



**KAMPALA CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT TO THE  
2007 COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING  
21 November 2007**

- 1 *We*, the representatives of civil society organisations from across the Commonwealth, meeting in Kampala, Uganda, from 18-22 November 2007 present the *Kampala Civil Society Statement* to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Commonwealth Member States, and Commonwealth Institutions, which has emerged from consultations with civil society and the Commonwealth People's Forum 2007: *Realising People's Potential*.
- 2 *We*, the Peoples of the Commonwealth commit to work with governments and the Commonwealth to fulfil the development agenda outlined in the *Kampala Civil Society Statement* and to respond constructively and energetically to invitations to form partnerships to bring about social transformation in the Commonwealth.
- 3 Welcoming the theme of the 2007 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) on *Transforming Commonwealth Societies to Achieve Political, Economic and Human Development*.
- 4 *Stressing* that transformation is about fundamental change: it is about asking hard questions on how we govern ourselves and organise our societies; it is about being willing to tackle and reform structures that create imbalances in power and unequal access to socio-economic opportunities. Efforts towards societal transformation can be eroded if the interconnected issues that determine political, economic and human development are not addressed adequately. Transformation requires the active participation and commitment of all members of society.
- 5 *Reaffirming* and *recommitting* to the CHOGM 2002 endorsement of "a Commonwealth known, owned and valued by its peoples, responsive to their evolving needs, and invigorated by a more focused and productive partnership between governments and civil society<sup>1</sup>."
- 6 *Reiterating* the views expressed by Commonwealth civil society organisations in the Communiqué adopted at the third Commonwealth People's Centre held in Durban, South Africa, in 1999, who stated that "a joint enterprise between elected governments, their citizens and their organisations is required to urgently meet global development needs. Governance further entails, especially, the State sharing with civil society the responsibility for policy making and implementation and all partners being accountable to their constituencies, to each other and to the society as a whole."
- 7 *Stressing* the importance of exchanges, partnerships and links across the Commonwealth, between civil society bodies, communities and professional institutions, for the purpose of sharing experiences and learning from one another, thereby strengthening governance, contributing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and building peace, prosperity and well-being.
- 8 *Noting* that in order to effect social development political leaders need to strengthen and expand partnerships with civil society in the policy-making process. Civil society leaders are rising to the challenge of developing exemplary professionalism, good governance and leadership in representing the views of citizens across the Commonwealth and beyond. An enabling policy framework needs to be put in place and resources identified so that political and civil society leaders can work more closely and consistently together to improve the lives of Commonwealth citizens. In undertaking this role, the leadership and professional development of civil society should be enhanced.

<sup>1</sup> Report by the Commonwealth High Level Review Group to Commonwealth Heads of Government. Adopted by Heads of Government, Coolumb, Australia, 3 March 2002.

- 9 *Reaffirming and underscoring* the importance of the Commonwealth's stated commitment to internationally-agreed human rights, including the right to: life, liberty and security of person; health, education and an adequate standard of living; freedom from discrimination; freedom of expression, association and participation; rule of law; and an international and social order in which these rights can be met.
- 10 *Congratulating* the Commission on Respect and Understanding and *endorsing* their report '*Civil Paths to Peace*'.
- 11 *Reiterating* the views expressed by Commonwealth civil society organisations in Abuja, Nigeria, 2003, who called for "a just and secure world, based on: respect for the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights; sustainable development based on recognition of human rights and the integrity of the environment on which human beings depend for the realization of their rights; and the principles of transparency, accountability, inclusive governance and multilateralism."
- 12 *Recognizing* the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, entitled *Our Common Future*, which popularised the concept of sustainable development, as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
- 13 *Reaffirming* the importance of sustainable development, in particular its emphasis on equity and justice, between and within generations, and the responsibility to act accordingly.
- 14 *Recognising* the essential role of civil society organisations, not only in the delivery of programmes, but also in their design, monitoring and evaluation.

### **MONITORING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- 15 *Noting with deep concern* that at the midpoint between the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the 2015 end date for arresting poverty and underdevelopment, the Commonwealth Secretary-General reports that: 27 million people in the Commonwealth carry the HIV/AIDS virus; 70 million of the world's unschooled children are in the Commonwealth; 800 million Commonwealth citizens live on less than a dollar a day; over 327 million people, or almost one in six Commonwealth citizens, live in slums; and that of the estimated 300,000 maternal deaths in the Commonwealth each year, most could have been avoided by relatively inexpensive health care<sup>2</sup>;
- 16 *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
  - a. *reinvigorate* action towards meeting the MDGs, including through the establishment of interim targets for those Member States that have not already done so; and
  - b. *publish* a biennial stock-taking of progress towards attaining the MDGs for all Commonwealth Member States.

