

# Final Communiqué Commonwealth Youth Forum

**Malta**

16-23 November 2005

*Held in advance of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2005*



## Networking *for* Development

### Vision

- 1** Towards a Commonwealth where young people are involved in all decisions that affect them and play an equal role in society
- 2** Towards a Commonwealth where young people have the opportunity to realise their potential and become full and active citizens across the World
- 3** Towards a Commonwealth where the rights and responsibilities of future and present generations are realised and protected
- 4** Towards a Commonwealth where countries compete fairly and respect diversity



CHOGM2005.MT



## COMMONWEALTH YOUTH EXCHANGE COUNCIL

The Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC) is a youth development NGO, working to enable young people to become active global citizens through sharing lives, developing friendships, exchanging ideas and working together. CYEC believes that young adults are the greatest resource for the development of Commonwealth nations. We are proud to be a founder, facilitator and supporter of the Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) which has developed as a pan-Commonwealth platform for young people to share their concerns and aspirations with their peers and the wider Commonwealth at the time of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings.

CYEC is delighted that Malta took up the challenge and that the voice of young people continues to be an integral part of the CHOGM process. CYF5 was a great success and CYEC is delighted to have been actively involved in delivering what is a unique partnership between young people, civil society and governments. We commend the recommendations contained in this CYF5 communiqué. We look forward to working with young people, the Commonwealth Youth Programme and Uganda, the host nation for CHOGM 2007.

## COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME

In its 32 years of existence, the Commonwealth Youth Programme has been a trusted partner in youth development, working with governments, international agencies, civil society and young people to create a society where young women and men are empowered to develop their potential, creativity and skills as productive and dynamic members of their societies both individually and collectively, whilst promoting values of international co-operation.

CYP is proud to be associated with the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council and the Government of Malta for the organisation of CYF5 in Malta. The theme for CYF5 - Networking for Development - provided a platform for deliberation on issues concerning good governance and active citizenship; health and sexuality; youth enterprise; ICTs and sustainable livelihoods. CYP hopes that CYF6 in Uganda in 2007 will continue to provide spaces for young people to be active and valued partners and participants in interrogating matters affecting them, and thus make meaningful contributions to the development of their livelihoods and that of their communities.

## PAN-COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PLANNING TEAM

**Jean-Paul De Lucca**, CYF5 Chair (Malta) • **Alexandra Löwe** (UK) • **Annabelle Vassallo** (Malta) • **Cedric Mifsud** (Malta)  
**Charles Chao Rong Phua** (Singapore) • **Daniela DeBono** (Malta) • **Darren Bain** (The Bahamas) • **Dev Sindhu** (India) • **Jimmy Clavier** (St Lucia)  
**Modupe Adefeso** (Nigeria) • **Rosette Xuereb** (Malta) • **Segametsi Moatalhaping** (Botswana) • **Trevor Borg** (Malta)

## SPEAKERS

**Hon Lawrence Gonzi**, Prime Minister of Malta • **HE Rt Hon Donald C McKinnon**, Commonwealth Secretary General  
**Mrs Florence Mugasha**, Deputy Commonwealth Secretary General • **Hon Dr Louis Galea**, Minister of Education, Youth and Employment Malta  
**Hon Dr Michael Frendo**, Minister of Foreign Affairs Malta • **Dr Kumi Naidoo**, Secretary General CIVICUS • **Dr Edward de Bono**  
**Vic Craggs OBE**, Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council • **Ignatius Takawira**, Commonwealth Youth Programme  
**Frans Baneke**, Chair, EuroNGOs for Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights (Netherlands) • **Dr Anna Vella**, Substance Misuse Unit St Luke's Hospital (Malta)  
**Johnah Josiah**, International Youth Development Network (Kenya) • **Dr Helen Yanacopulos**, The Open University (UK),  
**Clare Doube**, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, India (Australia), • **Ranier Fsadni**, Mediterranean Institute University of Malta (Malta)  
**Dr Paulette Bynoe**, University of Guyana (Guyana) • **Damien Hughes**, York University, Canada (Anguilla) • **Karl Gouder**, Young Enterprise Malta (Malta)  
**YoComm Team** (Sri Lanka) • **Dr Anthony Azzopardi**, University of Malta (Malta) • **Giovanni Buttigieg**, Euro-Med Youth Platform (Malta)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of the 2005 Malta Commonwealth Youth Forum is due to a great many people and organisations:

The Maltese people and their hospitality • Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister of Malta • HE Rt Hon Donald McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General  
Hon Dr Louis Galea, Minister of Education, Youth and Employment • Hon Dr Michael Frendo, Minister of Foreign Affairs Malta  
HE Ambassador Stellini, CHOGM Task Force • Adrian Tonna, Head, Youth Section, Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment  
Staff from the Ministry of Education • National Youth Council of Malta (KNZ) • Pan-Commonwealth Youth Planning Team • International Delegates  
Keynote speakers and presenters • Communiqué Drafting Committee facilitated by Alexandra Löwe, Andrew Robertson and Paul Micallef Grimaud  
• Commonwealth and Maltese Facilitator Team • Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council Team • Commonwealth Youth Programme Team  
Commonwealth People's Forum • The High Commission for Malta, London • Suncrest Hotel management and staff • University Students Council (KSU)  
Institute of Tourism Studies • Marion Cilia and volunteers from President's Award Scheme, Malta • Media students, University of Malta

*Thank you*

**T**he Government of Malta is to be commended for entrusting the planning and implementation of the 5th Commonwealth Youth Forum to the CYF Youth Planning Team with the support of the National Youth Council of Malta.

Young people were responsible for co-ordinating logistics; developing the agenda; writing concept papers; giving presentations; holding training sessions; giving cultural performances and speeches; reaching consensus through dialogue and debate; and communicating that consensus to Heads of Government. This is an achievement which sets new benchmarks for international youth affairs.

Delegates expressed their gratitude to their generous hosts, the Government of Malta, its sponsors and Commonwealth partners (Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council; Commonwealth Youth Programme and Commonwealth Secretariat). Delegates also expressed their appreciation to the Prime Minister of Malta, Dr. Lawrence Gonzi, and the Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Rt. Hon. Donald McKinnon, for the high level support they rendered throughout the process.

Delegates also expressed their thanks to the speakers, Mrs Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth; the Honourable Louis Galea, Minister of Education, Youth and Employment; Dr Kumi Naidoo, Secretary-General of CIVICUS and other participating speakers.

As well as appreciating the warm welcome extended by the Maltese Youth Delegation, CYF participants were impressed by their independence, assertiveness, gender balance and social diversity. Delegates resolved to remain linked to each other in informal as well as formal ways, and use their network to sustain international friendships and youth exchanges.



#### SPONSORS

*In Malta:* **Ministry of Education, Employment and Youth**

*Others:* **British Airways plc • Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council  
Commonwealth Youth Programme • National Governments**

# Executive Summary

## VISION

- Towards a Commonwealth where young people are involved in all decisions that affect them and play an equal role in society
- Towards a Commonwealth where young people have the opportunity to realise their potential and become full and active citizens across the World
- Towards a Commonwealth where the rights and responsibilities of future and present generations are realised and protected
- Towards a Commonwealth where countries compete fairly and respect diversity

## 1 Networking for Development

Young people can truly contribute and make positive changes within the nations of the Commonwealth, if they are given the chance to do so. CYF5 is committed to ensuring that young people are given a voice on an international level.

