

# **COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING, 1981**

*(Melbourne, 30 September-7 October)*

## **FINAL COMMUNIQUE**

1. Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Melbourne from 30 September to 7 October 1981. Of the 41 countries which attended the Meeting, 30 were represented by their Presidents or Prime Ministers. The Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Malcolm Fraser, was in the Chair.

2. Heads of Government sent a message of felicitation to Her Majesty the Queen as Head of the Commonwealth. They welcomed with great pleasure the opportunity of meeting in Melbourne, and expressed their appreciation of the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and the warm and generous hospitality of their Australian hosts.

3. Heads of Government warmly welcomed their colleagues from Zimbabwe, Vanuatu and Belize which had become members of the association since their last Meeting, and extended similar greetings to St Vincent and the Grenadines which had become a special member.

4. Heads of Government expressed their deep grief at the death of President Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh, President Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana, President Benjamin Henry Sheares of Singapore and Prime Minister Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago and recalled their deep commitment and significant contributions to the Commonwealth.

5. Heads of Government recalled with particular satisfaction the Commonwealth's role in helping to bring Zimbabwe to independence under majority rule following their Meeting in Lusaka. They were encouraged by this demonstration of the contribution their Meetings could make to the resolution of long-standing international problems.

### **World and Commonwealth Trends**

6. Heads of Government were conscious that they were meeting at a time when there was a growing sense of insecurity among the people of the world: they expressed grave disquiet at the marked deterioration that had taken place in international relations since their last Meeting. Central to their concern were the slide from detente to confrontation, mounting tension between the Super-Powers and the build-up of nuclear arms threatening the very survival of mankind. Heads of Government contrasted the increasingly large resources devoted to the manufacture of ever more destructive weapons with the growing inadequacy of the resources available for international economic co-operation and continued inability of the international community to agree on ways and means of alleviating world poverty. They were disturbed that in this situation, which called for new and enlightened policies, there was evidence of a weakening of the spirit of internationalism. They believed their association could help to reverse this trend and contribute to a safer and saner world.

7. Heads of Government asserted the right of all peoples freely to determine their destiny and noted with concern that this right was being denied in widely different circumstances in many parts of the world. They recognised an obligation to work for conditions more conducive to respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and the right to self-determination.

8. Heads of Government emphasised that as an association of aligned and non-aligned states, the Commonwealth was uniquely well placed to make a substantial contribution to defusing international tensions in a divided world. Believing that it was in the highest interest of the international community that the Non-Aligned Countries should be able to continue to play their constructive role and pursue the policies and principles of non-alignment free of outside pressures, they especially endorsed the role of the non-aligned members of the Commonwealth.

### **Southern Africa**

9. Heads of Government reviewed developments in Southern Africa since their Lusaka Meeting which established the basis for Zimbabwe's independence under majority rule. They affirmed that the Lancaster House Conference, and the negotiations which preceded it, demonstrated in a decisive and compelling manner the ability of Commonwealth members to work together to achieve consensus and to make a positive contribution to the resolution of major problems. In this respect they paid tribute to the central role of Britain in facilitating the process which enabled Zimbabwe to take its place as a sovereign independent country in the international community and the Commonwealth.

10. Heads of Government congratulated the Government of Zimbabwe which had earned the respect of the world community and fully justified the trust placed in it by the Commonwealth. Deep concern was expressed that, despite the significant achievement of Zimbabwe's independence, grave problems remained to be resolved in Southern Africa. Heads of Government acknowledged that, in fact, the situation had deteriorated. They recognised the urgent need to find solutions to these unresolved problems and renewed their total commitment to this objective.

11. Heads of Government stressed that at the core of these problems is the apartheid system which the white minority régime in South Africa continues to sustain and strengthen in a variety of ways, including the brutal internal repression of the African majority, the persistent refusal to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions providing for Namibia's long-delayed independence, the pursuit of policies of destabilisation against neighbouring states, the repeated threats to and violations of their territorial integrity and the expansion of South Africa's military capability. They considered that these developments not only threatened the stability of the region but also gravely endangered international peace and security. They therefore called on the international community to strengthen its collective resolve to eradicate apartheid.

12. Recalling their Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice proclaimed at Lusaka in 1979, Heads of Government reaffirmed their total and unequivocal condemnation of apartheid as a crime against humanity and their total rejection of all policies designed to perpetuate this inhuman system. They accepted that it was the solemn and urgent duty of each of their governments

vigorously to combat the evil of apartheid by the adoption of effective measures against it and to assist those struggling to rid themselves of it.

13. Heads of Government reaffirmed their Gleneagles Agreement of 1977 and reiterated their commitment to fulfilling effectively their obligations under it.

14. Heads of Government took special account of the efforts of the United Nations to reach universally accepted approaches to the question of sporting contacts within the framework of the international campaign against apartheid. They agreed to redouble their own efforts to secure such international agreement.

15. Heads of Government expressed deep concern that there had been no progress towards the achievement of independence for Namibia. They registered their grave disappointment that the Pre-implementation Meeting in Geneva in January 1981 had been aborted by the refusal of the South African Government to agree to a date for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435. Heads of Government reaffirmed their determination to ensure that the people of Namibia should be allowed without further delay to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. Mindful of the role being played by the Western Contact Group, which included two of their members, they urged the Group, as a matter of particular urgency, to intensify efforts to secure the implementation of Resolution 435 without modification or dilution as early as possible in 1982.

