



Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, 27-29 November 2009

CHOGM COMMUNIQUÉ

1. Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Trinidad and Tobago from 27 to 29 November 2009. Of the 49 countries that attended the Meeting, 34 were represented by their Heads of State or Government.
2. The Opening Ceremony of the Meeting included an address by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth.
3. Heads of Government conveyed their sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago for the warm hospitality extended to them and the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. They also congratulated Prime Minister Manning for his able stewardship of the Meeting.

Fundamental Values and Principles: The Modern Commonwealth

4. In the 60th anniversary of the Modern Commonwealth, Heads of Government adopted the *Trinidad and Tobago Affirmation on Commonwealth Values and Principles*.

Membership – Rwanda

5. Heads of Government considered the application of the Republic of Rwanda for membership of the Commonwealth, in accordance with the criteria and procedures agreed at their last meeting in 2007. They warmly welcomed Rwanda into the Commonwealth family as its 54th member.

Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG)

6. Heads of Government endorsed the Report of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), covering the Group's deliberations in the period since Heads' last meeting in Kampala in November 2007. They commended CMAG's work, which has contributed significantly to the protection and promotion of the Commonwealth's fundamental political values in member countries.

7. Heads of Government welcomed the reinstatement of Pakistan in the Councils of the Commonwealth following the conduct of credible elections in the country in February 2008 and the assumption of office by an elected, civilian government in April 2008.

8. Heads expressed deep concern at the further deterioration of the situation in Fiji Islands with regard to its adherence to fundamental Commonwealth values, including the abrogation of the Constitution in April 2009, ongoing restrictions on human rights including freedom of speech and assembly, and the Interim Government's decision to further delay elections until 2014. They noted that these actions had led to the full suspension of Fiji from the Commonwealth on 1 September 2009.

9. Heads fully endorsed CMAG's call for the Interim Government of Fiji to commit itself to a credible, inclusive and time-bound political dialogue towards the restoration of constitutional civilian democracy without further delay, and for the protection of fundamental human rights, including the immediate rescission of the Public Emergency Regulation. They reaffirmed their willingness to remain engaged with Fiji in support of any good faith efforts toward this end, in accordance with fundamental Commonwealth principles.

10. Heads noted the decision by the Commonwealth Games Federation to exclude Fiji from participation in the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, as a consequence of Fiji's suspension from Commonwealth membership. In this context, Heads observed that Commonwealth sporting events represent a significant public demonstration of the unity of the Commonwealth as a family of members with a shared commitment to fundamental values. They affirmed that sporting ties under the Commonwealth name are inseparable from the values of the association, and endorsed the position consistently taken by CMAG that those countries under full suspension from the Commonwealth should, *inter alia*, be ineligible to participate in Commonwealth sporting events.

11. Heads of Government agreed that consideration be given to strengthening the role of CMAG, in order to enable the Group to deal with the full range of serious or persistent violations of the Harare Principles. They also noted the decision of CMAG to constitute a working group of its own member states to look into how its work may be further refined and elaborated to make it more effective, in consultation with other member states, and make proposals on this matter to the wider membership. They agreed that this examination should be confined to matters within CMAG's existing mandate and that any proposals for going beyond that mandate should be referred to Heads.

12. Heads reconstituted the membership of CMAG for the next biennium as follows: Australia, Bangladesh, Ghana, Jamaica, Maldives, Namibia, New Zealand, Vanuatu and Trinidad and Tobago (as Chair-in-Office.)

Belize

13. Heads of Government noted recent developments in the ongoing efforts of Belize to seek a just, peaceful and definitive resolution to Guatemala's territorial claims. They welcomed the signing of the Special Agreement between Belize and Guatemala on 8 December 2008, which provides for submission of the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) upon approval by the citizens of both countries in simultaneous referenda. Heads expressed a high level of confidence that the dispute could be resolved through the judicial procedure of the ICJ, and urged the support and financial assistance of the international community for this process.

14. Heads further expressed satisfaction with the ongoing Confidence Building Measures supported by the Organization of American States, which had contributed immensely to stability in the adjacent border areas of Belize and Guatemala. Heads reiterated their firm support for the territorial integrity, security and sovereignty of Belize and mandated the Secretary-General to continue to convene the Commonwealth Ministerial Committee on Belize whenever necessary.

Cyprus

15. Reaffirming their previous Communiqués on Cyprus, Heads of Government expressed their support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. They expressed their support for a lasting, just and functional settlement based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the principles of the Commonwealth.

16. Heads of Government called for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on Cyprus, in particular Security Council Resolutions 365 (1974), 541 (1983), 550 (1984), 1250 (1999) and all subsequent resolutions. They reiterated their support for the respect for the human rights of all Cypriots, including the right to property, for the implementation of the relevant decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and of the European Court of Justice, and for the accounting for all missing persons.

17. Heads of Government further agreed on the importance of supporting the efforts of the two leaders under the UN Secretary General's Good Offices Mission to bring about a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem in line with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. They welcomed the ongoing Cypriot-owned process of the fully fledged negotiations initiated in September 2008, aimed at reaching an agreed solution on the basis of a bizonal, bicomunal federation with a single sovereignty, single international personality, single citizenship and political equality as described in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Guyana

18. Heads of Government received an update on Guyana-Venezuela relations, and welcomed the efforts being made by both States to develop their bilateral relations in spite of the controversy that emerged from the Venezuelan contention that the Arbitral Award of 1899, that established the boundary between Guyana and Venezuela, is null and void.

