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2025 Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting Outcome Statement

Fostering Resilience: Strengthening Intra-Commonwealth Trade and Investment Linkages

1. We, the Trade Ministers of the Commonwealth, met on 19-20 June 2025 in Windhoek, Namibia to discuss key developments and progress made since our previous meeting in London in June 2023 and to build upon the initiatives agreed by our Heads of Government in Apia, Samoa, in October 2024.
2. We reflected on the evolving challenges and uncertainties affecting global trade and underscored the importance of working together to address these issues and advance our collective trade and investment priorities. We noted how these challenges can affect developing economies in the Commonwealth disproportionately, particularly Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and discussed how we could - both collectively and as individual countries - strengthen their resilience to global shocks.
3. We emphasised the power of the Commonwealth as a model for cooperation built on our shared values and common goals to advance economic growth, prosperity and development. We discussed how we can collectively undertake more ambitious actions to grow intra-Commonwealth trade to US\$2 trillion by 2030 while also achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
4. We commended and supported the engagement of business leaders through the Commonwealth Business Summit, hosted by the Government of the Republic of Namibia, on the sidelines of our meeting on 18-20 June 2025 in Windhoek. We recognised the critical importance of bringing together business leaders, policymakers and trade and investment experts from across the Commonwealth to identify practical ways to enhance intra-Commonwealth trade and investment, drive digital transformation and innovation, and the sustainable energy transition, strengthen collaboration between the public and private sectors, and support and empower micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Supporting the Multilateral Trading System

5. We offered our strong support to a fair, transparent, equitable, inclusive, member-driven, non-discriminatory, open, rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core.
6. Furthermore, we endorsed our Commonwealth Statement on the multilateral trading system and propose for the Government of Namibia as the Host of CTMM to submit the joint Commonwealth Statement on behalf of members in support of the multilateral trading system to the WTO, which is annexed to this Outcome Statement.
7. We commended the valuable and impactful technical and capacity building support provided to Commonwealth small states through the Commonwealth Small States Office

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(CSSO) in Geneva and urge continued support to small states in their negotiations at the WTO and particularly in the lead up to and during MC14. We thanked the contributing countries for their ongoing support to the CSSO and discussed the critical need for additional sources of support to ensure its long-term sustainability. We encouraged the Commonwealth WTO Caucus to reconvene ahead of MC14 to facilitate an informal exchange of views between member countries and to identify and advance their shared interests and priorities.

8. We acknowledged the ongoing technical assistance and capacity building provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat to member states through the Trade work programme to support increased competitiveness and provide valuable trade policy research and analysis and reaffirmed our commitment to the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda.

Enhanced Cooperation to Deepen Commonwealth Trade and Investment

9. We reflected on the challenges to financing the economic development and the infrastructural deficit in our countries and the reduction in Foreign Direct Investments to the developing countries and small states because of the downturn of the global economy. We discussed the opportunities that exist and need for Commonwealth countries to leverage private investments, and innovative finance models to drive increased investments through public-private partnerships and blended finance into critical sectors to enable sustainable development of our countries.
10. We reviewed the agreed Work Plan of the Commonwealth Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI), identified priorities and provided guidance to support its implementation. We considered and noted progress on the Operationalisation Plan and tasked the WGTI to proceed with its implementation. We reiterated the importance of the WGTI as a practical mechanism to enhance Commonwealth collaboration aimed at growing intra-Commonwealth trade and investment. We stressed the need to retain flexibility within the Work Plan to adjust its focus areas and priorities in accordance with available financial resources, as the Commonwealth's work on trade and investment develops, including with respect to the new Commonwealth Strategic Plan due to be released later in 2025 and in keeping with evolving global trade and investment dynamics.
11. We noted the progress and work of the Commonwealth Sub-Action Group on Investment co-chaired by the United Kingdom and St. Kitts and Nevis. We thanked the Government of Malaysia for their previous role as Co-Chair of the Group. We noted the establishment of a Commonwealth Investment Network (CIN) at CHOGM 2024 and thanked the Government of the United Kingdom for the provision of initial funding to March 2026. We further agreed that the CIN should serve as a central mechanism for delivering the Commonwealth's shared investment priorities and expressed our support for this initiative. We acknowledged the ongoing work of the CIN to identify opportunities for collaboration with private investors, with the aim of achieving bankable investments.
12. We considered the scope and potential for deeper economic integration in the Commonwealth and how it could help member countries to navigate the challenging and increasingly uncertain global trade and economic landscape while also generating renewed impetus to achieve the target of increasing intra-Commonwealth trade to US\$2 trillion by 2030. We agreed that discussions on a long-term vision for deeper economic integration in the Commonwealth should continue under the Work Plan of the WGTI and that this work should align with the new Commonwealth Strategic Plan.