16. Heads of Government noted that, notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 418 (1977), imposing a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa, the apartheid régime's expenditure on military expansion and nuclear development had increased alarmingly. They therefore called for a full and effective implementation of the arms embargo, including its efficient monitoring, and urged all governments to desist forthwith from any collaboration with South Africa which undermined the implementation of the arms embargo.

17. Heads of Government condemned the South African régime's repeated threats to and violations of the territorial integrity of the States of Southern Africa, in particular its recent invasion and occupation of Angolan territory. They called for an immediate withdrawal of all South African troops from Angola and an end to all such violations. They also condemned any attempt from any quarter to subvert the legitimate Government of Angola through interference in the internal affairs of the country. In this connection, they expressed strong solidarity with the Front-Line States. They also expressed the view that African states should be able to pursue their own affairs without interference from any source.

18. In endorsing the report of the Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa, Heads of Government expressed appreciation for the effective and constructive manner in which the Committee had discharged its responsibilities in the past two years. They authorised the Committee to continue its work and to pay particular attention to the developments on Namibia. They noted with approval the important role played by the Commonwealth, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in enhancing the supply of trained manpower for both Zimbabwe and Namibia, and commended the Secretariat for its efficient administration of Commonwealth humanitarian assistance programmes in this regard.

19. Heads of Government noted that the increasing number of young refugees from South Africa in neighbouring countries was imposing severe burdens on those countries. They therefore approved in principle the recommendations of the Committee for the establishment of a Commonwealth education and training programme for the benefit of these refugees as a concrete manifestation of their concern and reinforcement of their political commitment against apartheid and their support for majority rule in South Africa. They requested the Secretary-General to prepare detailed proposals for establishing such a programme for consideration by Commonwealth governments through the Committee. Heads of Government also welcomed the recent UN/OAU/UNHCR Conference on Refugees in Africa and expressed appreciation to the participating countries and institutions and urged them to fulfil their pledges made at the conference to help alleviate this grave humanitarian problem.

20. Heads of Government recalled that at their Lusaka Meeting in 1979, they had acknowledged that the persistent problems of Southern Africa were damaging the development efforts of the states of the region which were in great need of further international assistance on a substantial scale. They therefore specially welcomed the establishment of and the progress made by the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) aimed particularly at strengthening co-operation among the majority-ruled states in the region and reducing their economic dependence on South Africa. While noting that significant bilateral and multilateral assistance is already being provided to SADCC to which Commonwealth countries are contributing, Heads of Government drew attention to the need for even greater international assistance to meet the emergent needs of SADCC countries.

### **Afghanistan**

21. Heads of Government expressed grave concern at the situation in and around Afghanistan and its implications both for the region's peace and stability and for international security. Although there were differing perceptions about the developments leading to the present situation, Heads of Government were united in calling urgently for a political settlement on the basis of the withdrawal of foreign troops and full respect for the independence, sovereignty, and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and strict observance of the principles of non-intervention and non-interference. They affirmed the right of Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour. They urged all concerned to work towards a negotiated settlement which would leave the Afghan people free to determine their own future.

### **South-East Asia**

22. Heads of Government were gravely concerned by the continuing tension in South-East Asia arising especially from the armed conflict in Kampuchea which affected the peace and security of the whole region and, if left unchecked, would result in the active intervention by major powers in the affairs of the region. They reaffirmed their support for the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states and the inadmissibility of the use of force in international relations. They agreed on the urgent need for a comprehensive political settlement which would ensure the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states in the region, including Kampuchea. They reaffirmed the right of the people of the region to determine their future free of outside interference, subversion or coercion,

and called for the speedy withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea. Heads of Government endorsed the conclusions of the New Delhi Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries in this regard. They noted various proposals, decisions and efforts of the various parties concerned directed towards finding an early political settlement of the problem.

23. Urging all states in South-East Asia to develop peaceful and friendly relations, Heads of Government noted with approval the efforts being made for the early establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in the region, and called on all states fully to support these efforts.

### **Refugees**

24. Heads of Government also noted with concern the problem of Indo-Chinese refugees/illegal immigrants caused by the continuing instability in Indo-China. They expressed their appreciation to countries of first transit burdened with this problem and to the resettlement countries for accepting these refugees/illegal immigrants. They were convinced that the root cause of this problem could be eliminated through a political solution to the conflict in Indo-China. They urged the countries which have the primary responsibility to tackle the problem of illegal departures at source by fostering the establishment of circumstances in which all the people concerned can live in peace and harmony and by co-operating with the UNHCR and resettlement countries to implement the programme of orderly departures.

### **Cyprus**

25. Heads of Government, reaffirming their Lusaka Communiqué and their decision regarding the Commonwealth Committee on Cyprus, reiterated their support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus and their solidarity with its Government and people. They stressed the importance of respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots and called for an end to all foreign intervention and interference in the Republic of Cyprus. While welcoming the resumption of inter-communal talks under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, they expressed their concern that these talks have not yet produced a solution, and stressed the need to achieve early progress towards a just and lasting solution, based on the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and the High-level Agreements. They noted that the President of the Republic of Cyprus had once again drawn to their attention his proposal for the total demilitarisation and disarmament of his country, put forward as a significant contribution to the search for a solution to the problem of Cyprus, a member of the Commonwealth.