19. Heads noted that the two countries had jointly proposed a candidate to the United Nations Secretary-General to be appointed as his Special Representative, to assist him as Good Officer in the search for a means of settlement of the controversy. They underscored the importance of this appointment to the resuscitation of the good offices process of the UN Secretary-General.

20. Heads expressed satisfaction with the role being played by the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana, which was established in 1999 to monitor developments in respect of the controversy. Heads agreed that the Ministerial Group should continue its work, and mandated the Secretary-General to convene meetings of the Group whenever necessary. Heads of Government reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the maintenance of Guyana's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Zimbabwe

21. Heads of Government welcomed the Global Political Agreement on power-sharing in Zimbabwe, and expressed the hope that this would be implemented faithfully and effectively. They looked forward to the conditions being created for the return of Zimbabwe to the Commonwealth.

Disarmament and Arms Control

22. Heads of Government once again acknowledged the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and reaffirmed their commitment towards ridding the world of these weapons. Recognising that the ultimate objective is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, Heads reaffirmed their commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which should be achieved in accordance with the United Nations Charter. Heads noted that the May 2010 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) provides states that are parties to the NPT with the opportunity to renew their commitment to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Heads reaffirmed the rights of states to nuclear energy for peaceful uses in conformity with their international obligations.

23. Heads noted the ongoing efforts towards the negotiation of a comprehensive Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in respect of conventional weapons,

and the proposed ATT conference to be held in 2012. They called for the finalisation of a robust and comprehensive ATT based on consensus.

24. Heads recognised the danger posed to civilians by the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions and noted the significant contribution made by concerned states and civil society to addressing the humanitarian impact of these munitions.

Small Arms and Light Weapons

25. Heads of Government expressed their deep concern over the illicit manufacture, illegal trade and uncontrolled availability of small arms and light weapons, including man-portable air defence systems and their ammunition. They also acknowledged the resultant threat posed to peace, security, stability and development, and emphasised the importance of continued assistance to member states in this area. They reaffirmed their support for the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Heads furthermore called for concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of such weapons.

Terrorism

26. Heads of Government reaffirmed their unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, as criminal and unjustifiable. They recognised that terrorism threatens the territorial integrity and security of states, and continues to present a serious challenge to international peace and security. They reiterated that acts of terrorism cannot be justified or legitimised by any cause or grievance whatsoever.

27. Heads stressed the continuing need for comprehensive efforts at all national and international levels to counter terrorism, including efforts to build respect and understanding among peoples. They urged member states to exchange information, including financial information on the movement of terrorist funds, and cooperate more effectively in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of terrorist acts through existing or new regional mechanisms, as appropriate.

28. Heads emphasised the need to conclude negotiations on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism on a priority basis, preferably during the Sixty-Fourth Session of the UN General Assembly.

29. Heads called upon all member states to accede to the UN Counter-Terrorism Conventions and Protocols, and to effectively implement these as well as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security

Council Resolutions, and to prevent the use of their territories for the support, incitement or commission of terrorist acts in other states. They particularly stressed the need for member states to implement the necessary legal framework for the suppression of terrorist financing, taking into account the provisions of the International Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism (1999) and Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001), with a view to interdicting the direct and indirect flow of funds to terrorist groups, including through charitable organisations.

30. Heads welcomed the convening, in September 2009, of a Ministerial Meeting on Terrorism, which endorsed the updated Commonwealth Plan of Action on Terrorism and sought to identify new areas of cooperation among member states to meet new challenges posed by terrorism. They expressed the hope that continued implementation of the Plan would facilitate an even more effective Commonwealth contribution to the UN-led global effort on counter-terrorism.

Combating Piracy

31. Heads of Government expressed their deep concern over the threat posed by piracy and armed robbery against ships. In this context, they noted the work of the International Maritime Organisation in facilitating the Djibouti Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden. Heads commended the work of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and urged the Group to carry forward its work in coordinating efforts to combat piracy. They encouraged member states to continue to cooperate to the fullest possible extent, and in a manner consistent with international law, in the combating of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

Combating Corruption and the Tracing and Recovery of Assets of Illicit Origin

32. Recognising that corruption in its various forms undermines good governance, public security, respect for human rights and economic development, Heads of Government urged member states which had not already done so to consider becoming parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and to implement its provisions, including those addressing asset recovery, to help them combat systemic corruption at both national and international levels.

33. Heads acknowledged the ongoing activities of the Secretariat to build institutional capacity and awareness in member states so as to assist them with implementation and enforcement of UNCAC. They also encouraged member states to consider implementing the recommendations of the 2005 Commonwealth Expert Working Group on the Recovery and Repatriation of Assets of Illicit Origin.

Migration

34. Heads of Government acknowledged that migration has historically contributed to the development and the flourishing of the human prospect. They expressed concern about protection gaps in countries of origin, transit and destination, and called for the strengthening of existing global mechanisms to effectively address the protection of migrants. In this context, they also affirmed the importance of enhanced cooperation among states, and other relevant actors, in managing mixed migratory flows and addressing protection needs.

Human Trafficking and People Smuggling

35. Heads, in noting the 2009 UN Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, reaffirmed their condemnation of the increasing levels of human trafficking, including trafficking for sexual and other forms of exploitation, which debases and deprives people of their human rights and dignity. They called for concerted efforts to deal with this challenge.

36. Heads again urged member states to put in place the necessary legal and administrative framework to prevent human trafficking, protect and support victims of such trafficking and prosecute the traffickers. They also affirmed the principle of solidarity and burden-sharing with regard to identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking.

