

Foreword by Commonwealth Secretary-General

Commonwealth Heads of Government, meeting in Lusaka in August 1979, expressed their grave concern with the deterioration in the world economic situation and prospects. In their search for remedies, they requested me to commission a Group of Experts 'to investigate and report on the factors inhibiting structural change and a sustained improvement in economic growth' and to 'identify specific measures by which developed and developing countries, Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth, might act to reduce or eliminate such constraints as a matter of urgency'. The Report of the Group of Experts is contained within these covers.

Since the Lusaka meeting, the global economic crisis has deepened and there is now considerable pessimism about the ability of nations to control world economic trends. The Group of Experts, consisting of distinguished persons from both North and South, has highlighted the grave consequences of the present situation for the peoples of the world, particularly those in the developing countries. The Report, which does not aim to cover the field but to focus on some acutely critical areas, shows that it is within the capacity of the world community, acting collectively and in harmony, to respond effectively to the crisis and to overcome current constraints on structural change in the world economy and on sustained economic growth. In the selected areas of its inquiry, the Experts' Group puts forward a number of specific practical measures directed towards achieving a more equitable, prosperous and stable world society.

The Experts themselves were drawn from a representative range of developed and developing countries: Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom and Zambia. It must be emphasised, however, that they have prepared and signed the Report in their personal capacities and not as representatives of Governments or countries. The publication of the Report does not imply that it necessarily

represents the views of Commonwealth Governments, nor does it commit them individually or collectively to its recommendations.

In presenting the Report, the Group has expressed the hope that it will be of assistance in the preparations for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in August-September 1980 on a New International Development Strategy for the 1980s and for the global round of negotiations which will follow. I share this hope, and have pleasure in making available through this Report the considered views of an independent group of Commonwealth experts as a contribution to the global dialogue.

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