### **HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

- 17 *Reaffirming* support for the Coolum CHOGM commitment to "work to eliminate poverty, to promote people-centred and sustainable development and thus progressively to remove the wide disparities in living standards among us."
- 18 *Recognising* that 2007 is a historic year since, for the first time, there will be more people in cities than in rural areas. This transition and the daily 65,000 increase in the population of Commonwealth urban areas, together with the urbanisation of poverty and the threats from climate change add urgency to the commitment given at Coolum. There can be no sustainable development without sustainable urbanisation.

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<sup>2</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat 2007: Report of the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Transforming Lives- Changing Societies

- 19 *Congratulating* the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements for its recognition that the Commonwealth is well placed to take action on the Habitat Agenda and sustainable development, and for its continued support for the Commonwealth goal of “demonstrated progress towards adequate shelter for all with secure tenure and access to essential services in every community by 2015.”
- 20 *We call on* Commonwealth Member States, and the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements to produce a ‘State of the Commonwealth’s Cities’ report for the next CHOGM, which would assess opportunities and threats of urban growth in relation to poverty alleviation, sustainable and people-centred development and reducing disparities in living conditions, and would recommend inter-governmental actions.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

- 21 *Welcoming* the recognition and identification by Member States that addressing climate change is a key issue for CHOGM 2007;
- 22 *Underscoring* the importance of industrialised countries in fulfilling their legal obligations as signatories of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to reduce their domestic emissions, and to provide financial and technological support for developing countries to shift quickly to a low-carbon development path, and to meet the basic human needs of their populations;
- 23 *Expressing continued concern* with the refusal of any Commonwealth Member States to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and to adopt emissions reduction targets;
- 24 *Stressing* that the dangers of climate change are clearer now than ever before, and decisions to be made at the upcoming UN Climate Change Summit to be held from 3-14 December 2007 in Bali, Indonesia, and subsequent related processes will be crucial in deciding the fate of millions of people, including many in developing countries and small states who will be among those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change;
- 25 *Noting the urgency* in creating a solid foundation at the Bali Summit to culminate in an equitable and effective agreement on the climate change regime beyond 2012;
- 26 *Highlighting* that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Stern Review have provided strong evidence that Member States are already being affected by the impacts of climate change, and have warned of far-reaching impacts that will be felt on people, economies, the environment and international relations;
- 27 *Recognising* that action to address climate change must also contribute to removal of the wide disparities in living standards among us, and lead to transformation through creating new economic opportunities, more sustainable arrangements for land use and transport, and adequate shelter for all;
- 28 *Stressing* that failure to address climate change will have far-reaching ramifications, even threatening the survival of small island states, particularly in the Pacific, Caribbean and Indian Ocean States;
- 29 *Underscoring* that urgent action on climate change is essential to the realisation of the MDGs and addressing climate change requires concerted effort from all levels of governments in partnership with civil society to plan and implement adaptation, disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies;
- 30 *We call on* Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *ratify and implement* their legal obligations as contained in the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol;
  - b. *commit* to negotiate a Road Map at the UN Climate Summit in Bali for a fair, effective, flexible and inclusive post-2012 climate regime by no later than 2009;
  - c. *endorse* the following as key elements of a post-2012 regime; namely
    - i. decisive quantified emission reduction targets for all developed countries under the Kyoto Protocol, including monitoring of compliance;

- ii. incentives for enhanced mitigation action by developing countries including through enhanced carbon trading;
  - iii. technology development, diffusion and commercialisation; and
  - iv. securing the scale of resources required to address climate change.
- d. *establish* a High-Level Commonwealth Commission, with civil society participation, to examine the challenges of climate change and to identify strategies, including for:
- i. addressing the impacts of climate change on Commonwealth Small States;
  - ii. disaster risk reduction strategies and support;
  - iii. employment transition to a more sustainable economy; and
  - iv. local level climate change strategies.
- e. *establish* measures and finance to support developing countries in adapting to the impacts of climate change, in particular through a Commonwealth Climate Change Adaptation Fund to facilitate adaptation measures and technologies accessible by all sectors, with special attention to the needs of the poor.

## FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 31 *Noting* that financing for development remains a fundamental challenge to the achievement of transformation. Aid commitments made at the G-8 Gleneagles Summit in 2005 have not been fully implemented. The MDGs are themselves only partial responses to fundamental needs, yet to achieve them by 2015 we must take a fundamentally different approach to financing development;
- 32 *Noting* slow progress by three of the four major Commonwealth donor countries to achieve the target of 0.7% GNP<sup>3</sup>;
- 33 *Stressing* that policies that encourage developing countries to keep investment at home, to mobilise domestic as well as international resources and to receive quality, predictable and sustainable overseas development assistance (ODA), are urgently required;
- 34 *Stressing* the significant opportunities provided in 2008 to enhance resources for development, notably the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Accra, Ghana, and the United Nations (UN) Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus to be held in Doha, Qatar;
- 35 *Considering* that the UN Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus process and Conference will fail unless it deals with the use of development funds to meet the international agreed development goals, including those outlined in the Millennium Declaration, with equity and sustainability in societies and communities;
- 36 *Noting* that the work of the Leading Group on Solidarity Levies to Fund Development needs to avoid simply adding funds to existing inadequate channels, and should pioneer delivery of additional, predictable and sustainable resources in ways which are transparent and open to the advice and evaluation of civil society;
- 37 We call on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *assert* the commitment of all industrialised countries to meet the UN aid target of 0.7% GNP and to review and monitor progress towards that target every two years<sup>4</sup>;
  - b. *increase* collaboration between Commonwealth agencies, governments and civil society partners to secure additional resources for development during the Monterrey follow-up in Doha in 2008;
  - c. *collaborate* to develop and mobilise innovative sources of finance, including through airline levies, development of currency transaction taxes, and carbon taxes;