37. Heads of Government affirmed their strongest support for combating people smuggling. Heads acknowledged that people smuggling, like all forms of transnational crime, continues to present a threat to the integrity of regional border security processes and procedures, and undermines the ability of states to manage migration. They also expressed their concern that transnational criminal organisations continue to profit from people smuggling, with disregard for the safety or human rights of those being smuggled.

38. Heads urged member states to increase efforts to combat people smuggling, including by enhancing regional cooperation, building capacity, and implementing national legislation to criminalise this activity. They acknowledged the important role of regional consultative processes in addressing the challenge of people smuggling.

39. Heads urged member states to comply with all obligations arising under international law and to consider becoming parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and the Protocols thereto, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

Human Rights

40. Heads of Government urged all member states to consider acceding to and implementing all major international human rights instruments, especially the twin 1966 Covenants (the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) which, along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, form the International Bill of Human Rights.

41. On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Heads called for the enactment and domestic implementation of CEDAW. Heads expressed their commitment to eliminating violence against women. They also welcomed the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1888 on sexual violence in armed conflict, and Resolutions 1325 and 1889 on women and peace and security. Heads stressed the need for improved women's participation, leadership and representation in decision-making at all levels, including in peace processes, conflict prevention and resolution, and in post-conflict peacebuilding.

42. Heads recalled that 2009 marked the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by all Commonwealth member states. They reaffirmed their commitment to uphold the rights of children and encouraged all member states to accede to the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

43. Heads called for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). They noted with satisfaction the recent increase in ratifications by member states of a range of international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They also noted the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

44. Heads recognised the work of the Secretariat in advancing and mainstreaming human rights in the Commonwealth and its support for the work of national and regional mechanisms in protecting and promoting human rights, in particular its intensive engagement with small states. They reaffirmed their support for the initiatives by the Secretariat to assist member countries, at their request, to improve their adherence to international and regional human rights instruments and in the processes of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council. Heads further acknowledged the Secretariat's programmes to promote human rights education and awareness through training programmes for targeted groups such as police, other uniformed services, magistrates and government officers.

45. Recognising and underlining the centrality of human rights to the fundamental values of the Commonwealth, Heads called for greater cooperation among national human rights institutions in order to enable these institutions to promote human rights more effectively.

World Economic Situation

46. Heads of Government acknowledged the ongoing turbulence in the global economy that has resulted, *inter alia*, in a global economic recession, contraction in global trade and reduced levels of foreign direct investment. They recognised the devastating impact that this has had across the Commonwealth, with economic growth in nearly all Commonwealth countries below potential levels. Heads noted that for many Commonwealth citizens living standards have declined, and progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the developing countries, especially Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), has been reversed. In that context, Heads welcomed the Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth agreed at the G-20 Pittsburgh Summit in September 2009. They supported the G-20's call for advice on promoting development and poverty reduction as part of the rebalancing of global growth and committed to working closely with international institutions, including the World Bank, to that end.

47. Heads expressed their support for the commitment to avoid protectionism, and to strengthen financial supervision and regulation. They emphasised the importance of renewing the contract between financial institutions and the society they serve, and the need to ensure the sector bears the full cost of the risk associated with their activities. They also welcomed commitments to accelerate IMF voice and governance reform, to review the capital needs of the multilateral development banks by mid-2010, and to adopt a more appropriate and dynamic formula to determine shareholder and voting power realignments at the World Bank and the IMF. They encouraged the IMF to consider the full range of options in their review.

48. Heads welcomed the steps taken by many countries to mitigate the impact of the economic crisis, and the fragile signs of growth in the global economy. They expressed concern however, that the social and economic impact of the crisis would continue to affect a vast majority of the developing countries, particularly the smallest and most economically vulnerable members of the Commonwealth, including LDCs and SIDS.

49. Heads nevertheless recognised that members in many regions including in Africa, had demonstrated encouraging and significant resilience, reflecting the presence of stronger macroeconomic and other policy frameworks. To further strengthen resilience, they urged enhanced international and national efforts to support electrification and other infrastructure development.

50. Heads also highlighted the fact that measures need to be taken to address the plight of many middle-income countries which are highly susceptible to external shocks but do not have access to concessionary loans and grants. Heads therefore welcomed the Commonwealth Secretariat's work to address the economic challenges facing these economically vulnerable member states, and urged that urgent measures be taken to provide support for them, especially in accessing adequate financing. They also welcomed the UN's Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS), which highlighted that the global economic crisis is only now starting to affect hundreds of millions of people around the globe; that the near poor, who have just climbed out of poverty, are sliding back into it; and that, with pressure on social sector budgets, existing social protection programmes may prove insufficient.

51. Heads recognised the negative impact of the current economic crisis on families and communities everywhere. They expressed concern at the often disproportionate impact on women, noting that more women are in paid work than ever before, making an essential contribution to family income. However, it is often women that are the first to lose their jobs, especially since many are considered to be secondary earners. Heads believed that enabling girls and women to develop and use their skills, and realise their full potential, both during this economic crisis and in its aftermath, is of critical importance. They therefore stressed that, where women and girls are disproportionately impacted by the crisis, their needs should be specifically addressed in any measures to address the economic crisis and support families.

52. Heads stressed the importance of ensuring an holistic and comprehensive approach to the global economic recovery process and highlighted the need for increased economic and social policy cooperation to support stable, sustainable and inclusive global economic growth and poverty reduction in Commonwealth countries. They noted that a number of long term economic challenges, including food and energy security, climate change and urbanisation, require urgent, enhanced and additional international cooperation. They stressed the importance of action to tackle these challenges at the national and regional levels, and particularly through strong and inclusive multilateral processes.

