sectors.
5. We view ICTs as powerful instruments of development rather than ends in themselves, delivering savings, efficiencies and growth in our economies. We also recognise the ability of ICTs to act as catalysts in

creating new economic synergies, offering opportunities to overcome the constraints of remoteness, small size, and other factors which have traditionally acted as a brake on development.

6. We firmly believe that the Commonwealth can contribute meaningfully to measures aimed at bridging and closing the digital divide, and are resolved to do so. ICTs provide an opportunity for individuals to learn, to grow, to participate more actively in society and to compete more effectively in markets.
7. We support the Digital Solidarity Fund as endorsed by the World Summit on the Information Society. Our goal is to see information technology made accessible to all. We recognise that this requires, in particular, investment in infrastructure, effective telecommunications, education, and co-ordinated public policy. We also recognise that the wealth of human and technical capital within the Commonwealth can be shared for the benefit of our developing member states. We will therefore use and seek to strengthen existing mechanisms and resources toward that end, collaborating with partners in other organisations within and beyond the Commonwealth, as well as with the corporate sector and civil society. We will also seek to use ICT networks to enhance the effectiveness of existing Commonwealth networks.
8. We endorse the *Commonwealth Action Programme for the Digital Divide* as our roadmap. We view the Commonwealth's priorities, in particular, as being the development of policy and regulatory capacity, the modernisation of education and skills development, the promotion of entrepreneurship for poverty elimination, the promotion of local access and connectivity, and the strengthening of local and regional networks. We request the Secretary-General to establish the Steering Committee of relevant existing Commonwealth agencies, including member states, to work with the Commonwealth Secretariat in implementing the Action Programme.
9. We welcome the launch of an Indian initiative on a Pan-African E-Network project that will link all the 53 member states of the African Union and assist in the achievement of the MDGs, especially in respect of education and health.

10. We also endorse the establishment of a Special Fund to enable implementation of the specific activities and to achieve the performance targets envisaged in the Action Programme, and call for contributions to the Fund so that it can become operational without delay. In this context, we note with appreciation the substantial contributions to the Fund announced by India and Malta.

27 November 2005

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Valetta, Malta, 25 – 27 November 2005

# Kampala Declaration on Transforming Societies to Achieve Political, Economic and Human Development

## Uganda, 2007

1. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, recall that our Declaration of Commonwealth Principles unequivocally decries the wide disparities in wealth between different sections of humanity and reaffirms the Commonwealth's commitment to raise standards and achieve a more equitable international society free of poverty, ignorance and disease.
2. Those Principles have been further elaborated and strengthened over the years to underline that development rests on the foundations of democratic governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights, gender equality and peace and security. The Commonwealth has also pledged and continued to pursue a stable international economic framework within which growth can be achieved, together with sound economic management at the national level that recognises the central role of the market economy.
3. We note that the membership of the Commonwealth comprises countries at different levels of political, economic and human development, and that historical factors and circumstances have been a significant contributory factor. We also recognise that many of our members are endowed with natural advantages upon which they have the potential to achieve positive economic and social transformation, while many members also have natural handicaps that constrain such transformation.
4. The experience of newly industrialised members of the Commonwealth shows the way forward for developing countries, and demonstrates that qualitative economic transformation occurs where the following conditions exist:

- Economies are open and their natural competitiveness is enabled;
  - The rule of law prevails;
  - A rules-based and fair multilateral trading system exists and is respected by all;
  - National development strategies with a long- term perspective following consultation with all stakeholders including women and youth;
  - Investment based on confidence and certainty that improves productivity;
  - Cost-efficient and effective growth of the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of economies that is promoted in a comprehensive and coherent fashion, including addition of value to primary products and reductions in transaction and other business costs;
  - Modernisation and renewal of national infrastructure, including through partnerships between the public and private sectors;
  - Policies which nurture a strong private sector;
  - Efficient and effective public services that are delivered on the premise of providing services to all;
  - Modernisation and innovation policies in the areas of science and technology;
  - Education and technical training are accorded high priority in public expenditure,
  - with the objective of speeding up the transition from rural-based towards skilled, middle class-based, industrialised and diversified societies; and
  - Strengthened public health systems to address in particular infectious illnesses as well as non- communicable and lifestyle diseases to create healthy and productive societies.
5. We must allow all our member countries to benefit from these foundations of economic transformation. We therefore attach importance and priority to efforts aimed at sharing experiences and best practice, as well as technology and assistance between Commonwealth countries.

6. We recognise that human and political transformation cannot be successful or enduring unless people themselves have a strong sense of ownership of the institutions put in place to govern and support their lives and welfare. Nor will human transformation occur sustainably unless people have a growing sense of achievement, benefit, and self-worth.
7. We note that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are designed to achieve the most significant fundamental transformation of humanity, and are largely linked to poverty reduction, health, education and gender equality targets. We also note with satisfaction the achievement of a number of MDGs by some member countries. We, however, express our deep concern that many Commonwealth countries are falling behind the MDG targets at this half-way point to the 2015 end year. Goals related to maternal and child deaths, HIV/AIDS, and elimination of gender disparities require urgent action in many countries.
8. We reaffirm our commitment to intensify our efforts to meet the MDGs and their associated targets, and to help one another to do so. We note in particular, the recognition that countries in Africa are proving that large scale progress in achieving the MDGs is possible under conditions of adequate financing, much of which should flow from a strengthened global partnership for development.
9. We recall the Goal committing all nations to develop a global partnership for development and acknowledge the developed countries that have increased resources for development by 30 per cent since Monterrey. Despite this, however, we note with concern the overall decline in official development assistance (ODA) in 2006. We call on the international community as a whole, and in particular the donor community, to honour pledges and make concrete efforts to meet commitments made with regard to financing for development.
10. We urge the United Nations Secretary-General to convene a meeting in 2008 that brings together Heads of Government with leaders from the private sector, and other interested parties to review progress and to consider ways to assist those lagging behind to accelerate the action that is needed to attain the MDGs.

