

**Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting  
Colombo, Sri Lanka, 15-17 November 2013**

**CHOGM 2013 COMMUNIQUÉ**

1. The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 15 to 17 November 2013, on the theme Growth with Equity: Inclusive Development. Of the 50 countries that attended the Meeting, 27 were represented by their Heads of State or Government.
2. Heads of Government conveyed their sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Sri Lanka for their warm hospitality, and the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. They also congratulated President Mahinda Rajapaksa for his able stewardship of the Meeting.
3. A highlight of the Opening Ceremony was an address by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, who represented the Head of the Commonwealth.
4. Heads acknowledged the progress made, since their last meeting, in Perth in 2011, in implementing a large number of recommendations made by the Eminent Persons Group, notably the adoption of a *Commonwealth Charter*, as well as the agreement on a new strategic plan for the Commonwealth Secretariat.

**Core Values of the Commonwealth**

5. Heads of Government welcomed the adoption of the historic *Commonwealth Charter* in December 2012 and its signature by the Head of the Commonwealth on Commonwealth Day in March 2013. They reiterated their commitment to respect, protect and promote the core values set out in the *Commonwealth Charter*.
6. In that context, they noted that the people of the Commonwealth, through the *Commonwealth Charter*, had emphasised the importance of democracy; human rights; international peace and security; tolerance, respect and understanding; freedom of expression; separation of powers; rule of law; good governance; sustainable development; protecting the environment; access to health, education, food and shelter; gender equality; young people; the needs of small and vulnerable states; and the role of civil society. Heads emphasised that these values were interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

**Development**

7. Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable development and to ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable future. They acknowledged that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. In this context, Heads

welcomed and expressed support for all ongoing work mandated in the Rio+20 outcome document: the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development particularly to provide leadership, guidance and recommendations at the global level for sustainable development; the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing; the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals; as well as the process to develop options for a technology facilitation mechanism.

8. Heads committed to ensuring an integrated and holistic approach to sustainable development. Heads reaffirmed all the Rio principles, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. They acknowledged the importance of the intergovernmental process for elaboration of a set of sustainable development goals that could integrate with the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
9. Heads of Government adopted the *Colombo Declaration on Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Development*.
10. Heads welcomed the substantial progress made as well as challenges faced both globally and within the Commonwealth towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They noted the findings of the *2013 United Nations MDG 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, but expressed concern that some targets remain off-track both globally and within the Commonwealth. Heads agreed that previous undertakings and commitments by member states at the Millennium Summit should continue to be pursued actively, particularly on Goal 8 related to Global Partnerships, and that the successful achievement of the MDGs by 2015 should remain a primary global development priority. During discussions, Heads reaffirmed their determination collectively to call for a strong and effective partnership for development. In this context, Heads endorsed the conclusions of the meetings of Commonwealth Ministers for Education, Health and Women's Affairs. Heads urged the international community to accelerate efforts and mobilise all necessary resources, building on existing momentum, to reach as many goals as possible by 2015.
11. Heads recalled the *Millennium Declaration* and the outcome of the United Nations General Assembly special event towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Heads reaffirmed their 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 United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields. Heads will continue to be guided by the values and principles enshrined in these texts. Heads reaffirmed 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.

12. In this context, Heads affirmed that the Post-2015 Development Agenda should re-enforce the international community's commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development. They endorsed the intergovernmental process to be launched at the beginning of the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly to develop and agree on a Post-2015 Development Agenda, with poverty eradication as its central imperative. Heads looked forward to a successful outcome of an open and inclusive intergovernmental process, taking into account existing and emerging challenges. Heads emphasised the importance of the means of implementation for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including development financing. Recalling their 2009 commitment, Heads called on developed countries to fulfil urgently the Official Development Assistance commitments they have made individually and collectively.
13. Heads welcomed the Report of the High Level Panel of the Eminent Persons Group on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Report of the United Nations 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*, United Nations Development Group consultations, the United Nations Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. They noted these contributions as inputs into the intergovernmental process on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
14. Heads acknowledged the inputs received for the Post-2015 Development Agenda from the Commonwealth Ministers of Education, Environment, Youth, Health, Women's Affairs, and Finance; accredited Commonwealth organisations; and, civil society. In particular, they noted the recommendations from Commonwealth Youth Ministers on the empowerment and participation of young people and welcomed the call from the Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers to governments to prioritise women's and girls' economic empowerment in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
15. Heads agreed that the new development agenda should strive to leave no-one behind and emphasised the need for the Post-2015 Development Agenda to reflect the Commonwealth's values, as set out in the *Commonwealth Charter*.
16. Heads reflected on the comparative strengths and circumstances of the Commonwealth and how its relevance to member states could be further enhanced. They considered, in particular, how the Commonwealth could provide leadership, guidance and practical support for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including by identifying factors impeding well-being and economic progress and the ability to meet the MDGs. They committed to work constructively to help deliver an ambitious and balanced global agreement in 2015. Heads remained committed to supporting the intergovernmental process and decided to engage collectively and help shape the Post-2015 Development Agenda by constituting an open-ended High-Level Working Group of Heads of Government to identify, through a Commonwealth Statement on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, shared Commonwealth perspectives and recommendations, advancing these through individual member governments in the intergovernmental consultations at the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