The CHOGM theme 'Networking for Development' was highly suitable and productive for CYF5. Delegates welcomed the opportunity to interrogate what it is to form and sustain networks for national and international development – and how governments, civil society organisations and young people in the Commonwealth can make better use of their networks.

Delegates recognise that CYF, as an evolving platform, can make a practical difference to development and democracy only if its relationship to other structures is recognised, explored and where necessary reformed and if members and partners commit themselves to working practices appropriate to a network structure. We ask governments, civil society, the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council and the Commonwealth Youth Programme to assist us in establishing the necessary networks and ICT platforms to network young people and their organisations, especially National Youth Councils, across the Commonwealth.

Learning from each other's experiences is one of the best ways for young people to develop their skills. This very Forum has proved to be a unique learning and networking opportunity for delegates. We believe that opportunities to meet such as youth fora and exchanges complement virtual networking.

## 2 Good Governance and Active Citizenship

CYF5 is concerned that many Commonwealth countries are on a path of unsustainable development that is failing present and future generations. We note the social and economic inequalities that are being fuelled by processes of globalisation and the productive power of new technologies and knowledge. CYF5 is concerned about democratic deficits at national and global levels.

In line with the principles of good governance, delegates recognise constitutionalism, electoral democracy, and respect for human rights and the rule of law as necessary steps towards accountable, transparent and responsible government that ensures basic needs of all citizens are met. Civil society is called upon to hold governments responsible through lobbying, democracy audits and active citizenship. Young people themselves must create and demonstrate good practices.

In terms of poverty eradication, CYF5 urges developed countries to issue commitments on debt relief for highly indebted countries, on condition of good governance. Corruption is a major force acting against poverty reduction in Commonwealth countries, affecting policy-making and implementation. We call for increased support and funding for the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation. A strong stand should be taken with regard to halting child labour and other exploitative labour practices, mainly by exposing international companies that perpetuate them. We call for trade justice and reform of the roles and accountability of international agencies such as the World Bank and WTO.

In terms of human rights, CYF5 calls for equal treatment of countries by the United Nations system, and for governments to ratify and implement international human rights conventions. Terrorism is a global malaise which the Forum strongly condemns, however we are deeply concerned that counter-terrorism measures may be violating human rights.

CYF5 participants call for citizenship education in national curricula to be strengthened. Effective education on rights and responsibilities allows space for young people to arrive at their own informed views and to participate in the governance process without discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and political beliefs.

Young people must be involved in decision-making and planning at local, national and international levels. The role of National Youth Councils, Youth Parliaments and youth organisations should be legitimised and recognised. We call for a Commonwealth Youth Pact, the development of which should be endorsed at the next Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting (2006). We have resolved to establish a Commonwealth Youth Network to empower and capacity-build youth councils and youth organisations.

### 3 Health and Sexuality

A healthy society is one which is free from violence and whose citizens enjoy physical, intellectual, social, sexual, moral, spiritual and economic well-being. Health and sexuality are intrinsically linked and must be addressed together. HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases are more than just health problems; they are a global emergency fuelled by poverty and underdevelopment.

The delegates at the Commonwealth Youth Forum are concerned that young people and women are disproportionately affected by violence and sexually transmitted diseases. Governments must improve legal frameworks to protect those affected by discrimination, sexual harassment and violence. These must be seen by all Commonwealth citizens and governments as human rights issues.

Young people have an important role to play in combating sexually transmitted infections. They can be particularly effective as peer educators, role models and agents of positive cultural change in their communities. We are keen to see the Commonwealth Youth Programme's Young Ambassadors for Positive Living programme expanded geographically and conceptually. We also urge governments to enhance young people's capacity to shape health policies by giving them a voice.

The media plays a powerful role in shaping perceptions of sexual behaviour among young people. All media organisations must take their responsibilities seriously and support government and civil society campaigns to promote health and change attitudes.

Education is essential in combating HIV/AIDS. We are concerned about low levels of sexual health awareness among our peers. Governments must expand school curricula to include health and sexuality education and ensure that peer education programmes are available. Young people are dying every day due to poor health services, infrastructure and equipment. We urge governments to improve health provision, especially primary health care facilities. Anti-retroviral treatments should be accessible to all. Youth-friendly and professional counselling services should be in place in every community. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation should provide assistance to improve health and sexual health service provision.

We have committed ourselves to the establishment of a Commonwealth-wide database intended to share project information and good practice on sexual health, facilitated by the Commonwealth.

We believe that the Commonwealth is a strong network. We urge the Commonwealth to consolidate its partnership with young people in order to further promote health and sexual health.

### 4 Youth Enterprise, ICTs and Sustainable Livelihoods

The delegates of CYF5 recognise the importance of enterprise development for young people across the Commonwealth. We note with concern, therefore, that little progress has been made on the recommendations put forward in the Abuja communiqué. The Commonwealth has significant principles and recommendations for youth enterprise policy and implementation on the table; these now need to be adopted by governments. We consider it fundamental that young people are actively involved in the formulation and implementation of youth enterprise and sustainable livelihood policies and initiatives throughout the Commonwealth.

CYF5 urges governments to support and recognise the contribution of young people and their entrepreneurial endeavours to development in their countries. The Forum calls for increased investment from Commonwealth governments in education and youth policy. As well as funding, this includes introducing entrepreneurship education and enterprise skills development into national education curricula, provision of more accessible forms of enterprise education (for example, through e-learning) and improvement in the legal framework. Furthermore, viable financial solutions such as the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative and other micro-credit schemes need to be made more widely available to young entrepreneurs. The private sector and civil society can assist youth enterprise by offering training, mentoring and support.



CYF5 also expressed concern at the widening digital divide, which is hindering development. The infrastructure for ICT is underdeveloped in most Commonwealth regions. Many young people in the Commonwealth do not have the ICT equipment and skills needed in a modern economy.

The Forum considered issues of sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods. Economic growth is a powerful tool in the fight against global poverty, but it could also be a threat to the environmental sustainability of our planet. The Forum recognises the responsibility of entrepreneurs to respect and preserve our natural resources for future generations. At the same time, we expect the international community to accept its responsibilities towards poorer communities by restructuring the international trading system and Bretton Woods institutions.

As young people we recognise our responsibility to help overcome the concerns raised. However, in order for Commonwealth young people and their organisations to be able to contribute fully to enterprise development, they must be given the opportunity to network and be actively involved in policy development. Winning greater support from government, the private sector and civil society for training, awareness raising and ICT infrastructure is seen to be central to the success of youth enterprise and networking.