11. We recognise that strongly development-oriented outcomes to the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations as well as the Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations between the European Union and the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) group of countries would make the most significant contributions to the attainment of the MDGs.
12. We also recognise that neither economic nor human development is possible in a sustainable way without democracy and good governance. We therefore affirm the importance of leadership that embraces the Commonwealth's fundamental values, and that is tolerant and encouraging of innovation, creativity and diversity.
13. We recognise that the challenge of transformation requires international collaboration and co-operation. The Commonwealth's common values and norms place us in a strong position of comparative advantage to learn and benefit from each other. We commit ourselves to explore ways in which each of us can share and strengthen our relations with each other in order to support transformation for us all. We call on the Commonwealth Secretariat to assist in developing an action plan to facilitate transformation in member countries.

25 November 2007

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Kampala, Uganda, 23 – 25 November, 2007

# The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration

## Trinidad and Tobago, 2009

### The Challenge of Our Time

1. Climate change is the predominant global challenge. We convened a Special Session on Climate Change in Port of Spain to discuss our profound concern about the undisputed threat that climate change poses to the security, prosperity, economic and social development of our people. For many, it is deepening poverty and affecting the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. For some of us, it is an existential threat.
2. We reaffirm our commitment to the Lake Victoria Commonwealth Climate Change Action Plan and its further implementation, in particular by contributing to the efforts of member countries in transforming their economies and strengthening the capacity and voice of vulnerable groups.
3. We recognise the unprecedented opportunity of our meeting just ahead of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen. We approach Copenhagen with ambition, optimism and determination. We welcome the attendance of leaders at the Copenhagen conference. The needs of the most vulnerable must be addressed. Their voice must be heard and capacity to engage strengthened. Many of us from small island states, low-lying coastal states and least developed countries (LDCs) face the greatest challenges, yet have contributed least to the problem of climate change.
4. In keeping with the spirit of the theme of CHOGM 2009, 'Partnering for a more equitable and sustainable future', we warmly welcomed the UN Secretary-General, the Prime Minister of Denmark and the President of France.
5. We represent a third of the world's population in all continents and oceans, and more than a quarter of the parties to the UNFCCC. We have the global reach and diversity to help forge the inclusive global solutions needed to combat climate change.



6. Science, and our own experience, tells us that we only have a few short years to address this threat. The average global temperature has risen because of the increase in carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. The latest scientific evidence indicates that in order to avoid dangerous climate change that is likely to have catastrophic impacts we must find solutions using all available avenues. We must act now.
7. We believe an internationally legally binding agreement is essential. We pledge our continued support to the leaders-driven process guided by the Danish Prime Minister and his efforts to deliver a comprehensive, substantial and operationally binding agreement in Copenhagen leading towards a full legally binding outcome no later than 2010. In Copenhagen we commit to focus our efforts on achieving the strongest possible outcome.

## **Copenhagen and Beyond**

8. A global climate change solution is central to the survival of peoples, the promotion of development and facilitation of a global transition to a low-emission development path. The agreement in Copenhagen must address the urgent needs of developing countries by providing financing, support for adaptation, technology transfer, capacity-building, approaches and incentives for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and for afforestation and sustainable management of forests.
9. In addition, we will strive to significantly increase technological and technology support to developing countries to facilitate the deployment and diffusion of clean technologies through a range of mechanisms. We will work to facilitate and enable the transition to low-emission economies, climate resilience and, in particular, support, including through capacity-building, for increasing the climate resilience of vulnerable economies. We will also aim to develop cleaner, more affordable and renewable energy sources. We must explore global mechanisms through which those identified technologies can be disseminated as rapidly as possible.
10. Ensuring the viability of states should underpin a shared vision for long-term co-operative action and a long-term global goal for emission reductions. In building towards an international agreement, all countries will need to play their part, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

11. We need an ambitious mitigation outcome at Copenhagen to reduce the risks of dangerous climate change without compromising the legitimate development aspirations of developing countries. We stress our common conviction that urgent and substantial action to reduce global emissions is needed and have a range of views as to whether average global temperature increase should be constrained to below 1.5°C or to no more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels. We also recognise the need for an early peaking year for global emissions. Developed countries should continue to lead on cutting their emissions, and developing countries, in line with their national circumstances, should also take action to achieve a substantial deviation from business-as-usual emissions including with financial and technical support, and also supported by technology and capacity-building.
12. Progress towards predictable and adequate finance for adaptation and mitigation measures must be achieved in any new multilateral approach. Public and private financial resources for developing countries will need to be scaled up urgently and substantially by 2020. We recognise that adaptation finance in particular should be targeted towards the poorest and most vulnerable countries. The provision of finance should be additional to existing official development assistance (ODA) commitments. In this respect, we acknowledge the potential role of the private sector and carbon markets.
13. In addition, we recognise the need for an early start to the provision for financial resources. Fast-start funding, constituting grant funding, should provide substantial support for adaptation, REDD plus<sup>1</sup> and clean technology. We welcomed the initiative to establish, as part of a comprehensive agreement, a Copenhagen Launch Fund starting in 2010 and building to a level of resources of US\$10 billion annually by 2012. Fast-start funding for adaptation should be focused on the most vulnerable countries. We also welcomed a proposal to provide immediate, fast-disbursing assistance with a dedicated stream for small island states and associated low-lying coastal states of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) of at least 10 per cent of the fund. We also recognise the need for further, specified and comparable funding streams, to assist the poorest and most vulnerable countries to cope with and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. We recognise that funding will be scaled up beyond 2012.