17. Heads recognised that climate change continues to be a major challenge for all countries, particularly for climate vulnerable developing countries, posing a grave threat to some countries. They highlighted that at the international level, this challenge should be addressed on the basis of the principles and provisions of the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) and in accordance with, *inter alia*, equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. In this context, they underscored the necessity for timely conclusion of the negotiations on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action to result in a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the UNFCCC, applicable to all Parties, to be adopted by 2015. In that context, Heads called for progress to be made at the 19th Convention of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Warsaw, Poland.
18. Heads welcomed the report of the Commonwealth Expert Group on Climate Finance.<sup>1</sup> They agreed to progress consideration of the Group's recommendations, including through consultations with existing climate finance mechanisms, in order to explore the potential for simplified access arrangements for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries.
19. Heads called for efforts to disseminate the findings of the report amongst members of the UNFCCC and relevant institutions, with a view to ensuring broad engagement of climate financing mechanisms in the Commonwealth's efforts to progress improved access to existing climate funds by Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries.
20. Heads welcomed the offer by the Government of Mauritius to host a Commonwealth Climate Finance Skills Hub and requested the Commonwealth Secretary-General to work with member states to progress a full proposal for the Hub for their consideration at the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2015.
21. Heads recognised the importance attached to both the operationalisation and the capitalisation of the Green Climate Fund. Heads looked forward to progress at COP 19 / CMP 9. Heads agreed to continue to take steps to help build national capacities for improved access to and use of climate financing, and to ensure the transparency of these flows.

#### Biological Diversity

22. Heads of Government reiterated their commitment to the achievement of the three objectives of the *United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD). They noted and welcomed the decisions taken during the 11th Conference of the Parties to the CBD, which took place in India in October 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> Australia and Canada had reservations about the language of paragraphs 18, 19, 20 and 21 and indicated that they could not support a Green Climate Fund at this time.

## Sustainable Land Management

23. Heads of Government recognised the importance of addressing land degradation and desertification. They welcomed the decisions of the Eleventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) (COP11), which took place in Windhoek, Namibia, in September 2013. They recalled the Rio+20 Outcome *The Future We Want* which outlines global aspirations and strategic priorities, including addressing the multiple challenges and threats related to natural and environmental risks, particularly droughts, hurricanes and floods, to ensure food security and improve livelihoods for vulnerable communities. Heads of Government welcomed further discussion on the consideration of desertification, land degradation and drought in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Heads also recognised the importance of multilateral co-operation, sustained commitment and collective action, in particular, by the prevention of illicit dumping of toxic and hazardous waste, as well as the prevention and mitigation of soil erosion and desertification.

## Governance and Management of Oceans

24. Heads of Government emphasised the importance of the world's oceans and seas as the basis for a broad range of critical economic and social activities, particularly for developing countries and Small Island Developing States. It was reiterated that many Commonwealth countries have sovereign rights and exercise jurisdiction, in accordance with the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, over areas of ocean space and resources, and that the sustainable management of these areas provides significant opportunities for economic growth. In that context, Heads further welcomed the *Perth Principles* of the Indian Ocean Rim Association.
25. Heads reaffirmed the importance of integrated approaches to ocean governance, in accordance with international law, including the protection, promotion and development of marine natural resources and all marine sectors. Heads also recognised the potential for creation of sustainable employment for the benefit of the citizens of member states from an ocean-based economy, including through sustainable fisheries and the exploration and development of petroleum and mineral reserves, renewable energy, shipping and tourism.

## Wildlife Resources

26. Heads of Government noted that the demand driving the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, and the poaching of endangered species which feeds this trade, had reached unprecedented levels, particularly of elephants and rhinos from parts of Africa. Recognising that this threatened ecological security and livelihoods of communities, Heads looked forward to the forthcoming meeting being convened by Botswana on elephants, and to a successful outcome from the London High Level Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade in February 2014. Heads committed themselves to taking the urgent and decisive action that is needed to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, improving law enforcement,

reducing demand for illegally sourced products and supporting the development of sustainable livelihoods to help poverty alleviation in affected communities. Heads noted the positive role being played by conservancies in generating incomes for communities while utilising wildlife resources sustainably.

#### Iwokrama Rainforest Programme

27. Heads of Government noted that deforestation continued to account for approximately 20% of the global emissions of greenhouse gases. In this regard, they acknowledged that the Iwokrama Rainforest Programme continues to play a valuable role in the Commonwealth's endeavours to promote research on the impact of climate change and in the development of models for sustainable forest management in transition to low carbon development.
28. Heads therefore noted that efforts to develop sustainable financing had fallen short of expectations and called on Commonwealth governments and the Commonwealth Secretariat to intensify efforts to find a long-term solution, including through potential collaboration with non-Commonwealth countries as well as international organisations and private foundations, in line with recommendations of the 2011 *Report of the Eminent Persons Group*.