<sup>3</sup> United Nations.1970: International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, UN General Assembly Resolution 2626 (XXV), October 24, paragraph. 43

<sup>4</sup> United Nations.1970: International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, UN General Assembly Resolution 2626 (XXV), October 24, paragraph. 43

- d. *form* a joint Commonwealth/Civil Society Working Group to explore and develop recommendations for innovative responses to resource needs related to the Accra and Doha conferences and strategies for their achievement.
- e. *support* developing country Member States in reducing donor dependence and domestic mobilisation of resources ('starting inside'), and implementing measures to retain resources at home and recapture resources that have taken flight to other countries;
- f. *mandate* the establishment of a regular Commonwealth monitoring report, that examines and makes public the flows of funds from 'South' to 'North', including banking of funds from executive corruption, making clear both the source and the destination;
- g. *make* a clear commitment regarding the transparency and accessibility of records of all public funds, receipts and expenditures;
- h. *ensure* priority to the development of domestic initiatives, investment and entrepreneurs, and *reject* international agreements which privilege foreign direct and/or portfolio investment; and
- i. *develop* programmes of access to credit, facilitation of licensing and other measures which will encourage the development of domestic entrepreneurs and domestic markets.

38 We call on the Commonwealth Foundation to encourage the creation, at the national level, in interested Commonwealth Member States, of civil society monitoring tools which trace the use of public funds.

### **ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- 39 *Recognising* that scientific knowledge and technological innovation, and their application through professional skills, are central to transformation, including efforts to combat climate change, achieve sustainable development and eliminate poverty;
- 40 *Recognising* that increasing energy costs will have differential impacts that will disadvantage countries, remote and rural regions and settlements, and markets where transport costs are already high;
- 41 *Urging* caution at the over optimistic prognosis regarding the application of clean coal, and carbon capture and sequestration technologies as solutions to climate change;
- 42 *Expressing* concern that investments by developing countries in renewable energy technologies remain secondary and are hindered by investments in new nuclear technologies;
- 43 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *invest* in science and technology and professional skills to support the transformation of energy supplies in Commonwealth Member States to an ecologically sound model focused on renewables and energy efficiency, and to deliver more energy-efficient forms of urbanisation;
  - b. *develop* creative financing and investment arrangements for decentralised renewable technology;
  - c. *implement* measures to promote energy efficiency;
  - d. *apply* ecological, sustainability and food security criteria in the development of biofuels and in the type of biofuel to be utilised;
  - e. *give support* to affordable energy for rural populations in order for them to avoid environmental destruction through the use of fuelwood;
  - f. *ensure that* every energy project, small or large, incorporates gender mainstreaming with a budget designed to build in gender equality;
  - g. *achieve distributional justice and equity of access in all energy developments;*
  - h. *renew support* for education, particularly instruction in, and, practical use of renewable energy, especially using locally available sources, such as waste;
  - i. *integrate* oil and alternative energy policies into natural disaster risk reduction, as well as town and country planning to mitigate urbanisation challenges; and
  - j. *prioritise* the use of increasingly scarce oil resources for the most critical needs of their society and for future generations.

## MARINE, COASTAL AND FRESHWATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- 44 *Underscoring* the importance of ensuring the sustainable utilisation of marine, coastal and freshwater resources;
- 45 *Believing that* because the impacts of over-fishing and environmental change will be devastating to populations dependent on fisheries for food and livelihood security, that effective fisheries management in Commonwealth Member States is essential to deliver economic and social benefits;
- 46 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States and Commonwealth Institutions to:
- a. *implement* the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation target for developing integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans, and stress the need to increase support to, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of partnerships in this regard;
  - b. *support* the engagement of educational and research institutions, as well as professional associations and other civil society organisations, in efforts to develop and implement integrated natural resource management plans and programmes in coastal zones through participatory planning;
  - c. *recognise* the global decline in fish stocks and that fisheries are fundamental to the economies of many Commonwealth Member States, in particular Small States, and take urgent steps to put both marine and inland fisheries on a sustainable footing; and
  - d. *establish*, where appropriate, international coordinating authorities for the management of international shallow sea, lake and river basins.