14. We agree that an equitable governance structure to manage the financial and technological support must be put in place. We agree that a future governance structure should provide for states to monitor and comply with arrangements entered under a new Copenhagen agreement.

28 November 2009

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 27 – 29 November, 2009

# The Declaration of Port of Spain

## Trinidad and Tobago, 2009

1. We, the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, meeting in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 27 to 29 November 2009, affirm the key role of partnerships in forging a more sustainable and equitable future for all people.
2. Our meeting takes place at a time when the world faces an unprecedented combination of social, economic and environmental challenges. These include a profound and debilitating global economic and financial crisis, volatility in key commodity prices, and the alarming impacts of climate change, which threaten the safety and livelihoods of millions. We also note with grave concern that many of the world's poorest communities are most vulnerable to these challenges.
3. We recognise that challenges of this magnitude cannot be resolved by any one country alone, and that effectively addressing them will require international co-operation, sustained commitment and collective action. This calls for the strengthening of multilateral co-operation, based on mutual respect, openness and partnership. We therefore commit ourselves to deepening the Commonwealth's existing networks of co-operation and call for a fresh impetus to foster new and more effective political and economic partnerships. We will also capitalise on the Commonwealth's unique abilities to advocate for partnerships with other members of the international community and to promote, within each country, partnerships among the different levels of government, civil society, youth and the private sector.
4. This renewed emphasis on Commonwealth partnerships and collaboration should focus on areas which offer clear practical opportunities to improve lives, build more resilient communities and strengthen the bonds and ties between nations.

## Protecting the poorest and most vulnerable

5. At our meeting in Kampala in 2007, we recognised that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are designed to achieve the most fundamental transformation of humanity, including in the areas of

poverty reduction, health, education and gender equality. While significant progress is being made in many countries, we remain deeply concerned that many Commonwealth countries are falling behind the MDG targets.

6. Noting that the global economic and financial crisis has profoundly affected both developed and developing countries and that the process of recovery is still slow and uncertain in many countries, we will collaborate to find ways to provide immediate help to the poorest and most vulnerable and to develop responses to protect the people that are most at risk, particularly those in poor developing countries.
7. We therefore commit ourselves to the strengthening and creation of partnerships and networks to increase development effectiveness, emphasising high-impact initiatives with clearly measurable outcomes. To this end, we pledge to take measures to improve the quality of the data used to inform policies in key areas such as health, poverty and education, strengthen the linkages between research and policy-making, and mainstream issues of gender and gender equality into policies and programmes. We will share our ideas and best practices, and deliver practical support through Commonwealth networks, including a new Commonwealth Partnership Platform Portal. We urge a stronger role for the Commonwealth Secretariat in assisting developing country members to access and utilise the resources available to cope with the economic crisis. We will also strive to implement the recommendations of the High-level Report on Democracy and Pro-Poor Growth as well as those of the Report of the Commission on Growth and Development.

## **Debt**

8. At our meeting in Kampala in 2007 we expressed concern that many countries were still weighed down by large and unsustainable debt burdens, and we reiterated the need to address the debt problems of middle-income countries, given the increasing share of government revenue taken by debt servicing and the implications for social spending.
9. In this regard, we commend the World Bank Debt Management initiative, which was developed in partnership with the Secretariat, and which was designed to help the governments of low-income and highly indebted middle-income countries to manage their national debts.

We call on the international financial institutions to provide new and enhanced funding windows for concessionary financing for middle-income countries with serious debt burdens.

10. In keeping with the calls made by Finance Ministers at the Commonwealth Ministerial Debt Sustainability Forum, we also call on donor countries to honour their bilateral commitments with respect to the promised aid levels and cancellation of debt.

## **Economic governance**

11. We will restore business confidence, the basis for investment and growth, by promoting the implementation of sound macroeconomic policies, including open, competitive markets with efficient and transparent regulation, good governance, and prudent and accountable management of public and private funds.
12. We also give our full support to the process of reform of international financial institutions and call for the urgent and comprehensive implementation of reform that responds to the needs of all countries. We should also seek to create mechanisms within established institutions that can assist small and vulnerable states.

## **Science, technology and innovation**

13. We recognise that many Commonwealth countries already collaborate on innovation, particularly in key areas such as information and communication technology (ICT). We believe that there must now be a far stronger emphasis on science, technology and innovation (STI) as key drivers of the type of economic transformation, employment generation and growth that will be required to emerge from the present economic crisis, attain our development objectives and realise our collective vision of sustainable development.
14. We therefore commit to promote increased investment in STI, as well as the rapid dissemination of technologies and ideas. In this regard, we request the Secretariat to identify, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC), mechanisms for financing research to advance the development and adoption of new technologies and to assist member countries to access the environmental development funds managed by the World Bank and the UN.

15. In addition, we will encourage new public–private sector partnerships, foster the expansion of the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector and promote new knowledge-based and creative industries.

### **Strengthening synergy and co-ordination**

16. As we seek to strengthen the CHOGM process, we recognise that a more co-ordinated, integrated and coherent approach to implementation of the decisions reached at CHOGMs is needed, alongside strategies to ensure the sustainability of collective Commonwealth planning and action.
17. We will therefore take all necessary steps to increase co-ordination among Commonwealth institutions and to ensure that Commonwealth ministerial meetings are more integrated with the CHOGM process. We will also strongly encourage co-operation and co-ordination among Commonwealth institutions, international financial institutions, regional development banks and other international bodies.

### **The global role of the Commonwealth**

18. The Commonwealth is a platform for its membership to communicate, share ideas and co-ordinate action across large geographical and cultural distances. It can therefore generate and sustain effective international action on global challenges. As a result of its diversity and representativeness, the Commonwealth can strengthen old partnerships and forge new ones in order to play a leadership role in the international arena for the promotion of a more equitable and sustainable future for all, and particularly to work as an advocate for small and vulnerable states. Together, we pledge to act as a catalyst for positive change in the international community in these challenging times.