## 5 Commonwealth Youth Forum: Towards CYF 6

After considering the evolution of the Forum since its inception in Edinburgh in 1997, we emphasise the importance of charting a clear path into the future for young people of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Youth Forum lives only through the continuity of its knowledge networks and fundamental working principles and the diversity of its constituencies. We therefore commit ourselves to continuing to refine the action plans and targets we started at CYF5 and reporting to CYF6, in Uganda, on progress made at national and other levels.

CYF5 asks CHOGM to institutionalise the Forum before the end of 2006 in order to facilitate sustainability and continuity and calls upon governments to support the Forum by ensuring all countries send representatives to CYF6 in Uganda.

Furthermore, we ask member governments to adopt an endowment policy within the Commonwealth Youth Programme that will aid the long-term financial sustainability of the CYF and ensure equitable youth participation from all Commonwealth regions.



# Networking for Development

*"A network is any group of individuals or organisations who, on a voluntary basis, exchange information or undertake joint activities and who organise themselves in such a way that their individual autonomy remains intact."* <sup>(1)</sup>

- 1.1** Meeting in Abuja, Nigeria in 2003, Heads of Government recognised that 'All Commonwealth efforts to achieve the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) must reflect...demographic reality by including young people in development and democracy.'

Heads of Government's attention was drawn to the Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting 2003, and its emphasis on young people as partners in the fight against poverty and HIV/AIDS. However, no specific and measurable targets were set in respect of youth participation in strengthening development and democracy in the Commonwealth.
- 1.2** Young people meeting in Abuja for CYF4 did set such targets. Progress on these targets has been unacceptably slow and many have been missed, demonstrating weaknesses at a number of levels. Nevertheless, we, the delegates of CYF5, affirm the broad directions set in Abuja and preceding Commonwealth youth fora. We remain deeply concerned about:

  - meeting universal basic needs such as access to healthcare and education;
  - confronting the continuing emergency of HIV/AIDS, its effects on individuals, societies, cultures and economies;
  - achieving trade justice and debt relief, good governance and respect for human rights;
  - strengthening young people's platforms within the Commonwealth, particularly the strengthening of independent National Youth Councils;
  - fully grasping the opportunities for wealth creation and poverty reduction offered by ICTs and enterprise.
- 1.3** A strong determination to make positive changes to the current state of inter-regional and international affairs inspired and motivated the participants at Commonwealth Youth Forum 5. The final aim of this document is to push for action in a down-to-earth way amenable to measuring progress.

Delegates brought to their discussions a great diversity of cultural, practical and professional knowledge. National Youth Council representatives, youth NGO workers, students, social workers, teachers, entrepreneurs and business consultants, trade unionists, lawyers, doctors, designers and technicians were present - from thirty-five countries on five continents. There were frank exchanges of views about the political restrictions on young Commonwealth citizens who are working for the development of their communities and countries. Delegates determined to work in ways that reduce and do not reinforce outmoded paradigms of youth development.
- 1.4** The Government of Malta chose Networking for Development as the guiding theme for CHOGM 2005. This theme was highly suitable and productive for CYF5. Delegates welcomed the opportunity to interrogate what it is to form and sustain networks for national and international development – and how governments, civil society organisations and individual citizens in the Commonwealth can make better use of their networks.
- 1.5** Delegates recognised that CYF, as an evolving platform, can make a practical difference to development and democracy only if

  - its relationship to other structures is recognised, explored and, where necessary, reformed;
  - members and partners commit themselves to working practices appropriate to a network structure.
- 1.6** A genuine network structure will not obstruct the efforts of its component units, but will allow each to take initiatives in accordance with their particular strengths, and form connections of a duration appropriate to the tasks in hand.
- 1.7** The technologies associated with international networks – ICTs – offer practical avenues for information disclosure and information sharing. The transparency and responsiveness of human networks is readily apparent in their style of usage (or non-usage) of ICTs.

Our cultures and polities are at varying, early stages of encounter with ICTs. Making a success of that encounter demands attention to human communication and social structure, as well as physical infrastructure. A platform spanning over fifty countries is in a position to undertake valuable experiments.

# Good Governance and Active Citizenship

**GOOD GOVERNANCE** – the need to make democracy work better for pro-poor development by implementing sustainable development programmes and enhancing democratic institutions and processes in all human endeavours.

**ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP** – all individuals and groups have the right to engage in the creation and reinvention of democratic society; have the right to participate in all of the democratic practices and institutions within that society; have the responsibility to ensure that no groups or individuals are excluded from these practices and institutions and have the responsibility to ensure a broad definition of the political.

## 2.1 Lines of Discussion

- 2
- 2.1.1 CYF5 recognises constitutionalism, electoral democracy and the rule of law as necessary steps toward accountable government that ensures basic needs of all citizens are met. Inequality and segregation with respect to education and employment limit thorough-going democracy and enfranchisement.
  - 2.1.2 Many Commonwealth countries are on a path of unsustainable development that is failing present and future generations. This is partly because civil society spheres capable of sustaining thorough-going democracy are incomplete both at national and global levels. Restructuring of international trading and financial systems must be undertaken so as to reform the roles of the World Trade Organisation and others.
  - 2.1.3 Delegates welcomed invitations by guest speakers to consider ways in which disparities in economic development and crises of identity at various levels are expressions of 'core-periphery' dynamics, changes in class structure, and the productive power of new technologies and knowledge. These challenges have to be met with creativity, hope and adaptability. As well as preserving elements of the old, today's active citizens have to embrace the new. Young people are inventors as well as inheritors of cultural values, and their voice becomes louder when they self-organise. Educating others informally is a powerful method by which we and other young people can campaign on issues important to us.
  - 2.1.4 There is a need to develop young people's understanding of the importance of active citizenship within democratic processes. Effective education on rights and responsibilities allows space for young people to arrive at their own informed view and to participate in the governance process without discrimination on the following factors, not limited to: age; gender; ethnicity; culture; religion; disability; sexual orientation; political beliefs, etc.
  - 2.1.5 The mechanisms of exclusion, exploitation, prejudice and conflict should be understood as integral to current national, regional and global trends. Delegates therefore rejected the view that when social groups find themselves excluded from power – be they young women or men, indigenous peoples, those with disabilities and others – such groups should be characterised as 'vulnerable'.
  - 2.1.6 Social and economic inequalities are fuelled by processes at a global level. However a number of feasible and urgent policy objectives at national and sub-national levels, positive discrimination among them, are not being seriously pursued. Research into potential solutions to social and economic exclusion, including positive discrimination, needs to be carried out by competent institutions.  
Legislation, skills training programmes and regulatory frameworks continue to fail certain sectors of society, particularly young women, ethnic minorities and people living with disabilities. Inadequate employment and training policies can have side-effects which endanger plural society and stable democracy, providing an opening for xenophobic movements.
  - 2.1.7 As long as actors at national and global levels tolerate corruption and crippling debt, or use these problems for policy leverage, solutions will have severely limited effects. At worst they can be cosmetic and a corrupting influence themselves.
  - 2.1.8 Many of today's most active young citizens are found not in government but in the private sector, the media and civil society organisations. In order to strengthen campaigns for more responsible and accountable government, young citizens must themselves invent and demonstrate good practices in the fields in which they are active.
  - 2.1.9 Corruption can be combated through networking at both international and local levels through law enforcement activities that contribute to a general climate of transparency and accountability. Corruption is a major force acting against poverty reduction in Commonwealth countries, and affects both policy making and policy implementation.