### **Zones of Peace**

26. Heads of Government noted the trend inherent in the call by the states of various regions represented in the Commonwealth for the creation of Zones of Peace in their respective regions. They saw this trend as a reflection of the concern of the peoples of those regions to safeguard their political independence and territorial integrity free from interference by extra-regional forces. They undertook to give consideration to requests for support for the establishment and consolidation of new Zones of Peace.

## **Latin America and the Caribbean**

27. Heads of Government reviewed recent developments in Latin America and the Caribbean and noted that the region had not escaped the vicissitudes and the dangers which beset the international community elsewhere. They upheld the sovereign right of each state to continue to pursue its own political, economic and social development free from all forms of external interference, coercion, intimidation or pressure. Most Heads of Government further called upon the international community to respect and support the wishes of the people of the Caribbean for the Caribbean area to be recognised as a Zone of Peace.

## **Belize**

28. Heads of Government reviewed developments leading to the independence of Belize. They expressed satisfaction with the role played by the British Government and welcomed its commitment to make adequate provision for the security of Belize. They commended the Commonwealth Ministerial Committee on Belize for the effective manner in which it had discharged its mandate. Noting the continuing threat to the security of Belize in the absence of a final settlement with Guatemala, Heads of Government reaffirmed their full support for the efforts of the Government of Belize to maintain Belize's territorial integrity and to achieve a final resolution of the outstanding issues on the basis of the Heads of Agreement signed in London on 11 March 1981. They requested the Secretary-General to convene the Committee, whenever necessary, to assist the Government of Belize in finding a lasting settlement in accordance with the Heads of Agreement. They noted the helpful attitude of the United States Government as reflected in its affirmative vote for the Belize resolution in the United Nations General Assembly in 1980 and expressed confidence that this attitude would be maintained.

## **Guyana**

29. Heads of Government expressed their deep concern at the threat to the territorial integrity of Guyana arising from the resuscitation by Venezuela of a claim to more than two-thirds of the territory of Guyana and the steps taken by Venezuela in pursuit of the claim. Noting that the existing boundary was laid down by an International Arbitral Award in 1899 and accepted by all concerned as a final settlement, they expressed support for Guyana and called for the peaceful settlement of the controversy in accordance with established procedures and with full respect for the sanctity of treaties.

## **Middle East**

30. Heads of Government expressed grave concern that the unresolved problems of the Middle East, especially the central question of Palestine, remained a serious threat to peace and security in the region and throughout the world. They recognised that a just and lasting settlement should be on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions and recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people, including their inalienable right to a homeland, as well as the right of all states in the region to live in peace within secure borders. Stressing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, most Heads of Government affirmed that the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, recognised by a substantial majority of them as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must be involved in negotiations for a settlement.

## **Mediterranean**

31. Heads of Government reiterated their conviction, expressed in the Lusaka Communiqué of 1979, that the implementation of the Mediterranean chapter of the Helsinki Final Act would enhance the security of the Mediterranean, Europe and the Middle East and urged its full implementation. They noted the declaration by the Government of the Republic of Malta proclaiming Malta as a neutral state adhering to a policy of non-alignment as an effective contribution to detente, peace and security in the Mediterranean region.

## **Indian Ocean**

32. Heads of Government noted with disappointment that despite the expressed wishes of the littoral and hinterland states there had been a further increase in the military presence of outside powers in the Indian Ocean and a deterioration of peace and security in the area. The concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace enshrined in the 1971 United Nations Declaration had been gravely undermined by increased military activity on the part of outside powers. They called upon governments concerned with the pursuit of the objectives of the declaration to co-operate in steps to remove sources of tension in the area and to make progress towards the creation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. In the belief that the proposed United Nations Conference on the Indian Ocean could contribute positively to the implementation of the declaration, they expressed the hope that agreement would be reached to convene the Conference at an early date.

## **South Asia**

33. Heads of Government noted with satisfaction that the countries of South Asia had initiated constructive steps with a view to increasing regional co-operation among themselves, thus contributing further to the climate of peace, stability and economic progress in the area.

## **Poland**

34. Heads of Government discussed the situation in Poland. They were concerned that it could have serious implications for the international community as a whole. They considered that the people of Poland should be left to determine their own destiny free from foreign interference.

## **South Pacific**

35. Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction at the resolution of the difficulties which had attended Vanuatu's accession to independence. They agreed that it was vital for the peace and stability of the region that all people of the South Pacific should be given the opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination as laid down in the United Nations Charter. In this regard, they welcomed the decision by the South Pacific Forum to send a mission to France to discuss the future of the French territory of New Caledonia.

36. Heads of Government shared the concern of member governments in the South Pacific over continued nuclear testing in the region. The South Pacific countries were strongly supported in their call for an immediate end to such tests.

37. Heads of Government noted the opposition in the South Pacific region to the proposals for dumping and storage of nuclear waste in the Pacific Ocean and the deep concern at the serious ecological and environmental dangers to which member countries could be exposed. In this regard the resolution adopted at the recent meeting of the South Pacific Forum was strongly supported.

