

The Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Task Force Meeting

12-15 August 2024 - Marlborough House, London-UK

OUTCOME STATEMENT

1. Ministers and senior government officials from The Bahamas, Cyprus, The Gambia, Jamaica, Kenya, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Samoa, and Sierra Leone, together with representatives from Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC), Commonwealth Association of Youth Work Associations (CAYWA) and regional organisations convened online and in person for the Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Task Force meeting. The purpose was to review the progress of the Commonwealth youth development agenda, reflect on past actions, and strategise the path forward.
2. The Task Force convened on International Youth Day amid political protests in several member states, many of which were led by young people. Recognising the growing role of youth in political movements, the meeting emphasised the importance of governments adopting the policy guidance and actions outlined in the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (CYMM). Members urged all member states to reaffirm their commitment to the values and principles of the Commonwealth Charter, particularly those related to democracy, human rights, and good governance, ensuring that the voices of young people are heard and their concerns addressed through peaceful and constructive dialogue.
3. Members noted that the political participation of students and young people in society has never been more critical. Across the Commonwealth, the courage, resilience, and commitment of youth have been extraordinary. Their voices have led movements for democracy, justice, and social change, demonstrating that young people are not just tomorrow's leaders but today's change-makers. Recent political developments have shown the power and potential of youth engagement- from leading peaceful protests to driving digital campaigns, young people are determined to make their voices heard and achieve their aspirations.

The following key outcomes were noted:

4. **Progress on CYMM mandates and commitments -National Reporting Progress**
The Task Force welcomed the actions taken by member states to produce national reports in alignment with CYMM mandates through their national focal points. The meeting commended this commitment to accountability and transparency in youth development initiatives.
5. **Implementation of Mandates**
Members acknowledged the significant progress made on various Commonwealth youth mandates. The meeting encouraged further actions, including the organisation of regional meetings and improved communication with Commonwealth High Commissions, to speed up implementation and improve the flow of information among stakeholders.

6. Year of Youth Mandate

The Task Force appreciated the progress made on the Year of Youth mandate and looks forward to the evaluation report, which will be presented at the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa. The meeting also thanked the Year of Youth Advisory Committee and the Project team at the Commonwealth Secretariat for their dedicated efforts in advancing this initiative.

7. Support for the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC)

The Task Force expressed strong support for the programme of work undertaken by the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC) and congratulated them on their significant contributions to the progress of the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (CYMM) outcomes. The meeting also expressed its gratitude to the Chair and outgoing executives of the CYC for their exemplary service. The Task Force reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the Council is equipped with the necessary funding and resources to effectively advance its youth development agenda

8. Welcoming the New CAYWA Executive

The Task Force welcomed the new Commonwealth Alliance of Youth Workers' Associations (CAYWA) executive and acknowledged their strategic plans and recommendations for advancing youth work across the Commonwealth. The meeting recognised the need to accelerate the establishment of national and regional youth workers' associations to bolster youth development efforts.

9. Provisional Plans for Commonwealth Youth Forum and CHOGM

The Task Force welcomed the provisional plans and programmes for the Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) and CHOGM. Members thanked the Government of Samoa for its invitation to host the events in October 2024 and expressed their anticipation of the successful execution.

10. Regional Plans and Youth Development Acceleration

The Task Force noted the ongoing regional plans to accelerate youth development in line with the aspirations of member states and the CYMM outcomes. The meeting acknowledged the essential role of regional organisations in supporting the Commonwealth Youth Policy agenda and stressed the importance of ongoing collaboration.

11. Youth Mainstreaming in Key Sectors

The Task Force welcomed the progress made in youth mainstreaming across various sectors, including health, education, sports, climate change, political participation, and trade within the Commonwealth. Members emphasised the need for ongoing efforts to integrate youth development into these key areas, ensuring lasting impact.

12. Approval of the Revised Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

The Task Force approved the revised CYP Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and endorsed its submission to Heads of Government at CHOGM for final adoption.

13. The Task Force reaffirmed its commitment to advancing the Commonwealth's youth development agenda and ensuring that young people across the Commonwealth are empowered to lead and contribute to a sustainable and prosperous future.
14. The meeting concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and collaboration among all stakeholders and participants. Members expressed their gratitude to the Commonwealth Secretariat for its ongoing support and leadership, and to all those who contributed to the meeting's success.
15. The meeting expressed deep gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth for her unwavering dedication to the youth of the Commonwealth. Members also thanked the Government of Pakistan for successfully chairing the meeting.