**2.1.10** Terrorism is a global malaise which the Forum strongly condemns. Nevertheless, delegates registered deep concern that Commonwealth countries may be violating human rights through the implementation of counter-terrorism measures, a tendency which would undermine good governance rather than secure it.

## 2.2 Recommendations on Good Governance

### Poverty Eradication

#### 2.2.1 We call on CHOGM to pursue poverty eradication by:

- Urging developed countries to issue commitments on debt relief for highly indebted poor countries by 2007, on condition of good governance;
- Revamping the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation and lobbying Governments to increase their support;
- Pressing for proper auditing of international monetary institutions to eradicate corruption and mismanagement;
- Taking action for the proper patenting of intellectual property in view of the TRIPS agreement;
- Identifying and exposing international companies that perpetuate child labour, slave labour and other exploitative labour practices.

#### 2.2.2 We call on National Governments to:

- Ensure a fair distribution of natural, human and financial resources by cutting down on bureaucracy, unnecessary regulation and the encouragement of a level playing field within society;
- Provide resources necessary for training and credit schemes, and educational opportunities, both formal and informal, which can lift families out of poverty;
- Push for wealth creation through production by decreasing the influence of stock markets on the international market scene.

#### 2.2.3 We call on civil society to encourage equal access to markets by promoting the idea of fair trade through campaigns initiated by NGOs.

### Human Rights

#### 2.2.4 We call on CHOGM to:

- Push for equal treatment of countries by the United Nations system so as to increase the credibility of the world's largest organisation, specifically in regard to its human rights activities;
- Create opportunities which will empower civil society when campaigning for respect of fundamental human rights.

#### 2.2.5 We call on National Governments to:

- Maintain human rights at the international level by ratifying, domesticating and implementing international human rights conventions;
- Include human rights education in national curricula in ways that children and young people find relevant;
- Encourage closer relations between countries which would contribute towards maintaining human rights. This would help disseminate information and increase pressure for respect of human rights.

#### 2.2.6 We call on civil society to:

- Play its part in human rights and citizenship education, recognising the importance of local context;
- Explore the use of all possible media in raising local and international awareness of human rights breaches;
- Recognise the importance of participating in electoral campaigns at a national level to put pressure on governments.



## Transparency

- 2.2.7 We call on CHOGM to** work for greater accountability of the World Bank to member countries, especially when imposing structural adjustment policies and conditions.
- 2.2.8 We call on National Governments to** increase transparency in democratic systems, for example through the creation of a public accounts committee.
- 2.2.9 We call on civil society to** hold governments accountable through lobbying and democracy audits and being active citizens.
- 2.2.10 We call on the corporate sector to** make its governance and operations as accountable and transparent as government and civil society.

## 2.3 Recommendations on Active Citizenship

### Formal Citizenship Education

- 2.3.1 Citizenship education should be strengthened in the education curricula of all Commonwealth member countries in ways that enhance critical, creative thinking and prepare young people for participation in decision-making.**

### Equity and Inclusiveness

- 2.3.2 Greater efforts should be made to mainstream education and employment opportunities for disabled people, to facilitate the realisation of truly inclusive institutions in society and government. An essential part of this is facilitating mobility.**

### Youth Pact

- 2.3.3 We call for a Commonwealth Youth Pact to be set up, whereby an agreement among Commonwealth countries with young people is undertaken in order to institutionalise participatory citizenship education and involve them in decision-making at all levels. Hence, the following timeline must be enabled:**

- At the next Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Meeting (CYMM) Youth Ministers must work towards a Youth Pact;
- This will be developed by the Youth Caucus and across the Commonwealth in time for CYF6;
- Then presented to CHOGM 2007;
- To be ratified at CYMM and CHOGM by 2009;
- And implemented in 2010.

### Increasing Youth Participation

- 2.3.4 Young people should be involved in community planning at local, national and international levels. This can best be achieved through:**

- A quota system on local decision making bodies;
- Youth sitting, and discussing freely, on civil society boards, NGOs, and governing bodies, thus increasing the efficiency of democratic governance through youth participation;
- A framework for informal and frequent consultation between young people, government and civil society should be set up at national and international level, by CYF6.

- 2.3.5 Youth organisations should be legitimised and recognised, and in keeping with the principle of good governance, youth organisations should be transparent and to this end should endeavour to make their statutes and accounts etc public. Youth organisations should be empowered through:**

- Statutes
- The Youth Pact
- Capacity-building (exchange of best practices through CYP and networking through youth councils). Organisations like CYP and CYEC must be involved in capacity-building as well as peer organisation capacity-building.

- 2.3.6 The role of youth organisations, national youth councils and parliaments, as well as trade unions should be increased and recognised at national and international levels.**

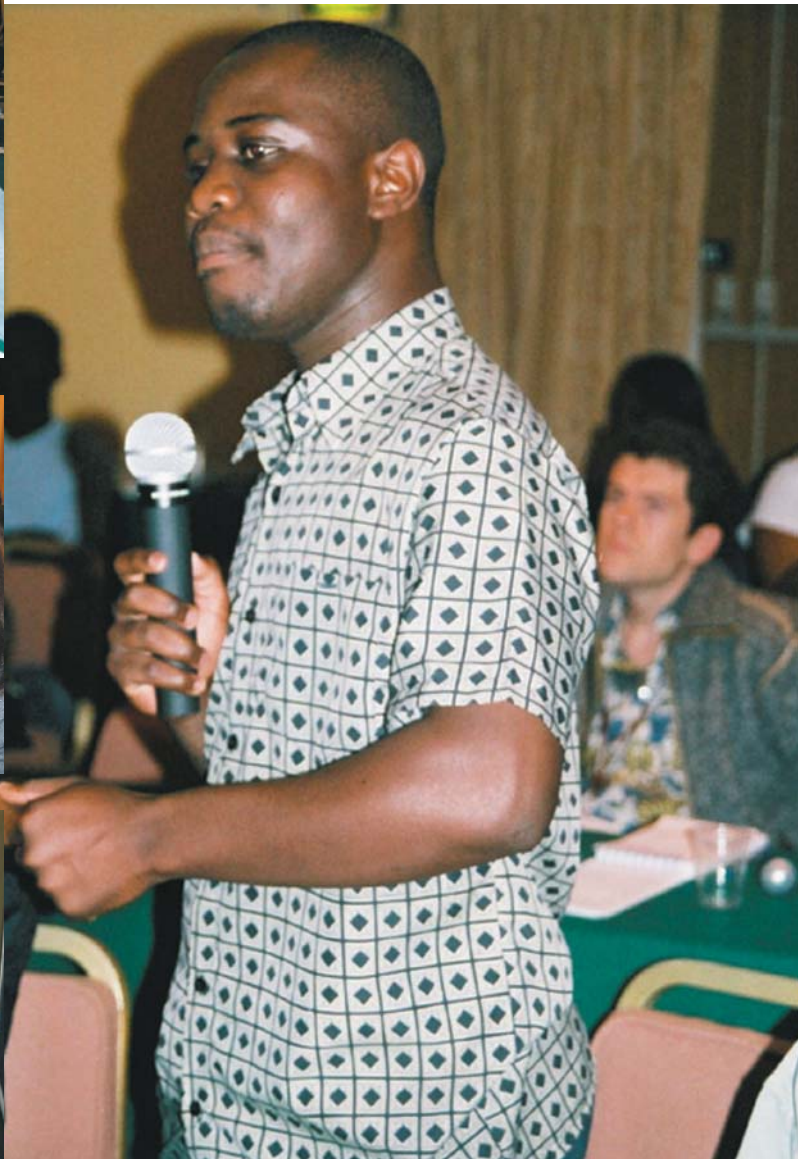
## Creation of a Commonwealth Youth Network