#### International Trade and Investment

29. Heads of Government adopted the *Kotte Statement on International Trade and Investment*.

#### G20

30. Heads of Government welcomed progress being made in strengthening relations between the G20 and Commonwealth members, including the establishment of the Annual Commonwealth Dialogue and regular G20 outreach with the Commonwealth.
31. Heads renewed with appreciation the recognition by the five Commonwealth G20 members of their special responsibility to convey the perspectives and priority concerns of the Commonwealth to the wider G20 membership, and conversely to keep fellow Commonwealth members abreast of the G20 agenda. Heads requested Commonwealth Finance Ministers to develop proposals for adoption at the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in 2014 which can further deepen the Commonwealth's engagement with the G20. Heads also acknowledged the work being done by the Commonwealth members of the Global Governance Group (3G) in encouraging the G20 to engage the wider United Nations membership. They welcomed Australia's forthcoming assumption of the G20 Presidency, and noted that this offers an important opportunity to reflect Commonwealth priorities in advancing global development policy challenges.
32. Heads welcomed the initiative of the G20 Development Working Group to conduct its first accountability exercise and noted the detailed contributions made by Commonwealth developing country members.

## Political Values

### Democracy

33. Heads of Government noted the fundamental and abiding requirement for all Commonwealth citizens to be able to participate in democratic processes and to hold their governments to account, in order to shape the communities in which they live. Heads affirmed their conviction that it is the role not only of governments but also of political parties and civil society to promote and uphold democratic culture and practices.
34. They recognised the role which local government in particular can play in enhancing the exercise of democratic governance and in the defining and delivery of essential services as well as in promoting economic development. Heads endorsed the 2013 *Kampala Declaration on Developmental Local Government* together with the accompanying *Munyonyo Statement on Local Government's Role in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, as well as the declaration of 2014 as the year of Developmental Local Government.

### Rule of Law

35. Heads of Government reaffirmed their belief in the rule of law as an essential element for the protection of the people of the Commonwealth and as an assurance of accountable government. They also reaffirmed their support for an independent, impartial, honest and competent judiciary, recognising that an independent, effective and competent legal system, prioritising timely administration of justice, is integral to upholding the rule of law, engendering public confidence and dispensing justice. They also reiterated their support for the *Commonwealth Latimer House Principles* and noted the importance of the separation of powers and maintaining the integrity of the roles of the legislature, executive and judiciary.

### Human Rights

36. Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment, as set out in the *Commonwealth Charter*, to equality and respect for the protection and promotion of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development for all. They urged members to accelerate efforts towards the ratification of all major international human rights instruments to strengthen the implementation of rights and freedoms as enshrined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; and to support the establishment and strengthening of National Human Rights Institutions and/or regional mechanisms where suitable, in compliance with the *Paris Principles*.
37. Recognising that the right to development is an integral part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, Heads acknowledged that lasting progress towards the implementation of the right to development requires effective development policies at the national level, as well as equitable economic relations and a favourable economic environment at the international level.

38. Heads welcomed *Resolution 67/155* of 20 December 2012, by which the United Nations General Assembly decided to proclaim the ‘International Decade for People of African Descent: Recognition, Justice and Development.’ They hoped that this development would significantly enhance the promotion, protection and fulfillment of the rights of people of African descent in the diaspora, including restoration of their human dignity and their integration as full citizens in the societies in which they live for overall attainment of national identity and social cohesion. Heads noted with appreciation the decision of the United Nations General Assembly on the convening of the World Conference for Indigenous Peoples, scheduled from 22 to 23 September 2014 in New York.
39. Heads noted the 20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, including the outcome of the Vienna +20 process which agreed to develop action oriented recommendations on how to strengthen further the international human rights system, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism. Consequently, Heads remained committed to assisting countries to build capacity to work with the UPR and implement the accepted recommendations, with the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat as appropriate. They noted the work being done by the Commonwealth Secretariat in this regard, particularly with small states, and encouraged these efforts to continue.

#### Freedom of Expression

40. Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to peaceful, open dialogue and the free flow of information, including through a free and responsible media, and to enhancing democratic traditions and strengthening democratic processes. Heads recalled that the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding had highlighted the importance of the role of the media in contributing to advancing peace and development. They also recognised the media’s role in fostering dialogue among citizens as key to strengthening democracy, social harmony and inclusion. Heads noted that social media had introduced a new dimension and agreed to share best practices within the Commonwealth to respond to the resultant opportunities and challenges. They also affirmed that the same rights and responsibilities that people have offline must also be protected online, in particular freedom of expression, in accordance with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
41. In this context, Heads requested the Commonwealth Secretary-General to review the Commonwealth Media Development Fund in order to examine how it can be renewed in its purpose to build the capacity of a free and responsible media. The exercise of these rights carries with it special duties and responsibilities and may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary for respect of the rights or reputation of others, protection of national security or public order, or of public health or morals.

