

## VOTE OF THANKS

Hon. K. Musokotwane

Minister of Youth & Sports, Zambia

We are here in Sri Lanka, a young developing country with all the potential for further development in all spheres and more particularly in the direction of enhancing the role of young men in changing the destiny of their own country. Testament to this is the presence today among us of the convenor of the conference of young people under the Chairmanship of the youngest of the young ministers here. Perhaps Cmrd. Chairman, on the subject matter of my vote of thanks I should like to thank on behalf of all my colleagues and delegates from the Commonwealth the Government and the people of Sri Lanka for the wonderful hospitality accorded to us since we arrived in their country. I am sure I speak on behalf of all the delegates when I say that in Sri Lanka all of us are feeling at home, away from home. Members of the Commonwealth Secretariat deserve a pat on the shoulder for all their efforts put into the organisation of this meeting. We are grateful to them. I am participating for the first time in a meeting organised by CYP as are some delegates in this conference. What we have read, what we know about the CYP has brought us here and we are confident and desire that the CYP must continue to give stimulus, it must continue to give impetus to Governments as well as to young men and women in shaping the destinies of their own future and the future of their own countries.

The Ocho Rios Declaration is significant, it is significant in that it is a pointer to the determination of young people to how they play their role in national development. The Ocho Rios Declaration is a document that is the sum total of the feelings of young people and more fundamentally and especially of the feelings of young people in different Commonwealth countries. For example the youth of Zambia and its first General Youth Council recommended to our Government that a Ministry of Youth be created. In Ocho Rios this feeling was presented on an international front. I stand here before you as the first Zambian Youth Minister. This clearly shows that some of the declarations that youth make both at national and international levels get some hearing. This is a most encouraging development, Mr. Prime Minister the country which I represent at this meeting is hosting the next HGM in August this year. Some of the themes the Colombo Meeting will consider will undoubtedly be considered further in Lusaka. Hence it should be the desire of the young people meeting here today that their views, no matter how diverse, should be brought to the attention of the Lusaka Meeting. To this end the presence at this meeting, of Prof. Murshid is of particular significance. This meeting is significant not only in terms of the subject matter discussed but also because it has attracted many professionals, and politicians. It is important that people who are diverse must come together and look at issues that generally affect us. This and future such meetings of Young Leaders is a sure way of assuring the growth of the Commonwealth. We gathered here Cmrd Chairman, are the future of the Commonwealth.

My government's commitment to the Commonwealth Youth Programme is total. My Government has participated fully in this Programme before, apart from hosting the Africa Regional Centre, a new building which is to be completed in August or September this year. Finally Chairman, Mr. Prime Minister, my fellow delegates and I are indebted to you for the stimulating address which will certainly go a long way in contributing to the success of this conference. We feel encouraged and with your support the youth of the Commonwealth is bound to contribute in a very fundamental way to the welfare of mankind.