**2.3.7** CYF5 has resolved to establish a Commonwealth Youth Network which will be facilitated through a database of local, regional and national youth organisations across the Commonwealth and will operate through e-networking and the sharing of resources, best practices and using peer pressure to provide the necessary motivation. This network will work towards:

- Being more business-like;
- Funding initiatives to reduce poverty, starting off by initiating projects in different countries to meet the basic needs of certain communities;
- Sharing and improving access to resources via the network;
- Lobbying for more political support for policy frameworks that meet citizens' needs and rights, including youth policies;
- Supporting each other in all the above in order to make the voice on a particular issue stronger.

**2.3.8** This network would be administered by the CYF committee, falling under the auspices of the CYP and CYEC. A committee which, together with CYF, would have a permanent status and would work towards supporting youth organisations in the network, ensuring the implementation of the CYF recommendations.

**2.3.9** The needs of different countries must be taken into account, when joining the network. These organisations will have the same objectives but implementation is left in the hands of the organisation in question. An organisation may only form part of this Commonwealth Network if it subscribes to a set of core criteria that the Committee will draw up.



# Health and Sexuality

*"We recognise that diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis are not only health problems but are also development issues. The high incidence of such diseases can also reverse the development process."*

*Aso Rock Declaration, Commonwealth Heads of Government, 2003*

## 3.1 Lines of Discussion

- 3.1.1** Representatives of young people at the Commonwealth Youth Forum Abuja expressed their concern about the lack of awareness of HIV and AIDS amongst their peers. The delegates hoped to see a reduction in the stigmatisation of people living with HIV and AIDS as well as those indirectly affected. This should have been achieved by an extension of the Young Ambassadors for Positive Living Programme, the inclusion of sexual health in school curricula and a focus on HIV and AIDS in informal education.
- 3.1.2** The Commonwealth Youth Forum 5 is supportive of the recommendations made in Abuja and commits itself to strengthening awareness raising campaigns and educational programmes which deal with HIV and AIDS. We note the commendable efforts made by governments, civil society organisations and individual young people, to raise awareness, particularly among young people. We are disappointed that targets set in Abuja have not been met.
- 3.1.3** Women and young people are still disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. Gender issues have not been sufficiently addressed by all stakeholders in tackling these issues.
- 3.1.4** HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases are more than just health problems. They are problems fuelled by underdevelopment. Poverty and unemployment are important factors, which influence the general well-being of Commonwealth citizens. Therefore, the recommendations outlined in the 'Youth Enterprise, ICTs and Sustainable Livelihoods' section are essential if progress is to be made on health issues.
- 3.1.5** A healthy society is one which is free from violence and whose citizens enjoy physical, intellectual, social, sexual, moral, spiritual and economic well-being. Health and sexuality are intrinsically linked and must be addressed together.
- 3.1.6** There are a number of areas which are of particular concern to the Commonwealth Youth Forum's delegates. These are:
- Sexual violence;
  - The role of the media in shaping perceptions of sexual health and sexual behaviour, particularly among young people;
  - The interplay of culture, religion and sexual behaviour;
  - Education and low levels of sexual health awareness among their peers.

## 3.2 Recommendations

### Sexual Violence

- 3.2.1** Young people can be disproportionately affected by sexual harassment and violence. Governments must utilise best practice models in developing a legal framework that will protect young people from sexual harassment and violence.
- 3.2.2** We commend the work of numerous women's and youth organisations addressing sexual violence. We urge governments to co-operate with, and financially support these organisations in their endeavours.
- 3.2.3** Sexual health and freedom from sexual violence is a human right. NGOs should lobby for this right to be recognised.

### Media and Culture

- 3.2.4** Media campaigns are an important tool in promoting health and sexual health. These are not being used to their full potential and will require a concerted effort and considerable funding if they are to deliver a change in attitudes. We call upon all media organisations to take their responsibilities seriously and support government and civil society media campaigns.
- 3.2.5** We call upon all stakeholders to take positive local customs into consideration. If health and sexual health promotion is to be successful, cultural and religious leaders must be involved.
- 3.2.6** Young people are inheritors as well as creators of cultural values. We are aware of our, as well as our governments', responsibility to foster positive cultural customs and practices. Young people must play an active role in cultivating positive cultural change.

**3.2.7** Governments should create and implement culture-conscious school curricula that introduce health and sexuality education from the first years of schooling.

### Education and Peer Education

**3.2.8** Discussions with peer educators are fundamental in guiding young people towards healthy living. Therefore all educational institutions, in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for health, have the responsibility to ensure that peer education programmes are available.

**3.2.9** We reiterate the statement made in Abuja that the Young Ambassadors for Positive Living programme must be extended geographically as well as conceptually.

### Health Service Provision

**3.2.10** Governments must provide readily accessible, youth-friendly and professional counselling services in every community. We are aware that this will require substantial resources and call upon all governments and donors to provide the necessary funding. The Commonwealth Secretariat should take up this suggestion and provide assistance through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.

**3.2.11** Young people are dying every day due to poor health services, infrastructure and equipment. Therefore, delegates urge governments to improve health provision by:

- Training young people to act as first aiders in their communities;
- Providing communities with health education workers to assist in preventing communicable diseases;
- Making anti-retroviral treatments accessible to all (HIV) seropositive individuals;
- Expanding and improving health infrastructure in educational institutions;
- Increasing availability of primary health care facilities so that all young Commonwealth citizens have access to local facilities, especially in rural areas;
- Providing incentives for health professionals to work in remote areas throughout the Commonwealth. These incentives should include transport subsidies, housing allowances and scholarships for additional training.

**3.2.12** The delegates of the Commonwealth Youth Forum are a source of innovation and ideas. We have demonstrated that with backing and support we can create positive change. We therefore ask the Commonwealth that it support delegates in the creation of a database intended for the exchange of project information and good practice on sexual health, both administratively and financially. CYF6 will evaluate this database. The database would include:

- Examples of established sexual health projects demonstrating best practice
- Project management assistance
- Online tutorials
- Links to funding institutions for sexual health initiatives

**3.2.13** Health and sexuality service provision for youth is too basic in many Commonwealth countries. As a result young people are not given sufficient opportunities to become engaged members of their community. We wish to see an increase in the number of youth and sports clubs throughout the Commonwealth.