28 November 2009

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 27 – 29 November, 2009

# A Declaration on Young People

## Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 2009

We, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, welcome the emphasis on young people in this, the 60th year since the foundation of the modern Commonwealth, with its theme of 'thecommonwealth@60 – serving a new generation'. We acknowledge with gratitude the role and active contributions of young people in promoting development, peace and democracy, and in protecting and promoting other Commonwealth values such as tolerance and understanding, including respect for other cultures. We recognise that the future successes of the Commonwealth rest with the continued commitments and contributions in these ways of our young people.

We appreciate the views and outcomes of young people that have been conveyed to us from the Commonwealth Youth Forum. We note young people's calls to be involved as agents of peace-building, and as agents for awareness of – and response to – climate change. We also hear young people's call to be facilitated as drivers of economic development, as young entrepreneurs.

We note the principles of youth development endorsed by Commonwealth Youth Ministers and affirm our own support for the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment.

We endorse coherence in the national, regional and global dimensions of advancing supportive policies towards youth. We also recognise the benefits of engaging youth at all levels of policy dialogue and curriculum development.

In this respect, we reaffirm our support for promoting 'youth mainstreaming', and recognise in particular the benefits of sharing best practices and knowledge of mainstreaming, to assist ministries and stakeholders in building comprehensive and coherent youth-related policies for national needs.



We endorse the project by the Commonwealth Secretariat to develop a comprehensive and replenished resource bank on youth affairs, consisting of data, best practices and thinking in this field, as a reference tool for the development of ambitious and coherent national policies by member countries.

We commend the Secretariat on its work to date in supporting the establishment of national youth plans and national youth councils in member countries. We note with concern that unemployment affects young people more than any other social group. We acknowledge the work of the pilot Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI), and encourage initiatives to expand the scheme and to support comprehensive skills development for youth in partnership with civil society and business.

We seek to enhance the CYCI by turning it into an integrated and holistic enterprise development programme, which is built around comprehensive and mutually reinforcing skills development, funding and mentorship. We pledge to support the new initiative, which should engage a considerably wider range of funders and partners, including our own ministries of youth, international finance institutions, regional organisations, banks and businesses. We welcome initial and generous donations that have been made by Asian and African banks to support further growth in this area.

We also appeal for voluntary contributions for special youth initiatives including the Commonwealth Young Professionals Programme and the network of centres of excellence based in the four Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) regional centres. We recommend that greater partnerships with national and international actors, including intergenerational alliances, be engendered towards the fulfilment of the youth development vision of the Commonwealth.

We recognise the opportunities for young people provided by the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP), celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2009. We express our appreciation for initial commitments of £1.6 million to date made towards the CSFP Anniversary Endowment Fund and anticipate the fund receiving further political and financial support.

29 November 2009

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 27 – 29 November, 2009

# Perth Declaration on Food Security Principles

## Australia, 2011

1. Food insecurity is one of the most pressing and difficult global challenges of our time. This is a profound concern for the Commonwealth – half of the world's one billion hungry live in our nations. The global food crises of 2007 and 2008 and the ongoing volatility and uncertainty of world food markets underscore the need for sustained international engagement with the issue. The distressing humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, most particularly in Somalia, and the drought, famine and famine-like situations occurring in other most vulnerable countries in the developing world highlight the difficulties we face.
2. Population growth will have a major impact on global demand for food. Additional factors, including scarce land and water resources, the diversion of fertile land, the reduction in crop species and use of crops for non-food purposes, urbanisation, distorted markets, and climate change, are intensifying pressures on supply. The world's poor and most vulnerable suffer most from food insecurity.
3. Commonwealth countries reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food, consistent with the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.
4. Commonwealth member countries affirm the important role that women, youth, farming and fishing communities, civil society and the private sector play in sustainable development and the need for their effective involvement in driving climate-smart agriculture and the food security agenda.
5. The Commonwealth is uniquely placed to support global food security efforts through Commonwealth countries' membership in all major global and regional forums that are engaged on this issue. Commonwealth countries therefore commit to use their membership of these forums to advocate the Perth Declaration on Food Security Principles to achieve outcomes that are relevant and meaningful to

members. Commonwealth members further commit to use the Perth Declaration principles as a guide to support domestic efforts to build food security.

6. The Perth Declaration principles reflect our shared approach to addressing the challenge of food insecurity and are focused on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable, particularly women and children.
7. The Perth Declaration principles on food security call for:
  - (a) co-ordinated and timely regional and global emergency relief efforts to deal with immediate crises;
  - (b) undertaking decisive and timely measures to prevent crises occurring, mitigate their impact when they do and build resilience;
  - (c) delivering practical measures over the medium term to make agriculture, including irrigated agriculture, and fisheries more productive and sustainable;
  - (d) strengthening support to government-led programmes and initiatives based on the spirit of effective partnerships;
  - (e) development of country-led medium- to long-term strategies and programmes to improve food security and ensure alignment of donor support to implementation of country priorities;
  - (f) scaling up nutritional interventions, including those that target mothers and young children, and incorporating nutrition considerations into broad food security initiatives;
  - (g) enhancing research and development over the longer term to build a sustainable agricultural sector, including through the promotion and sharing of best agricultural practices, in order to feed and nourish the people of the world;
  - (h) strengthening fisheries and marine resource management in member countries' waters to ensure sustainability of these resources for national and global food security, including through addressing illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing;
  - (i) improving international market access for food producers, including smallholders and women, through trade liberalisation measures such as the elimination of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, and avoidance of restrictions on food exports;