#### Freedom of Religion or Belief

42. Heads of Government noted that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief. Heads urged states to step up their efforts to protect and promote freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief. Heads also noted the responsibility of states to protect vulnerable persons from religious fanaticism. Heads stressed the importance of a continued and strengthened dialogue including among individuals of and within, different religions and beliefs, and with broader participation, including of women, to promote greater tolerance, respect and mutual understanding.

#### Women and the Girl Child

43. Heads of Government agreed that the Commonwealth will continue to address the issue of child, early and forced marriage, giving due consideration to the domestic legislation of member countries and relevant international law. In this context, Heads noted the recent Commonwealth Roundtable on Early and Forced Marriage and mandated the Commonwealth Secretariat, within the scope of its strategic plan, to continue with this area of work, including the sharing of best practices, challenges, achievements, and to address implementation gaps to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage.

#### Corruption

44. Heads of Government called for concerted and accelerated efforts to eliminate all forms of corruption, both at national and international levels, including by acceding to and implementing the *United Nations Convention on Corruption* (UNCAC). Heads called for an end to impunity in this context. Heads supported Commonwealth action on corruption, in particular the co-operation of member states in identifying, tracing, freezing and returning illegally acquired funds and assets to their countries of origin, in accordance with the UNCAC.

#### Audit Institutions

45. Heads of Government recognised the contribution that strong, properly resourced and independent supreme audit institutions play in improving transparency, accountability and value for money to ensure that public funds are appropriately spent.

#### Public Accounts Committees

46. Heads of Government further reaffirmed that strong and independent parliamentary oversight plays an important role in preserving the trust of citizens in the integrity of government, through Public Accounts Committees that are effective, independent and transparent.

#### Natural Resource Management

47. Recalling their commitment in the 2011 *Perth Communiqué* to promote more effective natural resource management through greater transparency and better governance, Heads of Government committed to support work towards

a common global standard for transparency in the natural resources extractive sector. While respecting sovereign rights and based on national priorities, Heads agreed to build capacity in and share best practice on resource management, to provide access to research, education and training, and technical and policy expertise. They welcomed existing partnerships between Commonwealth members and called for the extension of such collaboration. They noted the new Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Standard and encouraged Commonwealth countries to consider supporting or implementing it. They further welcomed international action to introduce reporting rules for extractive companies to report their payments to governments and encouraged Commonwealth countries to consider adopting such rules, including inter-company lending. Heads encouraged that mining should benefit local communities.

#### Tax Policy

48. Heads of Government noted the importance of payment of taxes and collection of revenue. They recognised the need for agreed approaches and enhanced international co-operation on international tax policy and requested the Commonwealth Secretariat to consider how these objectives could be advanced.

#### Transparency of Money Transfers

49. Heads of Government expressed their commitment to fight money laundering and financing for terrorism, and encouraged all countries to tackle the risks raised by the opacity of legal persons and arrangements. They agreed, in this context, to take measures to meet the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards, with a view to ensuring that there is no selective approach to those standards.
50. Heads emphasised the need for concerted efforts aimed at ensuring safe, secure, cost-effective and accessible channels for legitimate money transfer operations worldwide so as to ensure that this critical lifeline to developing countries is not compromised. They further noted the need for an appropriate national regulatory regime, where required, to support this objective.

#### Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group

51. Heads of Government recalled the importance they attached to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) as the custodian of the Commonwealth's fundamental political values. Heads of Government adopted the Report of the Group, which outlined its deliberations in the period since their last Meeting in 2011. They encouraged CMAG to continue to work to implement the strengthened mandate given to it by Heads in 2011 to protect and promote the Commonwealth's fundamental political values.
52. Heads agreed that the following countries will serve on CMAG for the next two years: Cyprus, Guyana, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka (*ex-officio* as Chair in Office), and Tanzania.

## Small States

53. Heads of Government welcomed the report on the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States, held in Colombo on 12 November 2013. They noted with concern that small states, including Small Island Developing States, were disproportionately impacted by the global economic crisis and have been slow to recover. Some small states are now struggling to meet the Millennium Development Goals, and several are experiencing various developmental challenges, including high debt burdens which pose a severe threat to their growth. Recognising that small states confront unique structural challenges and inherent vulnerabilities, Heads encouraged further interaction between small states to address common issues and share best practice, including within the framework of ongoing development co-operation with traditional partners. They welcomed work by the Commonwealth Secretariat to further advance and deepen its small states resilience framework and its practical application. Heads of Government also agreed to the establishment of an Open-Ended Ministerial Group to progress practical and concrete proposals to address the priority development concerns of Commonwealth small states, including through the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2014 and development of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
54. Heads welcomed Malta's offer to establish a Small States Centre of Excellence that will impart targeted capacity-building programmes and interventions in the areas of both democracy and development.