### Youth Participation and Empowerment

**3.2.14** Governments, civil society and business have a role to play in empowering young people by enhancing their capacity to shape policies, making them effective partners in the development process. Only if young people have a voice at all levels of project design and implementation will attempts to change behaviour be effective.

**3.2.15** We urge all governments, the Commonwealth and NGOs to give young people a voice at all levels of health and sexuality policy design and implementation. The exclusion of young people will reduce the effectiveness of the above stated policy.

**3.2.16** We believe that the Commonwealth itself is a very powerful network. We urge both the official and unofficial Commonwealth to lead by example and create networks of all organisations and individual stakeholders, both inside and outside the Commonwealth, in the fight against disease.

### 3.3 Targets

- 3.3.1 Revision and implementation of laws and increased awareness in society of sexual violence.
- 3.3.2 All reported incidences of sexual violence must be thoroughly investigated. This should be reflected by a marked increase in the number of arrests for sexual violence offences.
- 3.3.3 Sexual health and violence must be seen as a human rights issue by all Commonwealth citizens and governments. To reflect this, all Commonwealth countries must have active human rights watch bodies.
- 3.3.4 All Commonwealth governments should create and implement laws to prevent discrimination on any grounds.
- 3.3.5 A marked increase in the number of sexual health and violence workshops and the number of young people participating in them.
- 3.3.6 Health programmes must be effective in reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases among young people and increasing the average age of first consensual sexual intercourse.
- 3.3.7 All Commonwealth schools should have trained peer educators on sexual health, supported by health professionals and educators based in these schools.
- 3.3.8 All Commonwealth countries should have implemented within their national curricula a strategy to include strategic health and sexuality education.
- 3.3.9 Governments in all Commonwealth countries should support media organisations in their country to ensure all messages broadcast on health and sexuality are factually correct.
- 3.3.10 A marked increase in government commitment to eradicating preventable disease, measured by the number of projects funded and actively supported.
- 3.3.11 A pan-Commonwealth database on health and sexuality expertise and 'good practice' case studies will be operative by the time the Youth Forum meets again in 2007.



# Youth Enterprise, ICTs and Sustainable Livelihoods

*“Livelihood - the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks...while not undermining the natural resource base.”* <sup>(2)</sup>

*“Entrepreneurship - the process whereby we become aware of business ownership as an option or viable alternative, develop ideas for business...and undertake the initiation and development of a business.”* <sup>(3)</sup>

## 4.1 Lines of Discussion

- 4.1.1** Amongst the recommendations put forward in the Final Communiqué of the Commonwealth Youth Forum 4 (Abuja 2003), the need for proper incentives and financial support to emerging youth enterprises, and the need to invest in initiatives aimed at forming the entrepreneurial skills of youth, were identified. CYF5 reiterates the importance of having such incentives and initiatives in place in the various Commonwealth member states.
- 4.1.2** We also note the recommendations arising from the Creating Common Wealth Youth Enterprise Summit (2003). The Commonwealth has significant principles and recommendations for youth enterprise formulation and policy on the table: these now need to be adopted by governments.
- 4.1.3** The overall investment of Commonwealth governments in youth enterprise support is not sufficient to meet the various needs of young entrepreneurs. A further major hindrance to young people taking up enterprise is the difficulty faced by young entrepreneurs seeking loans from financial institutions to set up their business.
- 4.1.4** In many Commonwealth countries youth enterprise policy is constrained by complex legal systems, which set excessively high age limits for starting up businesses and taking out loans. This effectively excludes young people from setting up their own enterprises.
- 4.1.5** We commend the Commonwealth Youth Programme's Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI), which is pivotal to providing a solution to the problem of limited access to funds for young entrepreneurs.
- 4.1.6** Education is critical to the formation of young entrepreneurs all around the Commonwealth. Delegates noted with approval the attempts to ensure universal primary education and wish to see this extended to secondary level. An enterprising outlook must be instilled in young persons from their earliest school days so as to encourage them to become entrepreneurs. A culture that values entrepreneurship should be fostered.
- 4.1.7** We see creative thinking as an indispensable tool for enterprise and commend its introduction into national school curricula. We believe that the supplementing of regular school education by enterprise training opportunities has brought marked progress in youth development.
- 4.1.8** We also see education and employment opportunities for young people as key to maintaining social cohesion in the countries of the Commonwealth, especially in those countries that are facing the twin challenges of globalisation and the growth of xenophobia.
- 4.1.9** Training is an equally essential requirement in fostering youth enterprise. The Forum notes that, currently, young entrepreneurs are still finding it hard to find companies that are willing to offer them training support.
- 4.1.10** It is important to build on the experiences and achievements of young entrepreneurs. Enterprise-related educational programmes such as Junior Achievement/Young Enterprise are seen as necessary tools to achieve youth enterprise of a high standard.
- 4.1.11** Today ever greater amounts of information are disseminated over the Internet and by electronic means of communication. Yet the infrastructure for Information and Communications Technology is underdeveloped in most Commonwealth regions. This Forum finds that the digital divide within the regions and nations of the Commonwealth is seriously hindering development. Bridging that digital divide is key to a more equitable future development of the Commonwealth and its young people.

**4.1.12** An increase in appropriate and accessible ICT infrastructure and skills is crucial for the development of youth enterprise. This will also facilitate effective networking of young persons and their representative organisations across the Commonwealth. In general, however, the ICT equipment available to young people is too expensive or often obsolete. A further concern is that young people are not using ICTs effectively because they lack the knowledge and skills due to lack of training opportunities.

**4.1.13** CYF5 firmly believes that it is not possible to talk of enterprise and sustainable livelihoods without seriously considering sustainable development. We recognise that sustainable development encompasses two important concepts, namely economic growth that does not threaten the environmental sustainability of our planet as well as economic growth that is economically just, thereby allowing all Commonwealth countries to improve their living standards. Enterprise, particularly youth enterprise, is a powerful tool in the fight against poverty, but we recognise the responsibility of entrepreneurs to respect and preserve our natural resources for future generations.

**4.1.14** At the same time, we expect the international community to accept its responsibilities towards poorer countries and to implement the necessary policy changes required to alleviate poverty. This will include restructuring the international trading system and reforming the roles of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation.

**4.1.15** Civil society also has a vital role to play in both raising the profile of youth enterprise and lobbying government and the private sector for more support. It can also help to ensure that the views of young people are voiced and their concerns placed high on NGO agendas. Furthermore, civil society can help provide young persons with adequate training.

**4.1.16** CYF5 notes that similar concerns for Youth Enterprise have also been expressed at previous fora. We firmly believe that young persons have a wealth of energy and vision to offer in the drive towards a sustainable and viable future for enterprise. However, in order to tap into that potential proper networking of young entrepreneurs and representative youth organisations amongst Commonwealth countries is essential if youth enterprise is to flourish. Learning from each other's experiences is one of the best ways for young people to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Through the exchange of ideas and experiences, this very Forum has proved to be a unique learning opportunity for delegates. We believe that similar opportunities such as youth exchanges, internships, as well as effective virtual networking, will increase information dissemination with respect to funding, educational and other opportunities, all of which are core to the development of youth enterprise.