- (j) addressing the impediments that are inhibiting economic opportunities for these important producers, including lack of affordable financing, local value-added and adequate infrastructure;
  - (k) collaboration between international organisations, donor countries and national governments to address production, storage, waste reduction, elimination of post-harvest losses, transportation and marketing challenges; this collaboration could include more effective ways of meeting infrastructure financing gaps that engage the private sector; and
  - (l) improving the institutional framework for global food security efforts, including by supporting reform of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
8. Commonwealth countries recognise that Africa has the potential not only to achieve food security but to become a significant net food exporter. Leaders commit to supporting efforts and initiatives such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), designed to realise the long-term potential of Africa as a food producer and exporter.
  9. To support African agricultural production, Commonwealth countries have committed to direct action through major investments in agricultural productivity.
  10. Commonwealth countries recognise the critical role played by national and international agricultural research in promoting and sharing agricultural technologies for enhanced crop yields, and undertake to deepen their co-operation.
  11. Commonwealth countries also underline their critical role in managing and safeguarding a large proportion of the world's fish stocks.
  12. In advocating the Perth Declaration principles, Commonwealth countries acknowledge the central role played by the UN in global food security governance and commit to show leadership in the UN by supporting food and nutrition security initiatives.
  13. Committed to using the collective Commonwealth voice to influence global action, Commonwealth members urge the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 to commit to an ambitious programme of action to drive increased investment to boost sustainable global agricultural and fisheries productivity.

14. The Commonwealth, through its five G20 members, further commits to advocate for strong outcomes on food security at the G20 Cannes Summit, including to increase investment in appropriate agricultural technologies and sustainable productivity, to address market volatility and other market-distorting factors, and for food security, including fisheries, to be accorded a high priority within the forward G20 development agenda.
15. Recognising the ongoing critical food security needs, the Commonwealth welcomes the substantial contributions made by Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia in fulfilment of their L'Aquila Food Security Initiative commitments and calls on countries that have not yet fulfilled their food security commitments to do so.
16. Commonwealth countries will continue to prioritise food security and will assess progress towards implementation of these principles on food security at the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2013.

29 October 2011

Issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,  
Perth, Australia, 28 – 30 October, 2011

# The Magampura Declaration of Commitment to Young People

## Sri Lanka, 2013

1. We, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, recognise the vital role that young people can and must play at the centre of sustainable and inclusive development. Investing in young people today is the foundation for a prosperous and equitable tomorrow. We commit unequivocally to investing in young people and placing them at the centre of sustainable and inclusive development, thus harnessing their creativity, leadership and social capital towards the progress and resilience of Commonwealth countries, and a more democratic and prosperous Commonwealth.
2. We therefore aim to realise the transformational potential of young people by ensuring that our countries' national policies, plans and programming have a clear priority in favour of youth, with goals which focus on young people's concerns and aspirations, and which enable them to contribute meaningfully to national development.
3. We acknowledge that many young people face grave challenges and uncertainties, including unemployment and underemployment; lack of access to quality education; sexual violence in armed conflict and violence, especially against young women; the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS; concerns over systemic corruption, poor governance and human rights violations; limited access to technology; environmental degradation and climate change; inequity; and marginalisation and discrimination.
4. We also recognise that, with over 60 per cent of its population aged under 30, the Commonwealth is well placed to reap a demographic dividend, and that investment in young people is an essential element for national development strategies.
5. The Post-2015 Development Agenda is crucial to young people, who will be its heirs, custodians and champions. We acknowledge the call of Commonwealth Youth Ministers and youth leaders for a specific,

stand-alone goal on youth empowerment and participation, and youth-specific indicators on all relevant goals. We also acknowledge the recommendations from Commonwealth Education Ministers on education targets for the post-2015 framework.

6. We welcome the recently launched Commonwealth Youth Development Index, and its capacity to identify needs, measure progress achieved and assist Commonwealth states in shaping sustainable evidence-based youth development policies. We support national and international efforts to improve collection of youth-specific data to ensure a clear picture of young people's development.
7. We acknowledge the importance of youth voice and youth-led development initiatives promote young people's key role at the centre of sustainable and inclusive development. Accordingly, we welcome the establishment of the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC). We recognise the CYC's autonomous, youth-led status, and the value of its role as a recognised representative body within and beyond the Commonwealth. We appreciate the generous offers made to ensure that the CYC is resourced over the next two years to establish strong foundations, and to take forward its youth-led development agenda. In this context, we express our deepest appreciation for and welcome the Government of Sri Lanka's offer to host the Secretariat of the CYC. We look forward to strong partnerships between the CYC, member governments, youth and relevant Commonwealth institutions. We receive with appreciation the recommendations of the inaugural CYC Executive representing the Ninth Commonwealth Youth Forum. We also welcome the hosting of the World Conference on Youth by the Government of Sri Lanka in May 2014; the conference will be particularly focused on the participation and involvement of young people in achieving internationally agreed development goals.
8. We reaffirm the importance of job creation and youth enterprise for inclusive economic growth, which is vital to national prosperity and social cohesion, and commit to enhancing and investing in relevant policies, regulations and programming. We urge business leaders to prioritise opportunities for young people, and support efforts to address skills training to fit industry needs, especially through technical and vocational education and training (TVET). We commend the Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (CAAYE), and encourage replication of the model to build young entrepreneurs' networks in all regions of the Commonwealth. We

welcome the Government of Sri Lanka's proposal to the UN to declare an International Skills Day to promote and recognise youth skills development.