## Small States Debt

55. Heads of Government welcomed the report of the Commonwealth High-Level Mission on the debt and financing challenges of small states. They emphasised the need to continue advancing global awareness of unsustainable small states' debt and the accompanying financing challenges they confront, building on the Mission's recent work. They endorsed the recommendations of the Mission's Report, underlining the importance of continued collaboration within the international community to address these debt and financing challenges and to build small states' resilience, as well as continued engagement on innovative solutions such as the Mission's proposals for debt reduction and the inclusion of a vulnerability criterion in debt alleviation interventions and allocation procedures of international financial institutions. Heads reaffirmed their support for the Commonwealth Secretariat's current debt management and recording work.

## 2014 Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

56. Heads of Government called on the international community to work towards practical, tangible outcomes from the 2014 Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in Samoa, building on its theme as agreed by SIDS: 'The Sustainable Development of SIDS through Genuine and Durable Partnerships', to ensure progress on sustainable development priorities, and to

ensure that the Post-2015 Development Agenda effectively addresses and adequately responds to the needs and specific concerns of small states.

57. They urged that special efforts be made by member states to deliver practical assistance towards the efficient and sustainable use of marine resources, as well as in other areas including energy and tourism. They called upon states offering such assistance to adopt strategies to enhance the use, management and sustainability of such resources, bearing in mind the critical linkages with food and livelihood security, in particular for developing states. Heads noted with satisfaction that the Commonwealth Secretariat's strategic plan included continued advocacy with the international financial institutions to address small states' challenges and to identify creative solutions.

#### Middle Income Countries

58. Heads of Government recognised that Middle Income Countries comprise a wide range of diverse states, which contribute to international economic stability, while still facing specific challenges and needs in the context of the contemporary global environment. Heads acknowledged the need to identify development challenges particular to Middle Income Countries and assist in overcoming these. They emphasised the imperative need for Middle Income Countries to have a greater voice in the global decision making process, particularly in global financial institutions, including through intensified international co-operation among Middle Income Countries.

#### Global Threats and Challenges

##### Terrorism

59. Heads of Government reaffirmed their unequivocal condemnation of terrorism and extremism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever, and for whatever purposes. They stressed their unwavering commitment to combating terrorism, including international networks on money laundering and financing. They rejected the payment of ransom as a source of terrorist funding. They emphasised the need for continued solidarity and strengthened resolve to counter terrorism both within and between countries and recognised that new vigour needs to be injected in the negotiations to agree a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
60. Heads called for a comprehensive approach to working with United Nations and regional mechanisms aimed at tackling terrorism, including by acceding to the full range of conventions and protocols and accelerating the implementation of the *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy* and relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions, all of which are consistent with the *Commonwealth Plan of Action on Terrorism*.
61. Recalling the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, Heads called for continued efforts to address circumstances which contribute to radicalisation, extremism and the growth of terrorism.

62. Endorsing the efforts of the Global Movement of Moderates, Heads reaffirmed the importance of moderation as an all-encompassing approach to tackle global challenges and threats to international peace and security.

#### Piracy

63. Heads of Government expressed their deep concern at the incidence of piracy and armed robbery at sea and acknowledged the continued threat to international navigation, maritime security, trade and socio-economic development. They urged member states and the international community to continue to co-operate to the fullest possible extent to combat maritime crime in accordance with their national laws and in a manner consistent with international law. In this regard, Heads called for concerted efforts by member states to strengthen their counter-piracy capacities and co-operation by sharing knowledge, strategies, resources and best practice through *ad hoc*, informal or formal arrangements.

#### Cyberspace

64. Heads of Government reaffirmed the importance of addressing the increasing threat of cybercrime, which poses a major obstacle to socio-economic growth, peace and stability. They encouraged collaboration by member states with relevant international organisations and agencies, to develop appropriate programmes of technical assistance, in order to enhance capacity in resource-constrained settings. Heads noted the Commonwealth Cybercrime Initiative and the recent endorsement of its methodology by senior officials of Commonwealth Law Ministries in September 2013 and called for the provision of assistance to developing countries on their cybercrime issues.

#### Small Arms and Light Weapons Trade

65. Heads of Government acknowledged adoption of the *Arms Trade Treaty* (ATT) in April 2013, aimed at regulating international trade in conventional arms and its opening for signature in June 2013. They underscored the grave impact of small arms and light weapons proliferation, and the use of conventional arms by terrorists, including in Africa, and the need to curb such proliferation of illicit trade as a matter of priority. They called for the full and effective implementation of the *United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons* in all its aspects and in this regard welcomed the adoption of *United Nations Security Council Resolution 2117* on illicit arms trafficking in September 2013. They acknowledged the accession to the ATT by a number of countries and called on others to consider doing so. They urged member states to continue to support the United Nations' efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, and ammunitions and munitions used by such weapons.

#### Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

66. Heads of Government denounced the dehumanising and cowardly use of sexual violence in armed conflict and as a weapon of war. Heads noted that, in

addition to the long term physical and psychological trauma suffered by survivors, it undermines the social and economic wellbeing, development, peace and stability of communities and countries. In this context, they noted the 24 September 2013 United Kingdom-sponsored *Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*. They requested the Commonwealth Secretary-General to support conflict affected states in strengthening their capacity to prevent and respond to sexual violence in armed conflict, and to ensure that all relevant programmes in the fields of International peace and security, rule of law, gender equality, human rights, and the role of civil society address these issues and take into full consideration the needs and rights of women and children, within the parameters of the Commonwealth Secretariat's strategic plan.