## EDUCATION

- 47 *Noting* that education is a fundamental human right and key to social transformation, poverty alleviation, as well as justice and equity, particularly gender, which are among the Commonwealth values.
- 48 *Acknowledging* that progress in education depends on cooperation across sectors and partnerships between civil society, governments and inter-governmental organisations, particularly in addressing the key issues of gender equity and cultural diversity;
- 49 *Underscoring* the importance of addressing access to, and quality of, education in countries affected by conflict;
- 50 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *endorse* and *implement* the recommendations contained in the Message from Commonwealth Education Ministers at their Conference held from 11-14 December 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa;
  - b. *recognise* the role that education must play in securing attainment of all the MDGs;
  - c. *reaffirm* their commitment to achieving the MDGs for education with their focus on access, primary school completion and gender equity while placing these within the more inclusive Education for All (EFA) framework, approved at Dakar in 2000;
  - d. *respond* to the call by Commonwealth Education Ministers to adopt a holistic approach to education development, acknowledging the part that education institutions beyond the primary level can play both in supporting EFA and also carrying forward the wider socio-economic transformation agenda. Such an approach requires increased investment in affordable education and training provision through secondary, technical, vocational, and other tertiary-level institutions, as well as in literacy and non-formal education programmes;
  - e. *exploit* the role that new technologies, including information and communications technology, as well as open learning can play in extending education opportunity, improving its quality and developing skills;
  - f. *adopt* more proactive measures to address inclusion of the socially, economically and culturally marginalised;

- g. *request* Commonwealth Ministers of Education to report on ways in which education systems can contribute to creating a culture of peace, tolerance, mutual respect and other key Commonwealth values;
- h. *increase* support for educational and cultural interchange in the Commonwealth for the purposes of exchanging development-relevant experience and promoting understanding, including school and college linking and scholarship programmes;
- i. *use, strengthen and develop* the extensive infrastructure for Commonwealth education co-operation; and
- j. *use* the fiftieth anniversary, in 2009, of the first Commonwealth Education Conference to review the experience of Commonwealth educational cooperation in the last half century.

## HEALTH

- 51 *Noting with concern* the lack of progress towards meeting the health-related MDGs;
- 52 *Regretting* that without a radical renewal of commitment, at the MDG mid-point, many countries will fail to meet the 2015 and interim targets especially as slum growth is increasing the numbers of vulnerable people. Looking beyond the MDGs, there is need for a greater emphasis on health promotion in relation to the prevention of chronic disease conditions and palliative care;
- 53 *Underscoring* that maternal mortality rates remain unacceptably high in the rapidly growing urban slums notably in parts of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia;
- 54 *Acknowledging* that although child mortality has declined globally the pace of progress has been uneven and this underscores the need for improvements to basic healthcare services;
- 55 *Noting* that conflict always increases the incidence of disease, injury and death, while obstructing the enhancement of health systems and diverting essential resources away from health provision;
- 56 *Recognising* that in order to achieve the MDGs the Commonwealth requires another two million health workers;
- 57 *Underscoring* the importance of Commonwealth Member States becoming self-sufficient in their health workforces in order to deal with the chronic drain of trained personnel from poor to rich countries inside and outside the Commonwealth family;
- 58 *Highlighting* that the current operation of trade, investment and intellectual property agreements present considerable challenges to achieving the right to health and increasing the costs of providing treatment considerably;
- 59 *Noting* that meeting the MDGs will not be possible without dramatically increased investment unhindered by policies and conditionalities that restrict investment in health, personnel or education such as those that have in the past been imposed by the International Monetary Fund;
- 60 *We call on* Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *commit and* strengthen health systems that are progressively financed, inclusive and equitable;
  - b. *commit that* public primary health care be designed with “health for all” as its fundamental objective, providing access to care according to need;
  - c. *increase* emphasis on access to reproductive health services including better access to antenatal and postnatal care;
  - d. *support* the World Health Organization’s ‘treat, train and retain’ initiative; and
  - e. *fully implement* the Commonwealth Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Workers<sup>5</sup>; and
  - f. *improve* the disposal and destruction of medical waste to avoid contamination.

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<sup>5</sup> Adopted by Commonwealth Ministers of Health in 2003

## HIV/AIDS

- 61 *Noting* with concern that the 53 Member States, within which 30% of the world's population live, also carry a disproportionate 60% of the global burden of HIV/AIDS;
- 62 *Concerned* that despite the international priority accorded to HIV/AIDS, the rights and needs of children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS are still at the bottom of the global HIV/AIDS agenda;
- 63 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *implement* the international commitment to universal access to treatment by 2010;
  - b. *support* and *intensify* efforts to develop an HIV/AIDS vaccine;
  - c. *scale up* resources to ensure access to anti-retroviral drugs and testing facilities;
  - d. *ensure* the availability of adequate funds for HIV/AIDS prevention education and other related interventions including research on new prevention technologies (microbicides and vaccines).
  - e.  *earmark* an appropriate level of total HIV/AIDS funding for children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and *implement* National Plans of Action;
  - f. *adopt* and *follow* the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Code of Conduct on HIV/AIDS by 2013;
  - g. *adopted* legislation to protect HIV positive people from discrimination; and
  - h. *expand* the ABC (Abstinence, Be Faithful, and Condoms) strategy to SAVE (Safer practices, Access to treatment and nutrition, Voluntary counselling and testing and Empowerment) approach which is more inclusive and comprehensive.

