



**Commonwealth Law
Ministers Meeting**
Republic of Fiji
9–12 February 2026

Meeting of Commonwealth Law Ministers and Senior Officials

Nadi, Republic of Fiji, 9 - 12 February 2026

OUTCOME STATEMENT

1. Commonwealth Law Ministers, Attorneys General, and Senior Officials from 34 member countries met in Nadi, Republic of Fiji from 9 - 12 February 2026. Law Ministers welcomed Hon Shirley Botchwey, the 7th Secretary-General of the Commonwealth to her first Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting.
2. The meeting was held under the theme “*Anchoring Justice in a Changing Tide: Strengthening the Rule of Law for a Resilient Future.*” The Secretary-General expressed her gratitude to the Republic of Fiji for hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting and formally introduced the Chairperson of the meeting, the Hon. Siromi Turaga, Minister of Justice and Acting Attorney General of the Republic of Fiji.

THEME PAPER

3. Law Ministers received and discussed the theme paper from the Republic of Fiji. The Theme Paper exhorted member countries to maintain and reinforce the rule of law amidst shifting geopolitical tides ensuring that justice systems remain adaptable, inclusive, and responsive specifically in climate change, digital transformation, and regional cooperation.
4. Law Ministers commended the measures undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Fiji to reinforce resilience in the rule of law, observing that these efforts offer valuable insights and practical approaches from which other member countries can benefit.

A. DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE AND PARTICIPATION

5. With the appointment of the 7th Secretary General of the Commonwealth Hon. Shirley Botchwey and the adoption of the Commonwealth Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2030, the Ministers recognised that the Commonwealth must, with renewed vigour, work to meet the challenges of the future. Ministers applauded the Secretariat's *renewed focus on building democratic resilience and participation* through stronger adherence to the rule of law, human rights, and good governance affirming that democracy, justice, and accountability are mutually reinforcing and that strong, independent legal institutions are essential to sustaining democratic governance.
6. Ministers received and adopted the **Nadi Declaration on Democratic Resilience and Participation**. The Nadi Declaration affirms the centrality of the rule of law, good governance, and public trust in democratic institutions and processes as the foundation of democratic resilience. The Declaration commits members to strengthen inclusive and meaningful citizen participation, safeguarding human rights and civic space, and addressing emerging threats to democracy, including disinformation and external interference through cooperation, capacity - building and shared action. Law Ministers requested the Commonwealth to continue close collaboration with member countries and accredited partner organisations to support its implementation.

B. INNOVATION IN JUSTICE

7. Ministers reflected on the Discussion Paper on Justice and Artificial Intelligence, recognising both the transformative potential and complex ethical, legal, and regulatory challenges posed by new technologies.
8. Ministers agreed that the Commonwealth should take a leading role in the development of shared principles, guidance, and model frameworks to support member jurisdictions in harnessing artificial intelligence responsibly and equitably within their justice systems.

C. MARITIME BOUNDARIES AND SEA LEVEL RISE

9. Ministers reflected on the Discussion Paper on Maritime Boundaries and Sea Level Rise, acknowledging the Commonwealth's longstanding leadership in promoting ocean governance and sustainable management of marine resources.
10. Ministers reaffirmed the principle set out in the Apia Commonwealth Ocean Declaration (ACOD) adopted at CHOGM 2024, which recognises the urgent threat posed by climate change-related sea-level rise and affirms the right of states to maintain maritime zones established in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the consequential rights and entitlements that flow from them, notwithstanding physical changes as a result of climate change-related sea level rise.

D. COMBATTING MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

11. Ministers received a discussion paper on **disinformation via online platforms in electoral and other democratic processes** and noted with concern the rise of disinformation, including foreign disinformation campaigns, in the digital age, and its impact on citizen participation in democratic processes.
12. Ministers welcomed being informed about successful efforts to address the use of online platforms as vectors for disinformation in electoral contexts, including through engagement and collaboration with online platforms. Ministers encouraged the Secretariat to provide guidance on ways in which the Commonwealth could further support member states in combating misinformation and disinformation that undermines democracy.

E. WOMEN AND YOUTH

13. Ministers noted with appreciation the large numbers of women and young people that had been reached by Commonwealth Programs in 2024 and 2025. Law Ministers also received a paper on Birth Registration in the Commonwealth prepared in collaboration with the Commonwealth Lawyers Association.
14. Recognising that the vitality of the Commonwealth lies in its youth, and that uplifting women is uplifting communities, Law Ministers noted with appreciation this crosscutting pillar of the Commonwealth's New Strategic Plan and encouraged the Secretariat to invest in the Commonwealth's shared future by mainstreaming interventions to meet the justice needs of women and youth.

