

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

Leaders' Statement 2018

1. The fifty-three member countries of the Commonwealth met at Windsor Castle today, at the generous invitation of Her Majesty The Queen.
2. As Her Majesty enters her seventh decade as Head of the Commonwealth, we put on record our continuing gratitude for the duty and commitment Her Majesty has shown to all members of the Commonwealth over those decades.
3. We recognise the role of The Queen in championing the Commonwealth and its peoples. The next Head of the Commonwealth shall be His Royal Highness Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales.
4. The Commonwealth brings a unique perspective to this century's challenges. We speak for a diverse range of countries from some of the smallest to some of the largest nations on earth; for the most vulnerable, as well as countries at various levels of development. We can speak for six continents. Our consensus-based approach flows from our belief in the equality of all nations. Our Communiqué, adopted today, sets out the specific commitments we have made collectively to deal with those challenges. These include, strengthening democratic institutions and building peace; promoting gender equality and inclusion; action on climate change and oceans; sustainable use of resources; commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention; preventing and countering violent extremism and human trafficking.
5. We recognise the threat of climate change on the world but in particular the existential threat to Small Island Developing States (SIDs). We also recognise the need for a paradigm shift to urgently facilitate pre and post resilience building.
6. The Commonwealth is a global network and it is more than any of its constituent parts. It is the combination of its member countries, the Commonwealth Secretariat, its associated organisations, and its many people to people networks, with Her Majesty The Queen as its Head.
7. We have over the last two days heard from businesses, civil society and women from across the Commonwealth. We have also listened most attentively to the young people of the Commonwealth. We were impressed and persuaded by the confidence and wisdom of our future leaders and we recognise that for the Commonwealth to remain relevant we as Leaders need to ensure that our decisions take into account the needs and aspirations of young people.
8. We are committed to a stronger Commonwealth Secretariat, including through sustainable financing.

9. At Windsor we discussed our vision for the Commonwealth in this century. We have pledged to work together to foster a fairer, more secure, more sustainable and more prosperous future to the benefit of all Commonwealth citizens. And we will work together and support each other towards a common future.

United Kingdom
20 April 2018