## 4.2 Recommendations

### Education and Youth Policy

#### 4.2.1 This Forum calls upon Commonwealth Governments to invest adequately in education and youth policy by:

- Supporting and recognising the contribution that young people and their Youth Organisations can make to development in their countries. Governments are requested to fully commit themselves to creating adequate structures to facilitate the work of youth organisations;
- Investing generously in youth enterprise by making the necessary funds, infrastructure and training available to enable young people to become successful entrepreneurs;
- Ensuring that secondary education is compulsory for all;
- Introducing programmes specifically aimed at building entrepreneurial skills in the national curriculum and, where such programmes already exist, developing them further;
- Adequately addressing the need for young persons to acquire practical entrepreneurial skills by introducing this aspect into the assessment criteria of students in their individual national education systems;
- Providing more accessible forms of entrepreneurial education, such as accredited on-line courses;
- Ensuring that national education systems are conducive towards enterprise and that they value entrepreneurship as a profession;
- Including Junior Achievement/Young Enterprise Awards in national education curricula. Additionally, ensuring that entrepreneurship education does not end after young people leave school, but is continued in further education institutions to better equip young people for the challenges of the business world;
- Introducing creative thinking into national education curricula from an early age;
- Together with youth organisations, implementing programmes aimed at the building of leadership and enterprise skills and self-esteem amongst young people;
- Setting up comprehensive One-Stop-Shop centres to cater for the needs of young persons wishing to embark on an entrepreneurial career. Such centres are to provide consultation services to help entrepreneurs perform market research and raise funds.



- 4.2.2** The Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) and Commonwealth of Learning (COL) should cooperate with universities and other educational institutions to both innovate and provide proper and adequate training, with an emphasis on e-learning, to all young persons wishing to acquire entrepreneurial skills.
- 4.2.3** We believe that the business sector and other stakeholders could make a serious contribution to youth enterprise training and support by devising appropriate new initiatives. We therefore call upon the private sector to provide young entrepreneurs with adequate training, internships and scholarships, as well as to offer apprenticeship and mentoring schemes.
- 4.2.4** Commonwealth Governments are requested to provide incentives to the private sector and civil society to provide training to young persons wishing to acquire entrepreneurial and ICT skills. One way of doing this would be to grant tax or other incentives to companies that provide training to young persons.
- 4.2.5** Civil Society also plays an important role in providing the necessary social enterprise skills to young persons. They are asked to provide training programmes and internships to young persons wishing to develop social and other enterprises. Civil society is also called upon to collaborate with governments and the private sector to ensure that adequate training programmes are made available to young entrepreneurs.

### **Sustainable Development and Sustainable Livelihoods**

- 4.2.6** This Forum calls upon all Commonwealth Governments to give due weight to sustainable development and adopt policies and initiatives that promote this. In particular they should focus on:
- Ensuring our natural resources are preserved for future generations to exploit economically and sustainably;
  - Ensuring that adequate legal structures and economic incentives are in place to encourage entrepreneurs to move into sustainable forms of economic development;
  - Encouraging young entrepreneurs to consider eco-farming and other forms of sustainable livelihood development;
  - Using the Commonwealth to lobby jointly for the reform of the international trade system which disadvantages many young Commonwealth entrepreneurs;
  - Lobbying to ensure the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organisation are reformed so that they reflect the interests of all Commonwealth citizens.

### **Legal Framework**

- 4.2.7** The governments of the Commonwealth are called upon to review any laws and policies, as well as bureaucratic obstacles, which prevent young persons from becoming active entrepreneurs. In particular, governments are requested to review those laws that set an excessively high minimum age limit for setting up businesses and taking out loans. Similarly governments must revise laws which hinder the development of a competitive market place and which allow monopolies to become established.

### **Youth Enterprise Finance**

- 4.2.8** The Forum calls upon the Commonwealth and its member governments to:
- Ensure that viable finance solutions are made available to young persons wishing to invest in enterprise. In particular, better loan facilities are required for young entrepreneurs. These should include loans with repayment terms based on revenue points, rather than time periods;
  - Ensure that the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative is made accessible to all young people in all Commonwealth nations and that awareness of this initiative is raised. The Commonwealth Youth Programme must give thought to improving the current CYCI model by making it part loan and part grant-based whilst introducing proper accountability measures;
  - Ensure that young entrepreneurs can use the CYCI as security for bank loans;
  - Encourage financial institutions to grant loans to young entrepreneurs under conditions that are easy for young entrepreneurs to meet.
- 4.2.9** Private companies, in particular financial institutions, must recognise the need to promote enterprise among young people and provide them with educational and financial backing. They should provide young entrepreneurs with grants and loan facilities that are not cumbersome. We ask the Commonwealth Business Council to help address these issues.

## ICTs and the Digital Divide

### **4.2.10 The Commonwealth Youth Forum calls upon member governments to:**

- Give young persons the opportunity to make their contribution by being actively involved in the formulation of government policies relating to the development of youth enterprise and ICT;
- Provide cost-effective and sustainable ICT solutions so as to enable youth enterprise in their country, and beyond, to flourish;
- Make a serious commitment to bridging the Digital Divide. We see this divide as a serious impediment to effective networking amongst young people across the Commonwealth in all areas, including that of enterprise;
- Invest further in youth enterprise. The provision of adequate grants for youth entrepreneurship, training and ICT is essential for the sustainable future of enterprise. Regular monitoring and stocktaking of the initiatives being undertaken by government is required to allow for constant improvement.

### **4.2.11 The role of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation is to support this process by:**

- Encouraging private companies to invest in the development of young entrepreneurs through educational initiatives such as training schemes and internship programmes;
- Supporting governments in their efforts to establish accessible ICT structures throughout the Commonwealth.

### **4.2.12 Young people, their representative bodies and the Commonwealth Youth Programme must ensure that support for training, awareness, ICT infrastructure and incentives, as proposed throughout this document, is achieved from the government, private sector and civil society.**

## Networking

### **4.2.13 The Forum values networking and information sharing. It calls for a further pan-Commonwealth investment in the sharing of intra and inter-regional best practices through, for instance, the setting up of e-groups and easily accessible resource centres, both electronic and otherwise. Networking Commonwealth National Youth Councils is also essential.**

### **4.2.14 The Forum calls on the Commonwealth Youth Programme to establish Regional Youth Enterprise Agencies (RYEAs), run by young persons. This may be done through already established platforms, such as the Regional Youth Caucuses. The aim of such RYEAs would be to serve as monitoring bodies, linking countries within a region. They would also promote CYP's programmes, so assisting youth organisations with youth enterprise promotion.**

### **4.2.15 This Forum calls upon civil society to network and lobby to achieve the aims listed in this document and in particular to convince governments to involve young persons in national policy formation. We further request civil society to be more proactive in addressing youth issues and ask them to engage in youth enterprise development.**