67. Heads agreed to encourage, support and protect the efforts of civil society organisations, including women's groups and human rights defenders, to improve the monitoring and documentation of cases of sexual violence in armed conflict without fear of reprisal and empower victims to access justice. Building on the *Tenth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (10WAMM) Communiqué*, they also called for women's full participation in all political, governance and security structures, as well as decision-making processes, including peace-building and prevention and accountability efforts, and to ensure that such processes also take into full consideration the needs and rights of women and children.

#### **Youth**

68. Heads of Government adopted the *Magampura Declaration of Commitment to Young People*.

#### **Gender**

69. Heads of Government reaffirmed their conviction that gender equality and empowerment of women are at the core of human development. They endorsed the Communiqué of 10WAMM held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in June 2013, and welcomed the call for the prioritisation of gender equality and women's empowerment in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as well as the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat. They supported a twin-track approach to ensure that gender equality is both considered as a stand-alone goal as well as mainstreamed across all goals and sectors. Heads underscored the importance of women's economic empowerment and leadership as well as the urgent need for policy attention on violence against women.
70. While underlining the importance of encouraging economic growth, Heads noted that economic growth alone does not automatically lead to progress in human and sustainable development or narrow inequalities, especially gender inequalities. They reaffirmed the importance of supporting women's leadership, including in enterprise and urged the Commonwealth Secretariat, as agreed in its strategic plan, to accelerate implementation of the CHOGM 2011 recommendation on gender mainstreaming within the Commonwealth Secretariat and across all its Commonwealth work and efforts to promote a

holistic empowerment of women as a driver of economic growth, gender equality and inclusive sustainable development. They called for innovative, inclusive and accessible financing mechanisms as well as capacity-building to advance women's entrepreneurship.

## Education

71. Heads of Government noted the outcomes of the Commonwealth Education Ministers Meeting in Mauritius in 2012 and welcomed their efforts to engage in discussion on education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and in the identification of early childhood education and development as a priority for the Commonwealth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. They called on member states to ensure that each child is able to complete a full cycle of good quality education, which includes technical and vocational education, regardless of circumstance. Heads noted that persons most vulnerable to poverty are those with low levels of education. Education is notably a key catalyst for achieving national development and, as such, contributes to efforts aimed at addressing, *inter alia*, climate change; food security; and peace, security and stability. Heads noted the continuing challenge of underachievement and high drop-out rates in education systems and called for stronger efforts to be made to address the issue.
72. Heads noted that the most important driver of exclusion from education is poverty. It remains the case that the biggest factors affecting an individual's educational achievement and income potential are the education levels and income of their parents. 57 million primary school aged children are currently out of school, and the majority of these come from poor backgrounds. Breaking this cycle is a key. Education is the catalyst for human development, creating the conditions for progress in health and gender equity, and it plays a key role in helping to tackle some of the world's other pressing challenges.

## Health

73. Heads of Government reiterated the importance of having healthy people in order to ensure sustainable development. Heads welcomed and endorsed the outcomes of the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting held in Geneva in May 2013, which focused on the issue of mental health, building on work undertaken in recent years on non-communicable diseases. Recognising that progress on many of the MDGs remains to be achieved and recalling their commitment to maternal and child health in the CHOGM 2011 Communiqué, Heads further urged members to consider health, especially of children and women, as well as nutritional, sexual and reproductive health, in government policies and in discussions on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Heads also called for enhanced efforts to promote and support actions towards the sharing and exchange of experiences and best practices.
74. Heads emphasised the importance of access to affordable medicine, including generic medicine, as a critical element in the efforts for universal health coverage. Confronted by poverty alleviation and the burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases, Heads noted with concern the difficulties

faced by developing countries to access essential medicines and medical equipment in the international market. In this context, Heads committed to working together to promote greater engagement in the health sector and encouraged enhanced collaboration among member states in research, development, manufacturing and distribution of quality and affordable pharmaceutical products in the Commonwealth. They further recognised the need for the United Nations and its related agencies to facilitate access to affordable, safe and effective medicine.

75. Heads agreed on the need to improve collaboration on pressing global public health issues relating to infection prevention and control issues which are the cause of many avoidable illnesses and premature deaths, including work to ensure more appropriate use of antibiotics.

### **Social Development**

76. Heads of Government recognised that despite huge investments, people's access to health and education - particularly access to resources and services, and ensuring inclusive social development with equitable outcomes - has been difficult to achieve. They noted that current economic models that encourage investments in the social sectors are inadequate to improve quality of life and life satisfaction as they often do not consider the social determinants of sustainable development. They agreed that there is a need for a transformation in existing investment trends in the social sector so that persistent inequalities could be addressed and unmet education and health needs fully realised.