## DISABILITY

- 64 *Emphasising* the importance of mainstreaming and recognising disability as an integral part of relevant strategies for sustainable development;
- 65 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to *ratify* and *implement* the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and its Optional Protocol, and adopt disability inclusive policies.<sup>6</sup>

## WATER AND SANITATION

- 66 *Noting* that in many Commonwealth Member States, there is a lack of integrated planning in both urban and rural areas, and sanitation laws and policies are weak and not enforced. Furthermore, climate change is having significant impact on access to potable water;
- 67 *Expressing concern* that if the current global trends continue neither the water nor that sanitation target is likely to be met by 2015;
- 68 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to *recommit* efforts and resources to meet the agreed water and sanitation targets, as a key intervention to support the 2008 United Nations International Year of Sanitation (IYS) and the UN Action Plan for the IYS.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- 69 *Highlighting* that science, technology, and innovation are among the most powerful tools for meeting the internationally agreed development goals, and that such tools can make productive resources—natural resources, human resources, and physical capital — more potent contributors to the transformation of societies;
- 70 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

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<sup>6</sup> Memorandum to CHOGM; Commonwealth Disabled People's Conference, 4-7 November, 2007, Uganda, Kampala

- a. *renew* and *strengthen* their commitment to Commonwealth co-operation and partnership through establishing a science and technology innovation unit at the Commonwealth Secretariat, charged with the task, among others, of harnessing appropriate knowledge and experiences based on science, technology and innovation for addressing emerging developmental challenges and of establishing a Commonwealth science knowledge and technology innovation network to facilitate dialogue between policy-makers and innovation support practitioners; and
- b. *assist* the least developed Member States to attain the essential pre-requisite level of 1% of gross domestic product to research and development in science and technology expenditure on science and technology innovation, to successfully address and attain the MDGs, particularly with respect to poverty reduction and also to address the challenges of environmental sustainability including climate change.

## **TRADE NEGOTIATIONS**

- 71 *Expressing concern* regarding current negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), in particular negative tactics and threatening behaviour by developed countries that are undermining the possibilities of fair negotiations, true partnership and sustainable transformation;
- 72 *Urging* that trade negotiations be carried forward on a principled, participatory and transparent basis with clear priority on sustainable development imperatives, especially poverty reduction and equity, job creation and decent work, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, while addressing the negative effects of past neo-liberal policies. Negotiations should take the time necessary to meet these concerns;
- 73 *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *ensure* access and transparency for all stakeholders, including parliamentarians and civil society, in all trade, investment and intellectual property negotiations at multilateral, regional and bilateral levels;
  - b. *ensure* that EPAs do not undermine the financial resources of developing country governments, i.e. if liberalization threatens revenues, clear and sustainable alternative sources should be specified and committed before ratification;
  - c. *ensure* that EPAs embody a commitment to the priority of human rights, particularly the right to health, i.e. no provisions should prioritize the privileges of intellectual property over the right to health and access to essential medicines;
  - d. *ensure* that EPAs have clear provisions for comprehensive monitoring within benchmarks based on development objectives with sustained participation of civil society and other stakeholders; and
  - e. *establish* a monitoring body to analyse the effects of the WTO on Commonwealth countries and develop a strategy to mitigate negative economic and employment impacts.

## **COMMONWEALTH MINISTERIAL ACTION GROUP**

- 74 *Expressing* the view that transformation initiatives and policies must be underpinned by observance and adherence to fundamental human rights;
- 75 *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *review* the mandate of Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) regarding the inclusion of all serious and/or persistent human rights violations;
  - b. *develop* better mechanisms to ensure institutional memory;
  - c. *develop* clear indicators to decide when a country benefiting from the Commonwealth Secretary-General's good offices should be put on the agenda of the CMAG;
  - d. *formalise* systems for the engagement and participation of CSOs, including a human rights component;
  - e. *ensure* that the composition of CMAG is independently reviewed to strengthen its independence from political interests or alliances; and

- f. *ensure* that reports highlighting negative practices, such as human rights abuses and violations in Commonwealth Member States are automatically placed on the CMAG agenda for consideration, and that a strong link is forged between the reports and action taken.