9. We recognise the critical importance to young people of access to new technologies and information, including connectivity through social media and ICT curriculums in schools, to effectively communicate and mobilise paid employment opportunities, engage in development initiatives and build higher expectations of themselves and their communities. We note that ICT can be an effective instrument for rural and small state empowerment, making isolated communities a meaningful stakeholder in the global community.
10. We recognise the significance of healthy young people to national development and note with concern the disproportionately high rates of HIV/AIDS and NCDs in many Commonwealth countries. We recognise the value of increasing investments in healthcare for young people, including enhancement of health education, prioritising the areas of HIV/AIDS, NCDs and sexual and reproductive health.
11. We are deeply concerned at the vulnerability of our young people to involvement in crime and to the illicit use of narcotic drugs. We resolve to take concerted action to protect them from such dangers and harness their energies in constructive ways.
12. We acknowledge the important contribution that sport and physical activity can make to improving wellbeing and healthy lifestyles, and as a tool for development and peace, promoting education, equality, inclusion and social cohesion. We welcome the efforts by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Games Federation to advance sport for development and peace. We look forward to the 20th Commonwealth Games, to be held in Glasgow in 2014, and urge stakeholders to intensify efforts to use the Games as an instrument for development and peace.
13. We underscore the importance of a focus on vulnerable groups of young people, particularly the differently abled and those who live below the poverty line, in disaster-prone environments or conflict and post-conflict situations. We also reiterate the Commonwealth's commitment to promoting mutual respect and understanding, and recognise the leadership potential of young people of different religions and ethnicities in building peaceful and inclusive societies.



14. We commend the significant contribution made to youth development and empowerment by professional youth development workers across all sectors. We acknowledge the Commonwealth Secretariat's ongoing commitment to youth work education and professionalisation, and the strong commitment demonstrated by the Government of South Africa in hosting the inaugural Commonwealth Conference on Youth Work, Education and Training earlier this year.
15. We also, on its 40th anniversary, reaffirm our commitment to the CYP as a long-standing and unique instrument for promoting youth empowerment and development in the Commonwealth. We note the renewal strategy to position the CYP for contemporary and effective programming into the future and to deliver thought leadership that contributes unique ideas to Commonwealth and global youth development. We recognise that funding constraints are limiting the CYP's capacity to deliver such initiatives in support of Commonwealth youth priorities and needs. We reiterate our earlier decision that a new assessed- contributions formula should be developed, which should now be finalised promptly in order to increase and consolidate sustainable support for the CYP, and that countries should honour their financial commitments. We also reaffirm our commitment to other Pan-Commonwealth youth development initiatives, including the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and other youth exchange programmes.
16. We recognise the valuable role of civil society, especially youth-focused and youth-led organisations and networks, and the contribution of the private sector for youth development. We therefore call for increased coherence, cross-sector partnerships and collective action for the development, empowerment and inclusion of young people.

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# Colombo Declaration on Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Development

## Sri Lanka, 2013

1. We, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, recognise that accelerating growth has become central to policy efforts globally. However, we note that rising inequality at both international and national levels has implications for poverty reduction and future growth potential of member countries. Countries grappling with natural and man-made disasters and other pressing global challenges are the worst affected. This situation has led to the economic marginalisation of societies, within and among countries. Therefore, we agree that achieving growth with equity and inclusivity must be one of the main policy priorities for the Commonwealth, in keeping with the Commonwealth Charter adopted in December 2012.
2. We express our deep concern about the adverse impacts of the world financial and economic crises on development prospects, particularly in developing states. We emphasise the need to act decisively to tackle the challenges confronting the global economy to ensure balanced, sustainable, inclusive and equitable global growth with full and productive employment. We affirm the importance of reforms of the international trade, monetary and financial institutions in order to ensure fair representation for developing countries.
3. We recognise that improving access to productive employment is a critical element to achieve equitable growth and requires enhancing employability of the workforce and creating productive employment opportunities. Improvements in employability are largely linked to access to quality education, skills development, better healthcare and equitable access to resources. We agree to make concerted efforts to create productive employment with equitable access to all, to achieve inclusive growth.

4. We reaffirm the right to development for all individuals and commit ourselves to eliminate disparities and focus on making growth more inclusive for all, including for vulnerable groups, women, youth and the differently abled.
5. We recognise the importance of meaningful social protection for all in achieving inclusive development and also as an important tool in addressing poverty, inequality, vulnerability and social exclusion. Given the varying degrees of vulnerability to crises, particularly among the developing states, we underline the need for having proactive national initiatives on social protection, based on relevant international agreements.
6. Member countries of the Commonwealth are home to a diverse array of natural resources, which have been preserved and sustainably utilised over centuries for their benefit. We recognise the sovereign right of nations to manage their own natural resource base, according to national needs and priorities, in a sustainable manner, enabling their further growth and development.
7. We note the findings of the 2013 UN MDGs progress report, which states that some of the MDGs have already been met and that more targets are within reach by the 2015 target date. However, we are concerned that certain targets remain off track both globally and within the Commonwealth. We therefore call for an urgent implementation of all commitments undertaken, individually and collectively, in particular on Goal 8, related to global partnerships. We reaffirm our determination to collectively call for a strong and effective partnership for development, while emphasising that the successful achievement of the MDGs by 2015 should remain a global priority.
8. We therefore pledge to engage collectively and help shape the Post-2015 Development Agenda by constituting an open-ended high-level working group of Heads to identify, through a Commonwealth statement on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, our shared Commonwealth perspectives and recommendations. We will advance these shared perspectives through individual member governments in the intergovernmental consultations at the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly.
9. We welcome the report of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the report of the UN Secretary-General entitled *A Life of Dignity for All – Accelerating Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals*

*and Advancing the United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015*, the UN Development Group consultations, the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. We note their contents as inputs into the intergovernmental process on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