### **Disarmament and Arms Control**

38. Heads of Government were profoundly disturbed by the lack of progress in implementing measures of disarmament and arms limitation contained in the final document of the UN Special Session on Disarmament held in 1978. They saw this as a particularly serious matter in a situation in which there was mounting tension and lack of confidence amongst states. They agreed that practical measures directed towards nuclear disarmament and the avoidance of all armed conflict, particularly nuclear conflict, must have the highest priority on the international agenda.

39. On that basis they welcomed the decision of the United States and the Soviet Union to reopen theatre nuclear force negotiations and urged the reopening of talks on strategic arms limitation at the earliest possible date. These initiatives pursued in a genuinely constructive spirit would bring renewed hope to the rest of the international community. They would also inspire all concerned to bring a new sense of purpose to their negotiations on specific measures of disarmament and arms control.

40. Heads of Government emphasised the importance of an early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty as a crucial first step towards the cessation of nuclear weapons tests by all states in all environments.

41. Reaffirming their support for the objective of the Second Disarmament Decade proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1980, Heads of Government considered that the Second Special Session on Disarmament scheduled for 1982 would provide a significant impetus for a process of genuine disarmament particularly in the nuclear field. They expressed their determination to contribute effectively to the success of the Special Session.

### **Drug Abuse**

42. Heads of Government expressed concern at the problem of drug abuse which affects humanity. They recognised its grave danger to national security, stability and resilience. They agreed that this was not only a social problem but that there was also a clear link between drug trafficking and other types of organised crime, including illegal traffic in firearms, which could pose a serious security problem in some countries. They recognised that this menace had the potential to destabilise societies and nations. Heads of Government stressed the need to foster closer co-operation within the framework of international and regional agencies to combat this menace.

### **Law of the Sea**

43. Heads of Government stressed the importance they attached to securing at an early date a comprehensive and widely accepted Convention on the Law of the Sea.

44. They observed that such a Convention would enhance the prospects for peace and security in the world. It would define, inter alia: the rights of coastal states and other users of the sea; assist the rational exploitation and management of the living and non-living resources of the oceans; provide increased protection for the marine environment; give practical effect to the principle that the resources of the seabed beyond national jurisdiction are the common heritage of mankind, and permit all states to participate in the exploitation of those resources, either directly through national operators or indirectly through the enterprise.

45. Heads of Government noted with satisfaction that negotiations at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea had reached a very advanced stage, but recorded their disquiet at developments which, over the last two sessions, have prevented the conference from concluding a Convention in 1981. They expressed the hope that the Conference would complete its work in 1982 in accordance with the decision taken at its Tenth Session.

### **The Melbourne Declaration**

46. Recalling their Melbourne Declaration, agreed and issued during their weekend retreat, and recognising the importance of carrying forward the political commitments reflected in it into areas of practical action, Heads of Government approached their consideration of the world economic situation with a deep sense of urgency and practicality. They were determined to help the international community to usher in a new era of constructive economic relations between developed and developing countries, based on interdependence, mutual respect and a shared interest in change.

### **The World Economy**

47. Heads of Government reviewed developments in the world economy and the deterioration in it since they met in Lusaka in 1979. They recognised that they were meeting at a time of economic crisis. Recession was persisting and was accompanied by stubbornly high inflation and rising levels of unemployment and under-employment. Prospects for many developing countries were particularly grim; they were experiencing serious balance-of-payments and debt service problems, further erosion of their terms of trade, acute poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Heads of Government stressed the global character of the problems facing the contemporary world and expressed their firm belief that domestic policies to counter these problems needed to be supplemented by collective action and a global approach. They noted that the growing interdependence of the world economy rendered it imperative that urgent action be taken to deal with the economic problems of both developed and developing countries, with special attention being paid to the needs of the least-developed countries which were engaged in a desperate struggle for survival.

48. Heads of Government reaffirmed their conviction that the persistence of widespread poverty underlined the importance of promoting rapid economic growth and development, and of pursuing necessary structural and institutional changes in international economic relations, in order to create a more equitable economic order. In approaching the critical issues, they took account of the analysis and recommendations made by the reports of the Brandt Commission and the Commonwealth Group of Experts. They noted with

satisfaction the international recognition accorded to the report of the Commonwealth Group of Experts which they had commissioned at their Lusaka Meeting.

49. Heads of Government were conscious of the significance of their Meeting for the outcome of the Cancun summit. They believed that the issues to be considered had major implications for the recovery of the world economy as well as for relations between developed and developing countries. They expressed the hope that Cancun would make a bold start by putting international economic co-operation on a new and constructive course; and that it would unequivocally reaffirm the commitment to Global Negotiations, thus giving a much needed political impetus to those negotiations. They resolved to make every effort to remove obstacles to an early start to the Global Negotiations.

50. Heads of Government noted that the Global Round of Negotiations would cover wide fields and could be a time-consuming process. At the same time, they recognised the need for immediate and effective action in such critical areas as trade, energy, food, and money and finance, and called on leaders of all countries, without prejudice to the Global Round of Negotiations, to join them in commitment to such action.