53. Heads recognised the need for accelerated progress to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and called for 2010 to represent a breakthrough on progress. They welcomed the UN summit on the MDGs in 2010 as a critical opportunity to set out a global plan for delivering the MDGs. They looked forward to an international assessment of what is needed to achieve the MDGs as a basis for this plan. Recognising the importance of high-level attendance at the summit, they called on other world leaders to consider attending. They recognised that current global efforts to achieve the MDGs were inadequate and a renewed multilateral cooperative response to boost the capacities of the vast majority of its members was vital in this respect. They underlined the need for cooperation in achieving

progress in implementing all aspects of the Monterrey Consensus, as well as the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development of December 2008. In particular, they called on countries to meet their commitments to existing timetables for the increase of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and to ensure that the level of ODA was adequate to meet the development challenges in the developing and Least Developed Countries in the Commonwealth, and to strengthen the implementation of the measures needed to make aid more effective, as set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness endorsed in March 2005 and the Accra Agenda for Action adopted in September 2008.

54. Heads noted the potential of the Commonwealth as a forum for engagement and consensus building, and asked the Secretary-General to explore ways in which this potential could be further realised on issues where the Commonwealth has institutional advantage. They also urged the Secretary-General to work with Commonwealth members to develop options for strengthening the relationship between Commonwealth members and the G-20 as well as with other relevant multilateral fora.

55. In this context, the five Commonwealth members of the G-20 recognised the special responsibility they bear in transmitting to the wider group the perspectives and priority concerns of the Commonwealth.

Reform of International Institutions

56. Heads of Government welcomed the Marlborough House Statement on the Reform of International Institutions, agreed by the representative group of Commonwealth leaders established by the Secretary-General, as a basis to support reform of international institutions. They agreed that the Statement contains useful principles for such reform and that the Commonwealth should lead by example by striving to achieve the highest standards possible in each of the areas set out under the said principles. They also reiterated their intention to accelerate UN reforms and their effective implementation, as a matter of urgency, through lobbying and advocacy in the UN itself as well as in other international fora. Heads noted the conclusion of the representative group that the Commonwealth should act as a network for supporting members in discussions of inclusive reform, facilitating exchange of information and providing a forum for a dialogue on reform issues, particularly those of concern to small and other vulnerable developing states. They called on the Secretariat to provide assistance in this area consistent with its mandate at the request of the membership.

57. Heads noted that current global challenges had reinforced the importance of stronger and more effective multilateral institutions. They reaffirmed their commitment to continued efforts to push for increased inclusivity, accountability and modernisation of the institutions. They stressed the importance of Commonwealth members working to ensure that all the

processes of reform in international institutions are comprehensive and inclusive. Heads reiterated their call to strengthen the voice and representation of developing countries in international economic decision making and norm setting, taking into account prevailing conditions in these countries. They noted the recent widening of the membership of the international bodies concerned with supporting international financial stability and stressed the need for a continuing process of constructive engagement between these bodies and all developing countries. Heads welcomed the decisions of the G-20, in particular its support to strengthen the voice and representation of developing countries at the IMF and World Bank. They noted the increased role developing countries will play in international bodies.

58. Heads supported current efforts to reform international environmental governance arrangements. They proposed an approach that would be based on the principles of transparency, equal voice and fair representation, legitimacy, responsiveness, flexibility, accountability, and effectiveness. Such reform should cover all elements of the international system that relate to environmentally sustainable development, integrate environmental and development priorities, and be practically and speedily responsive to the priority needs of small states and least developed states.

Trade

59. Heads of Government expressed their commitment to active and continued participation in multilateral trade negotiations. They recognised that a development-oriented, ambitious and balanced conclusion to the Doha Round can contribute to global economic recovery and combating protectionism, as well as the fuller and more beneficial participation of all countries in global trade, thereby making a fundamental contribution to prosperity, sustainable development and the elimination of poverty. Heads of Government therefore called for a successful and development-centred conclusion to the Doha Round in 2010 and urged all parties to demonstrate the flexibility and political will required to make such an outcome possible.

60. Heads expressed their commitment to supporting developing countries to expand their economies through trade. This could be achieved through improving market access for developing countries by supporting their effective participation and integration into regional and global trade agreements, or through improving the international competitiveness of developing countries' economies. In this context, Heads considered there was especially a need to focus on addressing the non-tariff measures that impact adversely on the exports of developing countries. A balanced approach using bilateral, regional and multilateral channels was recommended.

61. Heads acknowledged the contribution to economic growth and development of increased trade between developing countries. While noting that this does not replace trade between developed and developing countries,

they were of the view that trade between developing countries has assumed greater significance and will be even more important in the emerging global economy, marked by significant changes in patterns of demand and consumption as a consequence of rebalancing. Heads expressed support for regional economic integration initiatives which are WTO-consistent and which promote the interests of developing countries as partners in regional trade agreements, as well as the interests of members adversely affected by the erosion of existing preferences or trade diversion.

62. Heads emphasised the importance of sustained and predictable Aid for Trade (AfT) in strengthening the capacity of developing country members, in particular small and vulnerable economies, to become more competitive and better able to capture opportunities created by more open regional and global markets. They welcomed the delivery of AfT commitments to 2010 and called for sustained delivery of increased AfT, post 2010, in line with national development plan priorities of recipient countries. They also acknowledged the benefits AfT can offer small and vulnerable economies in adjusting to liberalisation commitments and the implementation of trade agreements, thereby ensuring market access, especially for LDCs, in line with the special and differential treatment provisions of the WTO regime. They further emphasised the importance of mainstreaming AfT in national and regional poverty reduction strategies.