10. As we seek to further strengthen the global partnership, we are aware of the wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience available within the Commonwealth which remains underutilised. We therefore commit to actively explore the unrealised potential for collaboration and partnerships within the Commonwealth. We also recognise it as a useful step to facilitate the efforts of individual member countries towards equitable distribution of benefits and to achieve better living standards and prosperity for all.
11. In the context of a rapidly changing global environment, achieving growth with equity and promoting sustainable development will require intensified efforts at both the national and international levels. At national level, this could be achieved through strengthened public administration and institutions and reinforcing accountability; developing the necessary institutional capacity, knowledge and skill levels, particularly among young people; promoting the smoother functioning and increasing openness of markets; and strengthening the private sector and expanding infrastructure to foster long-term growth, including by making full use of public–private partnerships (PPPs) as an investment tool to achieve sustainable development. At international level, we acknowledge the importance of strengthened financial, technical and institutional efforts to support national efforts in addressing vulnerability and building resilience and the need for new international approaches that respond to the rapidly changing global environment in which sustainable development policies are being pursued. We recognise the special role the Commonwealth can play in exchanging experiences and lessons learned.
12. In furthering partnership-building, we also recognise the useful contribution that tools such as Commonwealth Connects can bring to member countries and encourage its full use to enhance connectivity among the people of the Commonwealth.

13. We express our commitment to work towards developing supportive global policies to address poverty, food security, climate change mitigation and adaptation, inequalities in trade, predictable and adequate finances, investments, knowledge and technology transfers, as well as in increasing voices in the global economic, trade and financial order to achieve growth with equity.
14. We recall the Millennium Declaration and the outcome of the UN General Assembly special event on the MDGs. We reaffirm our commitment to the Millennium Declaration, the outcome document of Rio+20, the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, and the outcomes of all major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields. We will continue to be guided by the values and principles enshrined in these texts. We reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in Principle 7 thereof.
15. We are of the firm view that our chosen national paths forward to realise sustainable, inclusive and equitable development in our societies can be reinforced and further advanced through concerted initiatives in the economic sphere. To this end, we request the Commonwealth Secretariat to convene and inform discussions at forthcoming Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meetings, drawing on inputs from members and expert development practitioners, on the key economic and other factors affecting Commonwealth member countries' ability to meet development goals, including the Post-2015 Development Agenda, once defined. This work should consider other areas of potential for economic co-operation within the Commonwealth. Progress will be reviewed at the next CHOGM in 2015.

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Colombo, Sri Lanka, 10 – 17 November, 2013

# Commonwealth Cyber Declaration

## United Kingdom, 2018

**Recognising** that the development of cyberspace has made a powerful contribution to the economic, social, cultural and political life of the Commonwealth;

**Underlining** that cyberspace provides a common space, within which the diversity and richness of Commonwealth identities can be expressed;

**Emphasising** the critical role of cyberspace in connecting all Commonwealth member countries, in particular small island developing states, to global value chains in the context of an increasingly globalised economy;

**Recalling** the Commonwealth Charter commitment to strengthening the use of information and communication technologies, while enhancing their security, for the purpose of the sustainable development of our societies;

**Recognising** the threats to stability in cyberspace and integrity of the critical infrastructure and affirming our shared commitment to fully abide by the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations to mitigate these risks;

**Building** on the principles expressed in the 2014 Commonwealth Cyber governance Model adopted by the Commonwealth ICT Ministers Forum and our shared commitment to Commonwealth values of human rights, tolerance, respect and understanding, freedom of expression, rule of law, good governance, sustainable development and gender equality;

**Underscoring** our shared interest in protecting the security of our networks, security of data, the people that use them, and the services that run on them;

We, as Commonwealth Heads of Government, commit to:

### **A cyberspace that supports economic and social development and rights online**

Recognising the potential for a free, open, inclusive and secure cyberspace to promote economic growth for all communities and to act as an enabler for realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals across the Commonwealth, we:

1. **Recognise and support** cyberspace as an enabling environment to promote investment and intra-Commonwealth trade in goods and services through open markets, the free flow of information, innovation, and fair competition.
2. **Commit to** promote interoperable and global technical standards, through appropriate consultative processes involving industry, academia, governments and other relevant stakeholders, recognising that standards should be open, foster security and trust and not act as barriers to trade, competition or innovation.
3. **Highlight** the importance of common standards and the strengthening of data protection and security frameworks, in order to promote public trust in the internet, confidence for trade and commerce, and the free flow of data.
4. **Acknowledge** the importance of tolerance, respect for diversity, and understanding in cyberspace.
5. **Affirm** that the same rights that citizens have offline must also be protected online.
6. **Commit** to limit the circumstances in which communication networks may be intentionally disrupted, consistent with applicable international and domestic law.
7. **Recognise** that without cybersecurity citizens are at risk of crime or exploitation, and *commit* to strengthening legislative, social and educational measures that protect the vulnerable.
8. **Recognise** that access to information and digital literacy can be a powerful catalyst for economic empowerment and inclusion, and *commit* to take steps towards expanding digital access and digital inclusion for all communities without discrimination and regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, geographic location or language.
9. **Emphasise** that enhanced digital inclusion of young people in the Commonwealth can contribute in a positive way to their education, social engagement and entrepreneurship.

## Build the foundations of an effective national cybersecurity response

Recognising the need for individual and collective action to tackle cybercrime and protect critical national infrastructure, we:

1. **Note** the importance and involvement of all stakeholders within their respective roles and responsibilities in the good governance of cyberspace.
2. **Highlight** the importance of national cybersecurity strategic planning and establishing incident response capabilities, supported by appropriate legislation and a law enforcement and criminal justice system capable of addressing cybercrime.
3. **Commit** to support businesses to implement appropriate measure to protect themselves and their customers from cybersecurity threats. *Commit* to work towards the development and convergence of approaches for internet-connected devices and associated services, in order to promote user security by default.
4. **Encourage** investment in cybersecurity and cyber hygiene skills, and to develop skills in the workforce, particularly for women and girls, and public awareness to help the public adopt secure online behaviours and protect themselves from cybercrime.
5. **Recognise** the potential for sharing of information across the Commonwealth for improving cooperation between government, law enforcement and industry, with due regard for necessary and proportionate safeguards.
6. **Commit** to exploring options to deepen cooperation on cybersecurity incidents and responses between Commonwealth member countries, including through the sharing of information about threats, breaches, vulnerabilities, and mitigation measures.
7. **Note with concern** the challenges faced by Commonwealth developing member countries, particularly less developed countries and small island developing states. *Commit* to invest in cybersecurity capacity building, including through the transfer of knowledge and technology on mutually agreed terms, the development of skills and training, the promotion of education and research, awareness raising, and access to good practice.