51. Heads of Government noted the conclusions on North/South Issues at the Ottawa summit of industrialised countries, and expressed the hope that the attention given to those issues at Ottawa would be advanced at Cancun. They requested participating colleagues to provide to other Commonwealth governments, through the Secretary-General, their assessment of the Cancun Meeting.

52. Heads of Government noted that co-operation among developing countries was a growing and welcome element in international relations. They urged that this process should be appropriately facilitated and supported so that it might make its due contribution to the resolution of the problems affecting the global economy.

53. Heads of Government noted that lack of progress in negotiations between developed and developing countries resulted in part from obstacles in the negotiating process itself. They requested the Secretary-General to convene a high level group to study and report on the issues involved.

### **Financial Issues**

54. Heads of Government attached high priority to the resolution of current problems in the financial and monetary fields, and stressed the urgent need to restore world economic growth and curb inflation. They noted that financial markets were unsettled; interest rates had reached unprecedented levels; exchange rates were subject to severe, and often disruptive, fluctuations; and there were pervasive and persistent imbalances in international payments. In an interdependent world, the resolution of these problems required greater co-ordination and co-operation on economic policy. They called upon all governments, particularly the major economic powers, to show greater concern for the repercussions of their policies on other countries; and, in the context of promoting economic recovery, to give urgent consideration to measures to bring stability to the financial and exchange markets and reduce upward pressure on interest rates.

55. In the light of the critical economic situation facing many developing countries, Heads of Government emphasised the need to increase official development assistance, particularly to the least-developed and other disadvantaged countries. They welcomed the decision of some countries to increase levels of official development assistance and called upon all industrialised countries which have not already done so, to reach the internationally agreed targets as soon as possible.

They also called upon the developed centrally-planned countries to substantially increase their development assistance. They noted the decision at the recent UN Conference on Least-Developed Countries in Paris to make additional resources available to these countries. The prospects for flows of concessional assistance to these and other low-income countries had been adversely affected by delay and uncertainty regarding IDA VI. They expressed the firm hope that the funding of IDA VII would be placed on a sounder footing. They attached importance to programme lending, including support for structural adjustment, and agreed that there was a case for a significant increase in such lending. They noted the prevalence of tied aid, which can distort the priorities of recipient countries, and urged all donor countries to give aid as far as possible in untied forms.

56. Heads of Government recognised the substantial contribution that multi-lateral institutions have made to economic development, and emphasised the major role they should play in expanding the flow of resources to developing countries. They agreed to make special efforts to ensure that progress in strengthening the resources of these institutions would not falter at this critical time. They stressed the need for these institutions to avoid political and ideological considerations in determining their operational policies.

57. Heads of Government recognised the role of private non-concessional flows, including direct investment, in facilitating development and stressed the continuing need for adequate financial mechanisms for the recycling of surplus funds. They noted that the commercial banking system had performed well in recycling funds; however, in their view, it might not be able to do so in future at levels and on conditions that would not impose intolerable debt service burdens. They agreed that international financial institutions should play an expanding role in the recycling process. In this connection they drew attention to the proposal of the Commonwealth Group of Experts for the establishment of appropriate guarantee facilities which would enable surplus funds to be channelled to developing countries on appropriate terms, including longer maturities. The present financial difficulties of developing countries were such that they required innovative approaches. Among other measures, Heads of Government called for consideration to be given to increased use of mechanisms such as export credit insurance and the exchange of commodities on a barter basis.

### **Trade and Protectionism**

58. Heads of Government expressed their anxiety over the trend towards increased protectionism. Aware of the importance of expansion of world trade to economic recovery and growth, they agreed that governments should make further efforts to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade and to achieve international agreement on effective rules covering resort to emergency safeguards. They noted that little progress had been made in eliminating

quantitative restrictions against certain categories of manufactured exports of particular importance to developing countries. They noted also that the process of reducing barriers to trade in agricultural products had scarcely begun. The export of processed commodities continued to be constrained by trade barriers which escalate with the degree of processing. They welcomed the proposal for a Ministerial Meeting of the GATT and urged the Contracting Parties of the GATT to take a positive decision to convene the Ministerial Meeting in 1982 to consider these and other problems of trade faced by all countries.

59. In view of their strong interest in the issues involved and in order to assist the deliberations, Heads of Government requested the Secretary-General to commission a group of independent high-level Commonwealth experts to investigate the impact of protection on developing country trade and report in time to assist governments in their preparations for the proposed GATT Ministerial Meeting. They agreed that the group would examine the effects of protection on developing countries, including the impact of tariff and non-tariff barriers on industrial and agricultural products. In this respect the group should consider, inter alia, the question of emergency safeguards, and non-conventional measures which, among other things, include such matters as voluntary export restraints and orderly marketing arrangements, structural adjustment, the escalation of tariffs and trade barriers that constrain the expansion of trade in processed commodities, and the adequacy of existing arrangements for the settlement of disputes.

### **Commodities**

60. Heads of Government noted that unstable prices and declining terms of trade were having an adverse effect on commodity-exporting developing countries, especially at a time of recession. They welcomed the agreement to establish the Common Fund and noted that progress made to secure its implementation had been slow. They urged all governments which had not done so to take urgent action to sign and ratify the Agreement to enable the Fund to become operational as early as possible and to contribute to its Second Account. They took note of the limited progress made in establishing effective international commodity agreements and urged governments to intensify their efforts to establish such agreements. They asked the Secretariat to give priority to identifying ways and means to expand processing in developing countries and to measures to maintain and improve commodity export earnings, and also to study the need for the adoption of a global scheme for the stabilisation of commodity export earnings.