## **GOOD GOVERNANCE**

76 *Noting* with deep concern shrinking of the operational space of civil society, especially in the context of the international efforts to counter terrorism;

77 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *strengthen* peoples' access to decision making processes by increased dialogue, collaboration and participation of civil society at all levels of the decision making process;
- b. *institutionalise* the participation of women in decision making in the first instance by achieving targets set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality<sup>7</sup>;
- c. *enact and implement* freedom of information legislation with an emphasis on accessibility in all Member States; and
- d. *ensure* that Commonwealth Member States guarantee the rights of civil society;
- e. *invest* in, and *support* professional ethics, codes and leadership training and development, thereby enhancing the overall capacity of governments and civil society organisations to deliver critical services for development, and to enhance transparency and reduce the extent to which corruption can undermine sustainable and equitable urban development.
- f. *provide* protection for civil society actors through the establishment of a Commonwealth mechanism for the protection of human rights defenders, including the principles in the UN Declaration for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders;
- g. *establish* and *ensure* the independence of National Human Rights Institutions in strict conformity with the Paris Principles; and
- h. *guarantee* a relevant and independent role for civil society, by providing adequate funding allocated from the annual budget with accountability measures. To enable an appropriate approach throughout the Commonwealth we call on the setting of a Task Force to draw up guidelines for adoption at the next CHOGM.

## **GENDER**

78 *Underscoring* that the empowerment of women is key to transformation, CHOGM should move from rhetoric to reality, by focusing attention on improving gender equality within Commonwealth Member States and adhering to agreed commitments in international declarations and conventions;

79 *Noting* that gender equality is not only crucial in itself, but is a fundamental human right and a question of social justice;

80 *Stressing* that gender equality is essential for growth and poverty reduction, and that it is key to reaching the MDGs and as such needs to be recognised as a goal in its own right;

81 *Affirming* that equal rights (political, civil, economic, social and cultural) for women and men, girls and boys needs to be demonstrated through: equal access to and control over resources for women and men; and equal opportunities to achieve political and economic influence for women and men;

82 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *put* in place measures that commit responsible ministries to implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015<sup>8</sup>. The Commonwealth must work together to ensure closer collaboration between governments and gender focused civil society organisations and institutions to ensure concerted support to elimination of gender inequalities and poverty eradication. Together they should address the gaps and persistent

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<sup>7</sup> Adopted by Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's/Gender Affairs, 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting (7WAMM), 30 May–2 June 2004, Fiji Islands

<sup>8</sup> Adopted by Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's/Gender Affairs, 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting (7WAMM), 30 May–2 June 2004, Fiji Islands

obstacles and challenges faced in the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action as these should not deter its implementation;

- b. *support* initiatives that increase financing for gender equality work, through gender responsive budgeting. In addition, the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness presents an opportunity for Commonwealth Member States to demonstrate support for increased funding to gender equality work;
- c. *institutionalise* the participation of women in decision making in the first instance by achieving 30% target set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015<sup>9</sup>;
- d. *ensure* concerted action, and commit resources to address gender-based violence and prevent the trafficking and abuse of women and children;
- e. *enact* and *implement* legislation against gender-based violence, promoting victim protection and awareness raising through the media, as well as education and training;
- f. *urge* those countries that are not parties to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women to ratify the Convention;
- g. *conduct* a gender disaggregated base-line study of gender equality in all Commonwealth Member States, using a standardised set of indicators, that is regularly updated;
- h. *encourage* Commonwealth Member States to initiate programmes in conflict and post conflict countries in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1325;
- i. *build* capacity of government institutions for gender budgeting and capacity for organisations to access funding for gender budgeting;
- j. *review* labour and employment laws and opportunities for women, and address women's ownership and use of land and property rights; and
- k. *mainstream* gender equality in all policies, strategies and actions, and financial measures which directly support women's empowerment.

83 We call on Commonwealth Governments, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation to facilitate the strengthening and development of the Commonwealth Women's Network, as a mechanism for the promotion of gender equality.

## DECENT WORK

84 *Recognising* that among the most essential human rights are the rights of workers;

85 *Noting* that the Decent Work Agenda has been recognised by the United Nations as central to poverty alleviation and should be placed at the core of social and economic policy;

86 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *mandate* the Commonwealth Secretariat to monitor progress towards the universal ratification by all Commonwealth Member States of ILO Convention 144;
- b. *decide* that all Commonwealth Member States will consult their tripartite constituents formally in the process of preparation of Commonwealth meetings and ensure a Commonwealth-wide Tripartite Consultation by the time of the CHOGM in 2009;
- c. *decide* that Commonwealth Labour Ministers will hold an Annual Forum, to be organised on a tripartite basis;
- d. *establish* a target for all Commonwealth Member States to ratify all eight core labour standards within the next six years, undertake biennial reviews of progress towards that objective, and publish the results of their reviews; and
- e. *establish* a fund for capacity enhancement activities by trade unions, covering inter alia workers in informal work and export processing zones and linked to ILO assistance and technological cooperation.