## Promote stability in cyberspace through international cooperation

Recognising the importance of international cooperation in tackling cybercrime and promoting stability in cyberspace, we:

1. **Commit** to the establishment of effective and proportionate domestic cybercrime and cybersecurity frameworks that take into account principles in existing international instruments, acknowledging the evolving tactics of cybercriminals and the transnational nature of cybercrime. *Commit* to use national contact points and other practical measures to enable cross-border access to digital evidence through mutually agreed channels to improve international cooperation to tackle cybercrime.
2. **Commit** to work towards common standards, harmonised legal approaches and improved interoperability, including through the use of Commonwealth model laws; and *commit* to considering the potential for further Commonwealth cooperation in this regard, including the possible coordination of common positions in international fora.
3. **Commit** to promote frameworks for cyberspace, including the applicability of international law, agreed voluntary norms of responsible state behaviour, and the development and implementation of confidence building measures to encourage trust, cooperation and transparency, consistent with the 2015 Report of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International security (UNGGE).
4. **Commit** to move forward discussions on how existing international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and applicable international humanitarian law, applies in cyberspace in all its aspects.

20 April 2018

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# Declaration on the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda for Trade and Investment

## **United Kingdom, 2018**

We, the Heads of Government representing member countries of the Commonwealth and one third of the world's population recognise international trade and investment as an engine for generating inclusive and participative economic growth and a means to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Recalling our previous statement issued in Kotte in 2013 and the Malta Communique in 2015, and mindful of the intra-Commonwealth trade and investment potential as demonstrated in the 2015 and 2018 Commonwealth Trade Reviews, we stress the importance of international trade and investment in boosting employment and income in our countries and helping them achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We take note of the statement delivered by Malta at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference and we affirm our commitment to free trade in a transparent, inclusive, fair, and open rules-based multilateral trading system as a foundation for economic development and growth. We encourage member countries to work collectively towards strengthening the system and on trade issues which will lead to more prosperity in the world economy.

In particular, we recognise the importance of the multilateral trading system in ensuring the integration of small, vulnerable and least developed countries and countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific into the world economy, and welcome initiatives which will support greater and more effective participation of these countries in international trade.

With members drawn from every geographic region and every level of development, we affirm the role the Commonwealth can play in supporting global growth, creating employment, the sharing of best practices and learning and promoting development among its members.

To promote the realisation of these goals, we hereby launch the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda for Trade and Investment.

This Agenda will be guided by the principles that: co-operation should be pragmatic and practical, leading to credible results; take into account regional integration initiatives; take into account the needs of small and vulnerable economies and least developed countries; avoid duplication with initiatives where other organisations are already working; add value in areas of engagement; and adopt a progressive approach towards a long term vision for closer trade and investment ties. It should also recognise the vital role of the private sector in delivering the 2030 Agenda and facilitating the promotion of the blue and green economy.

In pursuing the Agenda, member countries will structure dialogue around the following clusters:

1. **Physical Connectivity**, engaging on trade facilitation, identifying and facilitating implementation issues, infrastructure development including multi-sectoral connectivity and the sharing of trade information, in order to reduce the physical barriers to trade;
2. **Digital Connectivity**, assisting member countries in expanding ICT capabilities, identifying areas for developing their national digital economies, improving their regulatory framework and building digital infrastructure, inter alia through capacity building and promoting investments, to enable all members to take advantage of the opportunities presented by digital trade;
3. **Regulatory Connectivity**, improving understanding of various regulatory regimes, increasing the ease of doing business, promoting good regulatory practice including regulatory cooperation among member countries to reduce non-tariff barriers, improving services data collection, and mutual recognition, in order to reduce regulatory barriers, address the capacity deficit and improve the regulatory environment for business, especially micro, small and medium enterprises and consumers;
4. **Business-to-Business Connectivity**, supporting dialogue between the public and private sectors and between businesses, assisting member countries to attract investment through capacity building, facilitating the needs of the micro, small and medium enterprises to access finance, and reflecting on how domestic regimes could

facilitate business-to-business connectivity, particularly with the aim of enhancing the private sector's role in promoting the blue and green economy;

5. **Supply Side Connectivity**, encouraging the participation of all members in global value chains, fostering global value chains (GVC) linkages and sharing knowledge among members and harnessing them for economic growth, as well as the creation of export diversification opportunities for micro, small and medium enterprises, and exploring possibilities to collaborate on national trade portals, and
6. In engaging in these areas, member countries will mainstream **inclusive and sustainable trade** as a cross-cutting issue. The Commonwealth will deepen collaboration with other organisations in identifying issues affecting the sustainability of economies. We affirm our commitment to making trade and investment truly inclusive by encouraging the participation of women and youth in business activities, by taking a gender responsive approach to the development of trade policy, increasing opportunities for women to trade internationally, and breaking down gender barriers in all sectors. We undertake to invest in programmes to tackle youth unemployment and give young people access to meaningful opportunities.

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Agenda for Trade  
and Investment  
Communicable Diseases  
Combat Non-  
Communicable Diseases  
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