### **Energy**

61. Heads of Government re-affirmed their conviction that the energy situation required short, modicum and long-term measures to be undertaken within the framework of wider international economic co-operation. Such a policy must ensure adequate returns to exporters of oil and secure supplies to consumers. Oil prices should be set in such a way as to avoid sudden major increases, and at levels which would encourage production and conservation. Within this framework, immediate consideration should be given to devising special arrangements to meet the energy needs of low-income countries facing difficult balance of payments problems. They welcomed the concessional arrangements for the purchase of oil introduced by several oil exporting

countries, including Commonwealth members Nigeria and Trinidad and Tobago, for designated groups of developing countries and urged that consideration be given to their wider application.

62. Heads of Government emphasised the urgent need to devote sufficient resources for the development of conventional and new and renewable energy sources. They recognised that some progress had been made at the UN Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy held in Nairobi, and that some governments had offered to provide increased assistance for energy development. They noted in this connection, however, that there was no agreement on an appropriate multilateral financing mechanism. Mindful of the large increase in investment required for energy development in developing countries, they called for substantial additional multilateral provision of resources supported by both the industrialised and oil-exporting developing countries for the development of conventional and non-conventional energy sources. In this regard they supported the proposal for the establishment of an energy affiliate within the World Bank.

63. Heads of Government underlined the importance of meeting the technical assistance requirements of Commonwealth developing countries in energy development, particularly in respect of programmes to disseminate technology and to provide the necessary training facilities. In this context they noted the proposal under examination for a centre for research and development on new and renewable sources of energy within the United Nations system. They believed that the Commonwealth could play an expanded role in providing technical assistance for the development of conventional and non-conventional energy in Commonwealth countries. They asked the Secretary-General to examine the possibility of strengthening Commonwealth efforts in this field.

64. They noted with interest the work that was being done through the Commonwealth Regional Renewable Energy Resources Information System (CRRERIS). This system, which was established as a result of a decision of the New Delhi Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting, made available information on renewable energy technology. In this context they welcomed the Australian Government's offer to make available to all Commonwealth countries information and experience through the CRRERIS.

### **Food Problem**

65. Heads of Government were disturbed by the continuing precarious state of world food security and the persistent food shortages in many developing countries. An urgent need was a dependable system of world food security. They agreed to make greater efforts to secure the early establishment of an international grains arrangement with effective economic provisions which would safeguard the interests of both exporting and importing countries while recognising the special needs of developing countries, to reach agreed food-aid targets and to provide adequate food reserves, including emergency reserves. They also emphasised the importance of replenishing the resources of the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme to levels necessary to enable them to discharge their functions effectively.

66. Heads of Government recognised that the ultimate solution to the world food problem lay in greater food self-sufficiency in developing countries. They

stressed the importance of measures to provide essential agricultural inputs on reasonable terms. They emphasised further the special importance of appropriate domestic policies and strategies including the pricing and marketing of agricultural products.

67. Heads of Government endorsed the recommendations of the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Food Production and Rural Development held in February 1981 in Dacca. They recognised that the Commonwealth should mobilise its resources and experience to assist its developing members, and act as a catalyst for effective use of wider international assistance. They agreed that there was need for an enlarged Commonwealth role in agricultural project identification, preparation and management, the management of fisheries resources, the preparation of food strategies, training, improvements in food storage, the reduction of post-harvest losses, and ensuring the increased participation of women in food production. They requested the Secretary-General to give priority to work in these areas through technical assistance activities in response to requests from member governments, and welcomed offers of additional financial and institutional assistance from Commonwealth Governments.

68. Heads of Government welcomed the decision of the Australian Government to establish the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research and the decisions of the Canadian Government to establish an International Centre for Ocean Development and a training programme for agricultural extension workers which would reflect the important role of women in agricultural production. They recognised that these initiatives would contribute to the effectiveness of an enlarged Commonwealth food production programme.

### **Regionalism**

69. Heads of Government recognised the dynamic character of regionalism of which the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) was the most recent manifestation. They noted with satisfaction the support provided by Commonwealth countries and the Secretariat for regional efforts and agreed that they should continue to assist regional and inter-regional co-operation.

70. Heads of Government noted in particular the useful contribution made to Commonwealth co-operation by the Meetings in Sydney in 1978 and in New Delhi in 1980 of Commonwealth Heads of Government in the Asia/Pacific region. They noted that the Meetings had significantly contributed to co-operation and had become established as useful and regular forums for exchanges between Commonwealth countries of the region. They further noted the important areas in which practical co-operation between members had commenced—namely trade, energy, industry, and combating terrorism and the traffic in illicit drugs.

### **Island Developing and Other Specially Disadvantaged Countries**

71. Heads of Government discussed the special problems faced by island developing and other specially disadvantaged member countries. They noted with concern the particularly difficult economic and trading situation which currently faced small, poor states because of their limited human and natural

resource endowment, small size and specific transport and energy problems. It was agreed that these countries needed special measures of support.