Investment

63. Heads of Government noted the valuable role of investment in contributing to economic growth, the eradication of poverty and the expansion of economic space for their citizens. While strongly supportive of the role of external investment in development and urging expanding inflows to developing members, they also called for urgent economic reforms to improve the prevailing investment and business climate and to mobilise domestic investment. Heads emphasised the need to have clear, transparent and rule-based investment regimes. They also encouraged the use of home country incentives to promote investment in LDCs, small states and other developing countries. They emphasised the need for comprehensive skills development in promoting the environment for investment.

64. Heads recognised the importance of access to finance and called for the development of domestic financial markets with specific emphasis on micro-finance and micro-credit in support of poverty alleviation and economic democratisation programmes, particularly for marginalised groups including women. They also called for innovative and market-friendly interventions that mobilise official development assistance to share investment risks.

65. Heads recognised the importance of encouraging and requiring multinational enterprises to respect applicable laws and international standards of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in their operations. Heads

further expressed support and encouragement for the investment community to develop and promote CSR standards, tools, and best practices.

International Financial Centres

66. Heads of Government considered the issue of International Financial Centres (IFCs). They noted concerns about the operation of some IFCs. They also noted the role hosting IFCs can play in many Commonwealth countries' economic development, especially small states. In this context they discussed recent initiatives, such as the G-20 supported OECD listing. They agreed on the need for enhanced transparency of IFCs and cooperation between countries in the sharing of tax information in accordance with the internationally agreed standard. Recognising the different capacities of, and constraints on, countries with IFCs, Heads called for consideration of less resource intensive means for negotiating and concluding tax information exchange agreements to allow the targeted threshold of 12 information exchange agreements to be met quickly, and encouraged options for multilateral agreements to increase the transparency of IFCs.

67. Heads took note both of the concerns of a number of countries in ensuring a level playing field in pursuing these initiatives, and progress that had been made over the last year in this regard. They recognised the need to make progress on these issues based on consensus. They also noted the outcomes of the latest Global Forum Meeting, especially the commitment to integrating developing countries further in the Forum's work, including within the newly established Global Forum peer review process.

Climate Change

68. Heads adopted the Port of Spain Climate Change Consensus: The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration.

69. They reaffirmed their commitment to the Lake Victoria Commonwealth Climate Change Action Plan, welcoming progress in its implementation.

70. Recognising that member states are entering a more intense phase of work at the national level to prepare their economies and societies for climate change, Heads called for continued implementation of all six elements of the Plan by the Secretariat and other Commonwealth organizations, and urged particular emphasis on:

- Supporting small states and least developed countries in advancing their own strategies and policy frameworks on adaptation and towards carbon-neutral and climate-resilient economies. In this regard, they asked the Commonwealth Secretary-General to develop his good offices for the environment, exploring the potential for a partnership

between the Commonwealth, the World Bank and others, to provide specific programmes of support to vulnerable countries.

- Continuing to support the effective participation of small and vulnerable member states in international negotiations on climate change issues; working with young people, parliamentarians and others to support a broad engagement in setting and implementing policy frameworks related to climate change; and further promoting reform of international environmental governance arrangements to ensure greater participation and opportunity for all states and other relevant actors.

Sustainable Development

71. Heads of Government recalled the 1989 Langkawi Declaration and underlined the critical importance of integrated and sustainable approaches to development. They recognised that the challenges of the twenty-first century are deeply interconnected and that sustainable development requires institutions whose mandates and operations are responsive to this fact and to the needs of small, poor and highly vulnerable developing countries.

72. Heads emphasised the importance of promoting sustainable development with regard to environment infrastructure, entrepreneurship development and human resource development. They called for mobilisation of additional funds, technical assistance and collaboration. In this context, they reaffirmed their call for increased and comprehensive support for Aid for Trade activities.

73. Reflecting the Commonwealth's long-standing commitment to the sustainable development of small states, Heads of Government sought an effective review process of the Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in 2010 under the auspices of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, leading to strengthened implementation of sustainable development in small states and addressing new and emerging development concerns. They saw a role for the Commonwealth in supporting small states during the review and in addressing its findings through practical programmes.

74. Heads recognised that rapid urbanisation was posing a significant challenge in many Commonwealth countries, and that new and inclusive approaches to urban planning and management were central to achieving the MDGs. They acknowledged that leadership and a deeper understanding of the trends were required at all levels, together with the provision of effective financing for local infrastructure and services, to improve human security and achieve the Commonwealth goal of "demonstrated progress towards adequate shelter for all with secure tenure and access to essential services in

every community by 2015". They welcomed continued Commonwealth efforts to address these challenges.

Energy Security

75. Heads of Government noted that access to energy was essential to sustainable development. They voiced their concern that with fossil fuels being a finite resource and the urgent threats of climate change, ensuring safe, reliable and affordable energy for the people of the Commonwealth was a fundamental challenge. Heads reaffirmed the right of each country to the development and use of its own energy resources and committed to work together with a view to increasing energy efficiency and diversifying energy resources while minimising environmental impacts.

76. Heads endorsed the need to develop energy partnerships based on cooperation and market principles. In this regard, they encouraged participation in existing initiatives that foster investment and innovation in the development of diverse renewable energy sources and energy efficiency and promote cleaner energy through research and development, capacity building and the transfer of knowledge on environmentally efficient and sustainable technologies.

77. Heads also expressed their support for ongoing international initiatives such as the Joint Oil Data Initiative to improve transparency and reliability in the energy sector. They further recognised the importance of collaboration with the private sector to foster the sustainable development of natural resources, energy efficiency and conservation as well as to develop best practices for Corporate Social Responsibility.