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Building Resilient Economies

13. We reflected on how the Commonwealth can enhance trade and trade policies to address the energy transition, particularly through investments in renewable energy sources and related supply chains, and the removal of intra-Commonwealth trade barriers. We acknowledged the disparities in energy reliance among countries, the critical role of trade in sustainable energy projects, and the barriers to cross-border trade in clean energy services. We highlighted the need for collaborative efforts to support Commonwealth developing countries, SIDS and LDCs towards building resilient, sustainable supply chains for renewable energy technologies.
14. In this regard, we discussed how our collaborative efforts through the Sustainable Energy Transition (CSET) Agenda can facilitate intra-Commonwealth trade in low carbon and clean energy and technology driven goods and services and associated equipment and technology and provide support for developing Commonwealth countries - particularly LDCs, small states and SIDS to advance their energy transitions in line with their national priorities, needs and circumstances, without hampering their energy security.
15. In the context of the discussion around the energy transition, we reflected on the resource potential within the critical minerals sector in the Commonwealth. We discussed ways in which we can enhance the sustainability of the sector through our individual and collective efforts to build capacity through knowledge sharing, technical assistance and supporting enabling environments. We also discussed how this resource potential can be harnessed by encouraging value addition to critical raw materials at or close to source, integrating into global green value chains, and capitalising on the rising demand for critical minerals across the world.
16. We reaffirmed the need to increase cooperation to ensure food security and nutrition within the Commonwealth and noted the need for strengthening access to productivity-enhancing technologies and data systems for agricultural and fisheries trade and investment as a foundation for achieving this goal. We took note of the varying data capacities across our member countries, particularly in LDCs and SIDS and highlighted the need for tailored support to ensure timely access to accurate data utilising emerging technologies to strengthen national coordination to build resilience across our food systems.
17. We welcomed the ongoing work on the Commonwealth Model Law on Digital Trade by the Commonwealth Working Group on Legal Reform and Digitalisation and underscored the importance of ensuring it is adaptable to the diverse digital readiness of our member states, particularly by supporting LDCs and SIDS to build the legal, regulatory and infrastructural capacity to fully benefit from digital trade. We noted the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in trade facilitation and stressed the need to consider how AI can better assist and facilitate trade, including by potentially reducing trade costs, and enabling appropriate interoperable regulatory frameworks, but also acknowledged the possible risks associated with integrating AI into trade processes.
18. We discussed opportunities for further cooperation to promote green trade and develop circular economies within the Commonwealth. We discussed how we can collaborate to facilitate access to green and other low emission technologies, including through access to voluntary technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, and concessional financing to enable LDCs to develop green manufacturing capabilities and sustainable industrial strategies and create markets for sustainable products.

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19. We highlighted the increasing vulnerabilities due to climate change and the need for building resilient trade infrastructure, accessing green technology, and mobilising climate-aligned trade finance, particularly for developing countries and SIDS. We noted the ongoing work of the Climate Finance Access Hub and the support it provides to Commonwealth countries to unlock available climate finance.
20. We underlined that trade-related measures taken to combat climate change and other environmental challenges should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or disguised restrictions on international trade.

Towards CHOGM 2026 and Beyond

21. With a view to deepening Commonwealth cooperation in the areas highlighted above, we recommended that our Heads of Government reflect on these issues when they meet for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026 in Antigua and Barbuda.

Appreciation for Host and Organisers

22. We expressed our heartfelt appreciation for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the Government of the Republic of Namibia, and for the efficient support provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat in organising the Trade Ministers Meeting, and associated events and meetings.