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<sup>9</sup> Adopted by Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's/Gender Affairs, 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting (7WAMM), 30 May–2 June 2004, Fiji Islands

## CHILDREN

- 87 *Noting* the critical challenges facing children in the Commonwealth;
- 88 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *put in place* a Commonwealth Plan of Action for Children to provide a framework to ensure 'safe-places and enabling environment for children at all levels;
  - b. *explore* mechanisms to ensure that the voice of children is heard at future Commonwealth meetings.

## HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION AND COMPLIANCE

- 89 *Stressing* that the transformation of society is not possible without assured and effective access to justice, including an independent judiciary and democratic policing, such as policing that is representative, responsive and accountable;
- 90 *Expressing* outrage at the position taken by the three Commonwealth Member States who voted against adoption of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- 91 *Recognising* that human rights, democracy, good governance and the rule of law remain of central importance to the Commonwealth, as set out in the Harare Declaration, and that enabling environment is required, at both the national level and Commonwealth level, in order to achieve full civil society participation within the Commonwealth;
- 92 *Expressing* concern about the increase in cases of disappearance, occurrence of internal displacement, and the killing of innocent persons, as Commonwealth governments continue to fail to live up to their human rights commitments and, in not doing so, fail to transform societies for the realisation of people's potential;
- 93 *Noting* with grave concern the tendency in the Commonwealth countries to restrict civil society space, democratic rights, freedom of expression, particularly the media and the right to dissent and the targeting of Human Rights Defenders accompanied by extreme impunity by State actors all of which are reducing the commitment of Commonwealth States to the promotion, protection, and realizing of human rights in the association
- 94 *Noting* that an increasing number of countries have promulgated repressive legislation and taken administrative steps under the pretext of counter-terrorism measures in breach of established Human Rights instruments;
- 95 *Recognising* the need, given the current global climate of counter terrorism and resultant increase in police powers, for the development of standards and monitoring of Commonwealth police practices;
- 96 *Affirming* that a pan-Commonwealth approach is the most efficient and effective way to assist member states improve the quality of their policing, and ensure effective democracy and development;
- 97 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *ratify* and *implement* international human rights treaties; instructing the Commonwealth Secretariat to monitor and report progress. All legislation, especially anti-terror laws, must abide by international human rights standards;
  - b. *fully implement* their pledges and commitments to the promotion and protection of human rights at the UN Human Rights Council;
  - c. *respect* human rights in any legislation or other national security measures in the name of countering terrorism;
  - d. *respect* the moratorium on the Death Penalty voted by the UN Third Committee and proactively work towards the total abolition of the death penalty;

- e. *include* issues concerning minority rights, such as the rights of indigenous peoples, gay and lesbian people, people with disabilities, and refugees on the Commonwealth agenda;
- f. *constitute* a Commonwealth Expert Group on Policing to promote better policing in the Commonwealth and further call upon Commonwealth members to review and recast police laws and anti-terrorism law affecting policing to reflect the same;
- g. *strengthen* National Human Rights Institutions through increased funding, timely response to their recommendations, and establishment of mechanisms of engagement with governments and stakeholders;
- h. *provide* adequate support, including funding, for the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat;
- i. *facilitate* the participation of the Commonwealth National Human Rights Institutions Forum in the Commonwealth processes;
- j. *work* closely with National Human Rights Institutions in the promotion and protection of economic and social rights, and take measures for the domestic application of international law regarding those rights; and
- k. *create* the position of Commonwealth Commissioner on the Rights to Development in the Commonwealth Secretariat<sup>10</sup>.

## MIGRATION

- 98 *Noting* that many Commonwealth Member States face development challenges related to the management of migratory flows and their impacts on development.
- 99 Expressing concern over the uneven impact of globalisation and of climate change on international migration and on migration management and development in Commonwealth Member States;
- 100 Recognising that the number of migrants is rising, that this trend is likely to persist in the foreseeable future, and that the management of migration has now become a critical challenge for Commonwealth Member States;
- 101 Deploring the practice by a Commonwealth Member State of placing asylum seekers in camps on the Pacific Islands- the so-called Pacific Solution- with little support or attention to their well-being;
- 102 *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *develop* a comprehensive and balanced approach to migration taking into account migration realities and trends as well as linkages between migration and other key economic, social, political and humanitarian issues;
  - b. *address* the root causes of migration, such as conflicts, poverty, poor governance, under-development, lack of opportunities, climate change and environmental degradation;
  - c. *cooperate* on issues of the integration of migrants and the protection of their rights, and to facilitate access to adequate shelter with security of tenure; and
  - d. *ratify* and *implement* international instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Family Members (1990)<sup>11</sup> and all other relevant instruments.

## UGANDA

- 103 *Believing* that the people of northern Uganda are relying on the 2007 CHOGM to support the successful implementation of the ceasefire and the possible peace agreement negotiations between the government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army rebel group – the Juba Talks;
- 104 *We call* on Commonwealth Member States and CHOGM 2007 to support the peace process, including post-conflict reconstruction and peace building once an agreement is reached.