Food Security

78. Heads of Government expressed their deep concern about the threats that climate change, lack of access to fresh water resources, dumping of toxic waste and volatile commodity and energy prices pose to world food security. Recognising that poverty remains the fundamental cause of food insecurity, they called for increased investment in sustainable agriculture, rural development, and natural resource management, including innovative practices, and stressed the importance of a coherent, multi-dimensional approach to sustainable agricultural development and food security. Further, they recognised the need to increase food production, particularly in countries most affected by hunger, alongside measures to improve access to food and provide safety nets and social protection, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable.

79. Heads also agreed to strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies and supporting infrastructure, including irrigation, were conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented

world trade system. They endorsed the L'Aquila Joint Statement on Global Food Security and the development of a global partnership for agriculture and food security (GPAFS). They also noted the Declaration of the FAO's World Summit on Food Security which took place in Rome on 16-18 November 2009. They agreed to take forward urgent actions to meet the declaration's objectives to achieve the MDG targets on hunger by 2015, to reverse the decline in funding for food security and to tackle the challenge that climate change poses to food security.

80. Heads acknowledged that the sustainable harvesting of the world's fish stocks supports food security and can have long-term economic benefits. They expressed concern that the unsustainable exploitation of the world's fish stocks posed a threat to food security and could lead to long-term economic losses of depleted stocks. They also expressed concern at the plunder caused by Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU), in violation of, *inter alia*, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. They recognised that many developing states were particularly vulnerable to illegal fishing by foreign fleets. They agreed that urgent action was needed to strengthen fisheries and marine management in member states' waters, particularly in the case of the more vulnerable member states.

Challenges Facing Small States and Middle Income Countries

81. Heads of Government reaffirmed the challenges facing small states as set out in the 2005 Gozo Statement on Vulnerable Small States. They noted with concern that the global financial and economic crisis is having significant negative effects on small states in trade, aid, tourism and remittances and that the crisis has exacerbated the challenges already faced by these countries by deepening unemployment and creating budgetary pressure in crucial social sectors.

82. Heads of Government noted that the disproportionate impact of the global economic crisis on small states underscored the importance of a conducive external environment to their development. They encouraged these countries to continue to implement outward-oriented development strategies that would assist them to overcome their vulnerabilities and diversify the structures of their economies. They also called for an holistic and integrated approach to development for small states. Heads commended the work done by the Small States Network for Economic Development.

83. Heads welcomed the advocacy and policy development work of the Commonwealth Secretariat on behalf of small states. They urged the Secretariat to continue work in all the areas that would assist small states in their endeavour to implement crisis-resilient growth and development strategies. They agreed to make further efforts to better utilise the resources and capacities across the Commonwealth's membership to support efforts to

strengthen economic and social development in small member states. They welcomed the work of the Secretariat through its Joint Office for Commonwealth small states in New York and looked forward to further progress towards establishing a similar Joint Office in Geneva. They requested the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of the Geneva office being established as a cooperative venture with La Francophonie.

84. Heads urged the international community to provide support to small states in the pursuit of their development strategies and, in particular, the provision of comprehensive development assistance programmes and the use of regional mechanisms to address development challenges. They also called for continued international assistance to small states in meeting the MDGs and commitments under the Mauritius Strategy.

85. Heads expressed concern at the growing debt burden of Commonwealth small states. In the context of the acute pressures on small and middle-income states in respect of their debt burdens, liquidity and access to finance, Heads supported efforts to develop innovative solutions in areas of constraint, as recommended by Commonwealth Finance Ministers. They recognised that viable solutions would need to be adequately financed and urged that international financial institutions allocate more substantial resources for analytical and advisory services, capacity building and technical assistance for small states to meet the developmental challenges arising from the global economic and financial crisis.

86. Heads recognised that several Commonwealth countries are classified as middle-income countries (MICs) and still face significant challenges in their efforts to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. In that regard, they underlined the importance of international support that is aligned with national priorities, to address the development needs of middle-income countries, especially lower-middle-income countries. In view of the challenges faced by MICs, especially those that are small, vulnerable and highly indebted lower-middle-income countries, Heads welcomed the work of the Commonwealth Ministerial Debt Sustainability Forum (CMDSF) and in particular the recent launch in June 2009 by the World Bank, in partnership with the Commonwealth and other organisations, of a Debt Management Facility to help highly indebted low income and other developing countries. They urged continued action in this regard.

87. Heads extended sincere condolences to those affected by the recent natural disasters in the Asia-Pacific region, especially to those affected by the earthquake and subsequent tsunamis in Samoa and Tonga. They noted that small island developing states (SIDS) are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters, and reaffirmed their commitment to supporting disaster risk reduction efforts in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Mauritius Strategy.

Education

88. Heads of Government noted with concern the effect of the global economic downturn on social sectors such as education, particularly in developing countries and small states, acknowledging that education provides a fundamental tool for self-improvement and national development, and is a basic human right. They reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the MDGs of reaching universal primary education and gender parity by 2015 and agreed to prioritise reaching some 27 million Commonwealth children who are currently out of school, as well as those not completing primary education. They stressed the need to embrace an integrated and holistic vision of education systems, as encapsulated in the theme of the 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (17CCEM, Malaysia, June 2009), *Education in the Commonwealth: Towards and Beyond Global Goals and Targets*. Also pursuant to 17CCEM, they acknowledged the vital role that education can play in conflict prevention and resolution, and requested the Secretariat to explore options to strengthen its education work programme on Respect and Understanding.