### **4.2.16 The Forum calls upon the private sector and Commonwealth Business Council to network and lobby to raise awareness about the importance of youth enterprise by developing programmes that render enterprise more attractive. Additionally they can help convince accomplished entrepreneurs of the need to foster youth enterprise and further convince such persons to train, and act as role models and mentors for young persons.**

## The Role of Young People

### **4.2.17 Young people and their representative organisations must recognise their responsibilities to ensure that the recommendations made in this communiqué are taken seriously and bear fruit. They should act as watchdogs and lobby governments and other stakeholders to achieve the goals set by this Forum. In particular they are to continue lobbying governments to set up local infrastructure facilities.**

### **4.2.18 The responsibilities of young people and their organisations are to:**

- Recognise the importance and value of enterprise today and to invest highly in it;
- Take advantage of the opportunities available for young entrepreneurs by being proactive in establishing proper networks for the exchange of information and experiences and sharing information with each other;
- Promote youth enterprise among young people in their communities and beyond, and to develop their own agendas around youth enterprise promotion. In doing so, they should establish award schemes for successful entrepreneurs. Youth organisations should coordinate and organise an annual 'Entrepreneur Week', during which nation-wide campaigns aimed at fostering youth enterprise and disseminating information take place.

# Networking Commonwealth Youth: Towards CYF6

After considering the evolution of the Forum since its inception in Edinburgh in 1997, we emphasise the importance of charting a clear path into the future for young people of the Commonwealth. Taking into account the array of suggestions promulgated by this Forum, it is clear that the Commonwealth Youth Forum lives only through the continuity of its knowledge networks and fundamental working principles; and the diversity of its constituencies.

## 5.1 We therefore commit ourselves to:

- Continuing to refine the action plans and targets we started at CYF5 and to take a strategic approach to implementation;
- Ensuring that action begins from situation analyses which are specific to member countries and are undertaken by young people;
- Establishing a youth planning team which will sustain CYF's network in a transparent and accountable manner and which will work with National Youth Councils and other youth organisations;
- Bringing about better coordination between regional and pan-Commonwealth levels;
- Bringing new resources and contact persons into the network for the purposes of sharing knowledge, funding and best practice;
- Reporting to CYF6, which will be held in Uganda in 2007, on progress made at national and other levels on the recommendations made by the Commonwealth Youth Forum according to the working principles set out above;
- Seeking better coordination with CHOGM, the Commonwealth People's Forum, and the Commonwealth Business Forum and their media channels to ensure that CYF receives the publicity it deserves;
- Where our mandates expire before 2007, ensuring continuity of contact and understanding among our successors;
- Create a web-based platform to network and enable information exchange between the CYF planning team, Commonwealth Youth Caucus and National Youth Councils, as well as young people across the Commonwealth.

## 5.2 Targets

- 5.2.1 CYF5 calls upon CHOGM to institutionalise the Forum before the end of 2006 in order to facilitate sustainability and continuity.
- 5.2.2 CYF5 calls upon member governments to ensure that all Regional Youth Caucus members are delegates to the CYF6 in Uganda as a means of fostering synergy between the Commonwealth Youth Programme's thematic areas and the CYF themes.
- 5.2.3 CYF5 calls upon member governments, the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC) and others to provide the necessary institutional resources and technical assistance to assist the Government and young people of Uganda to successfully host CYF6.
- 5.2.4 CYF5 asks member governments to adopt an endowment policy within the Commonwealth Youth Programme that will aid the long-term financial sustainability of the CYF and ensure equitable youth participation from all Commonwealth Regions.
- 5.2.5 The Ugandan organisers of CYF6 must place the development of a 'CYF Vision 2015' on the agenda. This Forum will coincide with the expiration of the Millennium Development Goals and the Commonwealth Youth Programme's evaluation of its 2011-2015 Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE).
- 5.2.6 To ensure the Commonwealth Youth Forum becomes a sustainable project, we call upon the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council to build the capacity of a cadre of young people, who will be composed of both alumni and present CYF delegates, to facilitate the organisation of future CYFs.
- 5.2.7 CYF5 calls upon CHOGM and future CYFs to articulate and insist that Action Plans developed at CYF are linked to the work of Regional Youth Caucus to ensure cohesion, continuity and the achievement of targets.
- 5.2.8 CYF calls upon the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council to sign a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines specific roles and responsibilities of both entities in the organisation and sustainability of the CYF.
- 5.2.9 The CYF calls upon the Commonwealth Youth Programme and Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council to ensure that international media is invited to future CYFs, in order to better expose and convey the work and energy which constitute the CYF.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Starkey, P., *Networking for Development*, 1992, London.
- 2 Chambers, R. and Conway, G., *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century*, IDS Discussion Paper 296, 1992, IDS, Brighton.
- 3 Stevenson, H., quoted in Chigunta, F., *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges*, 2002, Oxford University.

**T**he Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) has held meetings to coincide with every Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting since Edinburgh in 1997 (followed by Durban [1999], Gold Coast/Brisbane [2001], Abuja [2003] and Malta [2005]). It was originated by the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC) working with Scottish partners, and with assistance from the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). It represents a highly successful Commonwealth partnership between government, civil society and young people.

The CYF provides an independent platform and voice for representative Commonwealth youth to consider a young person's agenda at the same time as the CHOGM. Each CYF addresses Commonwealth youth's concerns and builds on the work of previous youth fora. Each Forum works to formulate a Statement of Recommendations and Action Plans. These are shared with Heads of Government and disseminated Commonwealth-wide.

Representatives to the Forum are usually members of national youth councils or umbrella bodies and the Commonwealth Youth Caucus. They commit themselves to action on return home. A working group of Commonwealth young people help to ensure the torch is carried from one Forum to the next, and is entrusted with the running and organising of the next Forum. CYEC and CYP provide technical assistance to the host government and support the young people's planning and facilitation team.

CYF 5 was held in Malta from 16 to 23 November 2005. 35 countries were able to send youth representatives. The Forum was hosted by the Ministry of Education, Employment and Youth and the National Youth Council of Malta. A team of Commonwealth young people worked with Maltese counterparts to identify the themes, draw up a programme, plan and run the Forum. The Forum was honoured to be officially opened by the Honourable Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister of Malta.

This communiqué document is the result of the Youth Forum's recommendations. The Youth Forum calls upon Commonwealth governments, youth organisations and young people to note and act upon the recommendations contained herein. The Forum looks to the next CYF in Uganda and other international youth fora to continue to build on this work.

For further information, please contact:

**Commonwealth Youth Forum, c/o CYEC, 7 Lion Yard, Tremadoc Road, London SW4 7NQ**  
**T: +44 (0)207 498 6151 • E: [mail@cyec.org.uk](mailto:mail@cyec.org.uk) • W: [www.cyec.org.uk](http://www.cyec.org.uk)**

Published by CYEC 2006, ISBN-0-9537786-7-3

Text © CYF 2005 – reproduction for dissemination and educational purposes permitted

Photographs by Andrew Simmons and Cedric Farrugia

Designed by Ashley Shields, Orbit Graphics, Brighton

Edited by Alexandra Löwe and Helen Jones

Publication of this Communiqué has been made possible by a grant from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