<sup>10</sup> Recommendations of the Workshop on National mechanisms for the Protection of Human Rights, Violations and Abuse in the Commonwealth, Hotel Africana, Kampala Uganda, 20 November 2007

<sup>11</sup> UN General Assembly.1990. Resolution A/RES/45/158, adopted 18 December 1990

## ZIMBABWE

105 We call on Commonwealth Member States and CHOGM 2007 to:

- a. *show* the same concern and support for the people of Zimbabwe in present circumstances and extend to them for an agreed period any rights, privileges and statuses enjoyed by virtue of Commonwealth citizenship;
- b. *engage* with the people of Zimbabwe and commit resources to planning and development for the future; and
- c. *take action* in terms of Article B.3 (viii) of the Millbrook Plan of Action to protect and promote the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth as agreed in the Harare Declaration.

## FIJI

106 We call on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *recommend* that CMAG remain seized with the situation in Fiji and engage with all political parties to ensure early elections and the restoration of the independence of the judiciary and fundamental freedoms; and
- b. *continue* to urge the military regime to end human rights abuses and take all possible steps to return to democratic governance by February 2009.

## PAKISTAN

107 *Noting* the serious violations of the Harare Principles in Pakistan, given the ongoing nature of such violations and the recent escalation;

108 We call on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *mandate* the Commonwealth Secretary-General to engage with Pakistan for the urgent restoration of the Constitution, lifting the emergency and separation of the two offices held by the President, including the restoration of an independent judiciary; and
- b. *suspend* Pakistan from the Councils of the Commonwealth, in the event of failure to implement the above.

## MEDIA FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMONWEALTH

109 *Believing* that the character of the media influences the character of a country's democracy;

110 *Understanding* that a free and plural media underpins people's participation in development, and that a free and plural media is a vital prerequisite for the achievement of the MDGs, successful action against climate change and other actions outlined in this Statement;

111 *Underscoring* that a free flow of information underpins democratic, social and economic development;

112 *Stressing* that journalists and media professionals should be free of threats of harassment, imprisonment and death;

113 We call on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *enact and enforce* access to information and freedom of information legislation, and remove other barriers that constrain media freedom;
- b. *understand and support* the role of media in development, including capacity building; *encourage* the transformation of state broadcasters into independent public interest broadcasters;

- c. *encourage* the commissioning of diverse and independent programming; *support* licensing of community radio and for cultural and indigenous media;
- d. *organise* a conference on the role of media in relation to democracy and development in the Commonwealth; and
- e. *urge* the formation of a unit within the Commonwealth Secretariat responsible for managing and resourcing unified media and communication planning, including a global network to share information across the Commonwealth.

## **CULTURE AND DIVERSITY**

114 *Noting* that the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, at their 2005 meeting in Malta, affirmed the importance of promoting tolerance, respect, enlightened moderation and friendship among people of different races, faiths and cultures;

115 *Noting* that culture in the Commonwealth is a driving force for people-centred development;

116 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *recognise* and *promote* awareness that cultural diversity within and between Member States is a fundamental pillar of the Commonwealth, alongside development and democracy;
- b. *create* an enabling environment to foster unity in diversity; ensure respectful dialogue between people with different identities and values within communities, regions, nation states and the Commonwealth; and address issues of conflict, social exclusion and marginalisation;
- c. *recognise* and *support* the increasing role of the creative industries, cultural heritage, and other forms of cultural creativity in contributing to economic development, while protecting creators' rights of ownership to enable local communities to realise their potential;
- d. *raise* the status and budgets of member government Ministries and Commonwealth bodies with a brief for gender, youth, culture and diversity, while ensuring that their programmes and actions are integrated into the work of all other departments;
- e. *support* greater Commonwealth-level networking between culture ministers and senior officials, including civil society and the private sector; and
- f. *ratify* the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and meaningfully involve and support civil society in its implementation at national, regional and international levels, notably in the development and application of cultural policies and strategies.

## **RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING**

117 *Recognising* the commitment made in the 2005 CHOGM Communiqué that, *inter alia*, affirmed the importance of promoting tolerance, respect, enlightened moderation and friendship among people of different races, faiths and cultures;

118 *Recognising* that practical actions at grassroots level will promote inclusion and social cohesion, bring people together and connect those who hold different identities;

119 We *call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *commit* to implement the recommendations contained in the two reports, 'Civil Paths to Peace' and 'Engaging with Faith;'
- b. *encourage* collaboration between people with different identities, within and across communities, regions, nation states and the Commonwealth to promote understanding and address issues of poverty, conflict and marginalisation;
- c. *promote* greater adoption and popularisation of the concept of multiple identities and recognise the right of people to embrace and choose among these different identities; and

- d. *support* a programme of intercultural and inter, intra and cross faith exchange to build understanding and cooperation for joint working on development and governance objectives; and
- e. *support* the development of international community linking partnerships that build peace prosperity and well-being for all Commonwealth citizens.