89. Heads called on all Commonwealth countries to commit further resources to basic education, including by actively supporting the replenishment of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative. They supported the aims of the '1 Goal: Education for All' campaign to use the FIFA World Cup to raise awareness of education and to mobilise additional finance.

90. Heads noted that the expansion and quality of primary, secondary and higher education are integrally linked to the number and quality of teachers. Primary education provides the foundation for higher-level skills and knowledge, while secondary and higher education are critical for developing innovative solutions to national challenges, enhancing equity in the delivery of education, and for socio-economic development. Heads noted the need for all children to have equity of access to quality education, regardless of geographical location, resources, gender, ethnicity and ability, in order to equip them to interact effectively in the global community. They urged the advancement of quality basic education in developing countries and small states in particular, and noted the desirability of improving access for students of such states, who face cost constraints, to higher education institutions in Commonwealth countries.

91. Heads of Government attached particular importance to the work and potential of the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL), advocated additional inter-governmental support to advance its projects, and encouraged the creation of strategic partnerships by CoL.

92. Heads recognised the progress made in the expansion of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) and expressed their appreciation for the initial commitments of approximately £1.6 million made

towards the CSFP Endowment Fund in response to the 50th Anniversary Appeal. Heads welcomed the pledges already made and encouraged all member governments to consider making contributions to the Fund.

Health

93. Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to attaining the health-related MDGs and the need to closely monitor progress towards achieving these goals. They noted with concern the lack of progress towards achieving the goal for maternal and reproductive health, which is the most off-track, and the need for continued effort in relation to HIV and AIDS. They agreed that access to quality, affordable health services is fundamental to reaching the MDGs. They committed to achieve universal coverage of health services, free at the point of use, particularly for women and children. They agreed to invest in free health services to ensure that the poorest people, especially women and children, can access trained health workers with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, and with the right infrastructure, equipment and drugs. Recognising the huge diversity in health needs across the Commonwealth, they agreed on a Commonwealth Health Compact, through which they:

- called on donor countries to deliver existing commitments for financing in health and identify ways to increase international resources;
- welcomed the steps taken by low-income countries towards universal access to health services, and making them free at the point of use and urged further concerted action;
- support the role of civil society to advocate for, support and contribute to universal coverage of basic health care.

94. Heads adopted the *Statement on Commonwealth Action to Combat Non-Communicable Diseases*.

95. Heads noted with concern the impact of the global economic crisis on progress towards achieving the health related MDGs in Commonwealth countries, including universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care. Heads firmly supported the need to strengthen health systems in Commonwealth countries, considering a primary health care approach. Noting that international cooperation is critical in addressing the phenomenon of NCDs, Heads called for the consideration of a Summit on NCDs to be held in September 2011, under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly, in order to develop strategic responses to these diseases and their repercussions. They also supported initiatives to include the monitoring of NCDs in existing national health information systems and emphasised the need for NCD indicators to be included in the monitoring of the MDGs. They

endorsed efforts to address the health work force crisis and to expand the use of e-health technologies. They noted the continued challenges countries face in providing access to affordable medicines, and supported the exploration of options, for increasing access to appropriate, low cost medicines.

96. Heads reiterated that a rights based approach to health is fundamental to the achievement of human development goals. They acknowledged the need to explore and remove obstacles to accessing health, as a means of achieving better health for all. They noted the importance of evidence-based research for the programming, planning and policy development of quality health services and encouraged the sharing of knowledge among senior health practitioners in member countries.

Gender

97. Acknowledging the centrality of gender equality and empowerment to achieving all MDGs, Heads of Government committed themselves to accelerated implementation of the various international and regional instruments and agreements on gender equality and women's rights. Heads called for allocation of adequate and visible resources as well as other measures to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

98. Heads recognised the facilitating role of the Secretariat in enhancing policy dialogue, increasing advocacy and modelling of good practices on key gender issues affecting member countries. Heads reiterated their commitment to the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (PoA). They endorsed the need for effective monitoring and evaluation of progress in the implementation of the PoA, called for strengthened accountability mechanisms to be put in place, noting that gender mainstreaming is the collective responsibility and business of all, and welcomed its Mid-Term Review.

99. Heads noted that gender responsive budgeting can be an effective tool to promote effective economic and social governance in an equitable and sustainable growth and development strategy. They welcomed the commitment of their Finance Ministers to engage with Women's Affairs Ministers in the context of the 9th Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting in June 2010 on the gender related aspects of the global economic crisis, to ensure that the gender dimensions of the global economic crisis are recognised and incorporated into measures to respond to the downturn.

100. Heads commended the establishment of a single UN agency for women in the context of system-wide coherence in addressing gender equality concerns and women's rights, and urged swift implementation of measures to that end. Heads also stressed the need to strengthen mechanisms for gender mainstreaming including enhancing the capacity of national women's machineries.

Youth

101. Heads of Government welcomed the emphasis on young people in this, the sixtieth year of the modern Commonwealth, with its theme of *The Commonwealth @ 60: Serving a new Generation*. They recognised the role and active contributions of young people in promoting development, peace and democracy, and acknowledged that the future successes of the Commonwealth rest with young people. Heads adopted a *Declaration on Young People: "Investing in Young People."*

102. They also noted the challenges in developing and implementing the new assessed scale of contributions for the CYP, and, mindful of the importance of the CYP in underpinning the Commonwealth's commitment to future generations, agreed that the new scale should be finalised as a priority and implemented with effect from the 2010/11 financial year.

103. Heads welcomed the inaugural Youth Olympic Games, to be held in Singapore from 14 to 26 August 2010. They supported its aim of inspiring youth around the world to embrace, embody and express the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect through an integrated sport, culture and education programme.