72. The importance of measures to assist island states in developing their resources within their Exclusive Economic Zones was recognised as being of crucial importance to their development efforts.

73. Heads of Government noted that the Special Action Programme approved in Lusaka had been of some benefit to these countries, but that much more needed to be done within the Commonwealth and on a bilateral basis to help alleviate the problems of these states. Heads of Government noted the offer by the Government of Australia to fund appropriate facilities in New York to enable Pacific island states not presently represented to maintain representation at the United Nations. They also noted the initiative within the Pacific to establish a regional advisory service. The governments concerned agreed to consult to formulate more detailed proposals.

74. Heads of Government requested the Secretariat in consultation with member countries to strengthen further Commonwealth assistance to small island and other disadvantaged member countries.

### **Women and Development**

75. Heads of Government noted with satisfaction the establishment of a unit on Women and Development in accordance with the decision reached at their Lusaka meeting. The unit was already doing valuable work, especially in the smaller states and in helping to upgrade the status and broaden the experience of those working in women's bureaux. Recalling that this unit was established to advance the interests of women in the Commonwealth through exchanges of experience, training programmes and other activities, they expressed the hope that its services should be used increasingly by government agencies as well as by non-governmental organisations which are concerned with matters of interest to women. It was recognised that if women are to benefit from Secretariat activities, governments will need both to ensure their inclusion as participants in conferences and workshops and actively to search out suitable candidates for scholarships and training programmes.

### **International Year of Shelter for the Homeless**

76. Heads of Government noted with satisfaction the proposal made by the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements at the meeting held in Manila in April 1981 for an International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, and the recommendation made by the Economic and Social Council at its meeting in July 1981 to declare 1987 as the International Year. Heads of Government expressed their support for this recommendation.

### **International Year of Disabled Persons**

77. Heads of Government acknowledged that their Meeting was taking place in the International Year of Disabled Persons, and noted the related activities being conducted by the Commonwealth Secretariat and by member governments.

## **The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation**

78. Heads of Government, reaffirming that the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation should be assured of the resources required to exploit the many comparative advantages of Commonwealth functional co-operation, welcomed the arrangements for the Fund's restoration, replenishment and governance made by its Board of Representatives. In particular, they agreed that the level of activities carried out by the CFTC should be restored by 1983/84 to the level attained in 1978/79 as a basis for future growth, and expressed their satisfaction that indications from major and minor contributors suggested that the necessary resources would be made available over this three-year period.

79. In order to foster wider awareness of the Commonwealth among its peoples and as a contribution towards the financial stability of the CFTC, Heads of Government agreed in principle to the proposal for a special Commonwealth stamp issue every five years. Stressing the necessity of every Commonwealth country participating, they authorised the Secretary-General to prepare, for consideration by governments, detailed plans for the first issue which would commemorate Commonwealth Day in 1983.

## **Commonwealth Youth Programme**

80. Heads of Government noted with pleasure that the Commonwealth Youth Programme had continued to make a valuable contribution to the development of national youth policies and programmes and expressed satisfaction with the results of the restructuring of the programme requested by them at Lusaka in 1979. They stressed the importance of ensuring that the programme's resources should not be allowed to fall below their present level if the current planned level of activities is to be sustained. To this end, Heads of Government agreed to endeavour to maintain the value of their contributions in real terms.

## **Commonwealth Foundation**

81. Heads of Government expressed satisfaction with the valuable work of the Commonwealth Foundation and approved the recommendation of its Board of Trustees that the Foundation be accorded the status of an international organisation by the host government. Noting with appreciation that the budgetary target approved in Lusaka in 1979 had almost been reached, they agreed that governments should endeavour to maintain this level of funding for the present.

82. Heads of Government expressed their warm appreciation to the retiring Chairman, Sir Adetokunbo Ademola of Nigeria, for his services to the Foundation over the last four years. They appointed Dr Muhammad Adbur Rashid of Bangladesh as the new Chairman.

## **Human Rights**

83. Heads of Government considered the Report of the Commonwealth Working Party on Human Rights and reaffirmed the importance which all Commonwealth governments attached to the observance of human rights. They urged those governments which had not yet done so to accede to relevant global and regional instruments on human rights. They endorsed in principle

the recommendations of the Working Party concerning the establishment of a special unit in the Secretariat for the promotion of human rights within the Commonwealth subject to agreement being reached on the appropriate method of financing the unit. They requested the Secretary-General to consult further with member governments on an agreed definition of human rights within the Commonwealth context as well as of the unit's functions. They took note of the Working Party's proposals for an Advisory Committee for the protection and maintenance of human rights and asked that these should be further considered by the next meeting of Commonwealth Law Ministers.

### **Student Mobility**

84. Heads of Government reaffirmed that student mobility and educational interchange within the Commonwealth were important to the national development efforts of Commonwealth countries and to maintaining Commonwealth links. While noting the factors contributing to the situation, they recognised that there was widespread and serious concern that the recent very substantial increases in overseas student fees in some countries were creating impediments to the movements of students and teachers between member countries. They expressed their appreciation of the report of the Consultative Group on Student Mobility within the Commonwealth and urged that early and sympathetic consideration be given to the implementation of its recommendations.