### **Fiji**

77. Heads of Government reiterated the Commonwealth's unwavering solidarity with the people of Fiji, and their expectation of Fiji's reinstatement as a full member of the Commonwealth family, through the restoration of constitutional civilian democracy, the rule of law and human rights, in accordance with Commonwealth fundamental political values, as enshrined in the *Commonwealth Charter*. They noted the promulgation of the new Constitution of Fiji as a step towards the restoration of democracy and the holding of national elections in 2014. They welcomed the Commonwealth Secretariat's provision of technical advice and support to the electoral preparations, including the offer of election observers. Heads urged that an independent national election commission be established rapidly, to oversee the conduct of credible and inclusive elections on a level playing field. They requested the Commonwealth Secretary-General and CMAG to remain engaged with a view to restoring full adherence to Commonwealth values.

### **Cyprus**

78. Reaffirming previous CHOGM Communiqués, Heads of Government expressed full support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. They agreed to support the efforts for a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, under the auspices of the

United Nations Secretary-General, based on the *Charter of the United Nations* and the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) for a State of Cyprus with a single sovereignty, single international personality and a single citizenship, in a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality as described in the relevant UNSCRs.

79. Heads called for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Cyprus, in particular 365 (1974), 541 (1983), 550 (1984), and 1251 (1999), and reiterated their support for the full respect of the human rights of all Cypriots, including their right to property; for the implementation of the relevant decisions of the European Court of Justice; and, for the accounting for all missing persons. They also extended their full support and solidarity to the Republic of Cyprus in the exercise of its sovereign rights under international law, including the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, to explore and exploit the natural resources in its Exclusive Economic Zone, and called for the avoidance of actions and statements that threaten stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.

### **Belize**

80. Heads of Government expressed disappointment that the simultaneous referendums scheduled for 6 October 2013 were not held due to Guatemala's decision to postpone. Heads emphasised the importance of preserving the 2008 *Special Agreement* between Belize and Guatemala, which commits both parties to holding simultaneous referendums on submitting Guatemala's Territorial, Insular and Maritime Claim to the International Court of Justice. Heads urged both Parties to agree on a new date for the simultaneous referendums to take place within the shortest possible time.
81. Heads called on the international community to continue to support the process under the auspices of the Organization of American States, engage with the parties to augment confidence building measures, and assist in their efforts to reach a final settlement. Heads noted with concern the environmental degradation faced by Belize as a result of cross-border extraction of natural resources, including through illegal logging and mining. Heads reiterated their firm support for the territorial integrity, security and sovereignty of Belize, and requested the Commonwealth Secretary-General to continue to convene the Commonwealth Ministerial Committee on Belize as required.

### **Guyana**

82. Heads of Government received an update on Guyana-Venezuela relations and expressed their satisfaction with the efforts of the two countries to further strengthen their relationship. They however noted with concern the recent action by a Venezuelan Navy vessel - an action which was immediately endorsed by the Government of Venezuela - in forcibly detaining a research vessel that had been operating with the permission of Guyana within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Guyana.

83. Heads noted the positions of Guyana and Venezuela that the two countries would continue to proceed to settle their differences through dialogue and co-operation. They therefore welcomed the decision of the respective Foreign Ministers to explore mechanisms, within the context of international law, to address the issue of maritime delimitation between the two states. Heads of Government reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the maintenance and preservation of Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

### **The Gambia**

84. Heads of Government noted with regret the recent decision of The Gambia to withdraw from Commonwealth membership. They looked forward to the country's eventual return and encouraged engagement with The Gambia towards that end.

### **Commonwealth Collaboration**

#### **Movement of Commonwealth Citizens**

85. Heads of Government recognised the importance to the people of the Commonwealth of their being able to move more easily between Commonwealth countries, and noted the report commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretary-General aimed at promoting easier cross-border movement of Commonwealth citizens on *bona fide* travel. Heads requested that a working group of officials be created by the Commonwealth Secretary-General to consider the report's recommendations in the lead up to the 2015 CHOGM, and to provide detailed proposals, including any other regimes that better facilitate free movement of Commonwealth citizens.

#### **Migration**

86. Heads of Government recognised that migration is an important component of the development process. Heads, recognising the economic and social benefits of migration for countries of origin as well as destination, emphasised the need for effective international co-operation to address international and intra-Commonwealth migration, opportunities and challenges, in countries of origin, transit and destination, with a view to maximising benefits for all migrants. They called for co-operation to combat irregular migration and trafficking in persons in accordance with bilateral agreements and international obligations. Heads of Government, recalling the link between migration and development, welcomed the outcome of the 2<sup>nd</sup> United Nations High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held in New York from 3 to 4 October 2013. Heads noted that it is important to consider migration issues in their contributions to the preparatory process that will establish the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

#### **ComPartnership**

87. Heads of Government welcomed the 'ComPartnership' initiative, a contemporary platform to unlock the potential for bilateral technical co-

operation and the creation of collaboration between Commonwealth member states. They noted that this would be sought through the creation of an on-line resource database to be hosted on the Commonwealth Secretariat's web-based platform 'Commonwealth Connects'.