Bridging the Digital Divide

104. Heads of Government recognised the important role that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can play in economic and social transformation. They expressed their appreciation for the work of the Steering Committee of Commonwealth Connects, and welcomed its 2009 Report to CHOGM. They endorsed the strategy to focus on promoting strategic partnerships, building ICT capacity and helping member countries to access new resources.

105. Heads recognised the role of the Commonwealth Connects programme as a catalyst for the initiation of partnerships to promote the use of ICT for development, and reiterated their support for the continued role of the programme in helping make ICTs available for citizens, businesses and governments throughout the Commonwealth. They encouraged increased partnering and sharing of expertise from ICT-advanced member countries, as well as further contributions to the Commonwealth Connects Special Fund.

Commonwealth Secretariat

106. Heads of Government continued to stress the importance for the Commonwealth Secretariat of incorporating results-based management and outcome-based reporting into its governance structure. Heads also emphasised the need to continue to implement the recommendations of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) review in 2008 and

focus on its comparative strengths. They also noted the good progress achieved in restoring the CFTC to its earlier value, undertook to complete five years of increased pledges as agreed at the 2005 CHOGM in Malta, and agreed that member governments should thereafter at least maintain the real value of their contributions to the CFTC.

107. Heads adopted the proposal on a revised scale of assessed contributions for the Commonwealth Secretariat budget, to be implemented with effect from the 2009/10 financial year, with the changes phased in over a three-year period. They noted that in future the scale should be reviewed and adjusted on a five-yearly basis.

108. Heads welcomed the continued efforts by the Secretary-General to promote the development of strategic partnerships, which they saw as a valuable means primarily of extending the global reach and impact of Commonwealth values and principles, as well as offering potential for securing additional support and resources for the Secretariat's work.

109. Heads reaffirmed the importance they attached to the continued strengthening of the governance of the Secretariat, and welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to improve its effectiveness and efficiency within its areas of priority and focus, including improved reporting of results, as agreed by member governments in the Strategic Plan. Heads agreed that the troika of the past, present and future Chairs-in-Office should be informed on selected matters at the initiative of the Secretary-General.

Commonwealth Functional Cooperation

110. Heads of Government took note of the various aspects of Commonwealth Functional Cooperation presented to the Committee of the Whole (COW). They requested the Secretary-General to continue to bring to the notice of Heads of Government any proposed mandates arising from Ministerial meetings that have significant implications for the Secretariat's work programme and resources. Heads acknowledged in particular the contribution of the accredited Commonwealth Inter-Governmental Agencies and Commonwealth Organisations which reported to the COW and to Foreign Ministers.

Commonwealth Cultural Festival

111. Heads of Government received a proposal from the Government of Pakistan for the holding of a biennial Commonwealth Cultural Festival. They requested the Commonwealth Foundation to conduct a feasibility study in this regard.

Civil Society

112. Heads of Government affirmed the centrality of civil society, including professional networks, in supporting the values and principles of the Commonwealth. They recognised the importance of a vibrant and active civil society as a key partner in delivering a sustainable and equitable future for all, and valued the contribution that civil society continues to make through its engagement with Commonwealth intergovernmental institutions and processes. They noted the statement from the Commonwealth People's Forum and its assessment of the interconnected challenges facing Commonwealth citizens and the particular impacts on women and young people.

Commonwealth Foundation

113. Heads of Government received the Report of the Commonwealth Foundation and its four year Strategic Plan 2008-12: Civil Society: a Force for Transformation. They valued the unique role of the Foundation in working with governments and civil society to forge partnerships. They welcomed the commitment of the Foundation to expand its grants programme and the consequent 25% increase in support allocated to civil society over the period 2006-08. They recognised the value of dialogue between civil society and governments, both nationally and in Commonwealth processes, and the contribution made by the Foundation in providing civil society a voice at Ministerial meetings, notably at 17CCEM. They noted the additional resources secured by the Foundation in support of its mission and commended its initiatives on culture and development, sustainable economic recovery and fisheries and food security. They welcomed Maldives into the membership of the Foundation.

Commonwealth of Learning

114. Heads of Government received with appreciation the Report of the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) and its three year plan 2009-2012 Learning for Development. They expressed satisfaction that the number of countries making voluntary contributions to its budget had increased to 41, and encouraged other member governments to also consider doing so. They expressed particular appreciation for the work of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth, and – with its first period of funding drawing to a close - encouraged the Secretariat to assist the CoL in securing new funding to continue and expand the programme in terms of capacity-building in the use of ICTs in education, and the development and delivery of courses.

Commonwealth Business Council

115. Heads of Government commended the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) for its work in building private-public partnerships for trade and investment in Commonwealth countries, and its establishment of initiatives on business action against corruption and business engagement to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. They also welcomed the dialogue with the private sector through the Commonwealth Business Forum and requested the CBC to carry forward its work in collaboration with governments, the public and private sectors.

Commonwealth Local Government Forum

116. Heads of Government noted the continuing work of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) to promote effective and transparent local governance and democracy in member countries, including capacity building in this regard. In this context, they welcomed the outcome of the CLGF's 2009 conference – the Freeport Declaration on Improving Local Government: The Commonwealth Vision as well as CLGF's programme in the Caribbean and other regions of the Commonwealth.

Future Meetings

117. Heads of Government accepted the offer from the Prime Minister of Australia to host the 2011 CHOGM. They also accepted the offers of the President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of Mauritius to host the 2013 and 2015 CHOGMs respectively.

Hyatt Regency Trinidad Hotel
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago

29 November 2009