F. THE LEGAL WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT

15. Ministers encouraged the Secretariat to continue working with focus and intent, within the boundaries set by the Strategic Plan 2025-2030, on helping members find niche and replicable solutions to access to justice challenges across the Commonwealth, and they were pleased to receive the following developments:

a. ASSET RECOVERY

Ministers received a paper on challenges in asset recovery in the context of the Commonwealth. Ministers appreciated the importance of effective means for combating corruption and economic crime. Ministers requested the Secretariat to conduct a scoping exercise on the current legal frameworks for asset recovery in the Commonwealth, identify law, policy and implementation gaps and make recommendations for collective action, including leveraging existing Commonwealth tools, such as the International Cooperation Data Base launched at CLMM 2024.

b. THIRD PARTY FUNDING

Ministers thanked Malaysia for presenting a paper on third party funding, to enhance access to justice, drive economic growth by removing upfront legal costs and create a fairer legal environment. Ministers requested the Secretariat to progress the work by conducting a scoping study on the approaches to third party funding of civil

litigation in the Commonwealth and presenting recommendations for consideration.

c. THE COMMONWEALTH DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

At the 2024 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa, Heads commended the ongoing work towards the finalisation of a Commonwealth Disability Inclusion Action Plan. An Expert Working Group, supported by an Advisory Body of Persons with Disabilities, was subsequently established to complete the Action Plan. Law Ministers received an update from the Expert Working Group on its progress towards finalizing the draft Commonwealth Disability Inclusion Action Plan, thanked the Advisory Body for their indispensable contribution to the process, and once finalised, agreed to support a process to consider its submission to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

d. COMMONWEALTH MODEL LAWS AND CONTRACTS

Ministers acknowledged the significant progress achieved in the development of model laws that respond to the evolving legal and technological landscape. They commended the organisation's efforts to support member states through the development of non-binding model laws on stablecoins, digital trade, military justice, and suppression orders. Ministers encouraged continued collaboration in the formulation, dissemination, and implementation of the model laws, as appropriate, to ensure that member countries are equipped to meet emerging challenges with consistency, fairness, and innovation.

e. COMMONWEALTH KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS AND E-RESOURCES

Ministers recognised the organisation's ongoing commitment to advancing knowledge sharing and capacity building through the development of innovative knowledge products and e-resources.

16. Ministers noted with satisfaction the conclusion of work in the following areas:

- Commonwealth Equal Access to Justice Best Practice for Family Courts in Trinidad and Tobago and People Centred Access to Justice in Kenya
- The Commonwealth Legal Repository, and
- The Commonwealth e-Course for First Time Judicial Officers
- The Handbook on the Decriminalisation of Poverty and Status, produced in partnership with the Institute of Commonwealth Studies
- The Commonwealth Pro Bono Centre in 2025, a project of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Lawyers Association
- The Commonwealth Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) Toolkit for Africa developed under a UK - FCDO supported EBR.

THE NADI DECLARATION

17. Commonwealth Law Ministers agreed to recommend the Nadi Declaration on Democratic Resilience and Participation for consideration at the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

PARTNER REPORTS

18. Law Ministers noted the Secretary-General's commitment to revitalising partnerships observing the legal partners had always played an active and indispensable role in the delivery of the Legal Work of the Secretariat.
19. Law Ministers received and noted reports from the Secretariat's partner organisations including: the Commonwealth Association of Law Reform Agencies (CALRA), the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute (CJEL), the Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), the International Red Cross and the British Red Cross (ICRC/BRC), and the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association (CMJA).
20. Ministers also expressed their appreciation for the presentation by Justice Defenders on the impact of educating inmates and prison officials together which demonstrably contributed to restored hope and purpose in prisons. This presentation powerfully illustrated the transformative impact of education within prisons.

CLOSING

21. Law Ministers expressed their deep appreciation to the Republic of Fiji for graciously hosting a successful meeting in the serenity of the Pacific. Ministers also looked ahead with optimism to the **2026 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting**, to be held in **St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, from 1-4 November 2026**, and to future gatherings of Law Ministers, which they affirmed would continue to strengthen the Commonwealth through shared purpose, collaboration, and collective progress.

END.