#### Commonwealth Plan for Broadband Inclusion

88. Heads of Government welcomed the initiative of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation, and the International Telecommunication Union to work together in a multi-stakeholder partnership to support the development of national broadband policies and strategies in those Commonwealth countries where they are yet to be developed. They noted that this would help bridge the broadband divide and ensure accessible and affordable access to broadband, as the foundation for a contemporary digital economy, thereby enabling all Commonwealth citizens to benefit from the opportunities that broadband access affords for economic growth and human wellbeing in the interconnected global economy, and to take advantage of the potential of the 'Commonwealth Connects' web platform. They also noted the importance of enhanced international co-operation to support implementation of national policies and strategies to promote universal digital access.

#### Commonwealth Games

89. Heads of Government looked forward to the 20th Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow in 2014.

#### Diamond Jubilee Trust

90. Heads of Government noted with satisfaction the breadth of support from across the Commonwealth afforded to the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, established to mark sixty years of dedication and service by the Head of the Commonwealth. They welcomed the Trust's planned focus on youth leadership and on avoidable blindness across the Commonwealth, in programmes to be delivered over the next five years designed to achieve a substantial impact and sustainable legacy. They encouraged the Trust to work in partnership with the Vision 2020 alliance with the aim of making a decisive contribution to the objective of global elimination of avoidable blindness by 2020, and the Commonwealth Youth Programme and Commonwealth Youth Council to advance the Youth Leadership Programme.

#### Centenary of World War I

91. Heads of Government noted that 2014 would mark the centenary of the start of the First World War. They recognised that the centenary is an opportunity to remember history, the enormous contribution and ultimate sacrifice made during the War and to focus on the lessons of the past and the imperative of peace.

## Commonwealth Organisations

### Commonwealth Secretariat

92. Heads of Government received the Commonwealth Secretary-General's *Biennial Report* with appreciation. They recalled that they had requested the Commonwealth Secretary-General at their last Meeting in 2011 to introduce an ambitious programme of reform, noted with appreciation the implementation of the recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group, and looked forward to the early completion of this process. They encouraged the necessary and significant reform of the Commonwealth Secretariat and noted the progress made by the Commonwealth Secretariat. They welcomed within this context, the adoption of the strategic plan and a focused work plan within a results-based framework. They called on the Commonwealth Secretariat to continue to make progress in implementing institutional reforms and modernising the organisation for greater efficiency, effectiveness and development results, as well as accountability and transparency, and to be reflective of the aspirations of member states. They also noted the continued growth of the 'Commonwealth Connects' web platform for contemporary networking among Commonwealth communities of practice, as well as the work in hand to create online health and education hubs for collaboration and networking as a part of the Commonwealth Secretariat's broader approved work programme to advance social development.

### Commonwealth of Learning

93. Heads of Government congratulated the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) on its 25th anniversary and noted COL's ongoing support to member states in enhancing access to formal and non-formal education and training through the use of appropriate technologies. They commended COL for evolving to remain relevant to the needs of member states; for its enhanced focus on outcomes and impact, and on delivering value for money. They appreciated COL's 'Learning for Development' approach, which can effectively address development issues such as poverty, inequity, food security and health. They expressed particular appreciation for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth, in which all thirty-two small states are active members. Heads encouraged COL to develop further innovations in educational technologies and models for replication by other countries and stakeholders.

### Commonwealth Foundation

94. Heads of Government received with appreciation the report of the Commonwealth Foundation and its four-year strategic plan 2012-2016. They commended the relaunch of the Foundation in 2012 and noted the organisation's focus on enabling citizens to engage with the institutions that shape peoples' lives. They affirmed dialogue between civil society and governments as an intrinsic feature of the Commonwealth. They welcomed the Foundation's contribution to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, support to civil society voice at Commonwealth ministerial meetings, notably the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers and 10<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth

Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting, as well as the development of the Commonwealth Writers initiative. They noted the Foundation's results-based approach to programming and grant making, and called on the Foundation to ensure that its grants are rationalised and targeted to have maximum impact. They welcomed Bangladesh to membership of the Foundation.

#### Other Commonwealth Organisations

95. Heads of Government warmly welcomed the many and diverse inputs and support for the Commonwealth association at large, and for its shared values, principles and goals, provided by accredited Commonwealth organisations. They expressed their particular appreciation for the reports and contributions of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Commonwealth Business Council, and Commonwealth Local Government Forum.
96. Heads recalled the importance which they had earlier expressed in the *Affirmation of Commonwealth Values and Principles* and which they continued to attach to common action by Commonwealth organisations that contributed to collective support and promotion of Commonwealth values, principles and goals.
97. Heads welcomed the outcomes of the Commonwealth People's Forum, Business Forum, and Youth Forum.

#### Future Meetings

98. Heads of Government welcomed and accepted the offer of the Prime Minister of Malta to host their next Meeting in 2015. They also welcomed the offers of Vanuatu and Malaysia to host the 2017 and 2019 CHOGMs respectively.