### **Communication and the Media**

85. Heads of Government welcomed the Report of the Commonwealth Committee on Communication and the Media. They expressed satisfaction with the operation of the Commonwealth Media Exchange Fund and noted the Secretariat's proposals to broaden the scope of its application. They noted with appreciation the contributions by the Governments of Australia and Britain to the Fund and welcomed offers of additional support from other governments.

### **Culture**

86. Heads of Government expressed appreciation of the work of the Commonwealth Institute and commended it to all member countries.

### **Commonwealth Employment/Labour Ministers Meeting**

87. Heads of Government noted a proposal by the Commonwealth Trade Union Council for a meeting of Commonwealth Employment/Labour Relations Ministers at the time of the International Labour Conference, and requested the Secretary-General to make arrangements for such a meeting in 1982.

### **Report of the Secretary-General**

88. Heads of Government commended the Eighth Report of the Secretary-General and noted with appreciation the progress made in various areas of Commonwealth activity since their last meeting.

## **Next Meeting**

89. Heads of Government, recognising the growing contribution which the Commonwealth is capable of making to the solution of world problems, reaffirmed the importance which they attach to their biennial meetings and the opportunity which such meetings provide for consultations aimed at forging a consensus on some of the major issues facing the world.

90. Heads of Government accepted with pleasure the invitation of the Government of India to hold their next meeting in India.

*7 October 1981*

## **THE MELBOURNE DECLARATION**

We, the Heads of Government here assembled, drawn from five continents representing a quarter of the world's entire population:

1. Affirm our strong and unanimous conviction that all men and women have the right to live in ways that sustain and nourish human dignity;
2. Believe that this right imposes obligations on all states, large and small, not only in respect to their own people but in their dealings with all other nations;
3. Assert that the gross inequality of wealth and opportunity currently existing in the world, and the unbroken circle of poverty in which the lives of millions in developing countries are confined, are fundamental sources of tension and instability in the world;
4. As a consequence, assert our unanimous conviction that there must be determined and dedicated action at national and international levels to reduce that inequality and to break that circle;
5. Believe that for all these reasons it is imperative to revitalise the dialogue between developed and developing countries;
6. Declare that this will require a political commitment, clear vision and intellectual realism which have thus far escaped mankind and to all of which the Commonwealth can greatly contribute;
7. Believe that the dialogue must be conducted with a genuine willingness to accept real and significant changes commensurate with the urgency of the problems we now face;
8. Firmly believe that the choice is not between change and no change but between timely, adequate, managed change and disruptive, involuntary change imposed by breakdown and conflict;
9. Maintain that success will only be achieved as states recognise and give due weight to the essential inter-dependence of peoples and of states;

10. Declare that, while the most urgent humanitarian considerations demand action, self-interest itself warrants a constructive and positive approach to these great human problems by all governments;

11. Recognise that in the process of negotiations, nations must cast aside inhibitions and habits which have thwarted progress in the past and find new ways of talking constructively to one another so as to reach agreement on effective joint action;

12. Note that, as well as technical economic considerations, it is imperative that states keep in the forefront of their attention the larger moral, political and strategic dimensions of what is at stake;

13. Maintain that while the problems are formidable, they are not of such a weight that they will defeat our purpose, given political will and an understanding of the needs of different countries and groups;

14. Assert that what is at stake—in terms of how hundreds of millions will live or die; of the prospects for co-operation or conflict; and of the prospects for economic advance or stagnation—is of such vital importance in human terms that it would be an indictment of this generation if that political will and the readiness to find a creative compromise were not found;

15. Firmly believe that the issues are so important that they require the personal commitment and involvement of political leaders who, representing the will of their people, have the greatest power to advance the common cause of mankind;

16. Attaching the highest importance to the principles and objectives of this document, recognising the mutual interests and interdependence of all nations, declare our common resolve: to end the present impasse: to advance the dialogue between developed and developing countries: to infuse an increased sense of urgency and direction into the resolution of these common problems of mankind: and solemnly call on all leaders of all countries to join us in a commitment to taking prompt, practical and effective action to that end.

*Canberra*  
*3 October 1981*

## Heads of Delegation

<b>Australia</b>	The Rt Hon Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister
<b>The Bahamas</b>	HE R F Anthony Roberts, High Commissioner to the United Kingdom
<b>Bangladesh</b>	The Hon Shah Azizur Rahman, Prime Minister
<b>Barbados</b>	The Rt Hon J M G M Adams, Prime Minister
<b>Belize</b>	The Hon George C Price, Prime Minister
<b>Botswana</b>	HE Dr Quett K J Masire, President
<b>Britain</b>	The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister
<b>Canada</b>	The Hon Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister
<b>Cyprus</b>	HE Mr Spyros Kyprianou, President
<b>Fiji</b>	The Rt Hon Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Prime Minister
<b>The Gambia</b>	The Hon Assan Musa Camara, Vice President
<b>Ghana</b>	Dr The Hon Isaac K Chinebuah, Minister of Foreign Affairs
<b>Grenada</b>	The Hon Cde Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister
<b>Guyana</b>	HE Cde L F S Burnham, President
<b>India</b>	Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister
<b>Jamaica</b>	The Rt Hon Edward Seaga, Prime Minister
<b>Kenya</b>	HE Daniel T arap Moi, President
<b>Kiribati</b>	HE Ieremia T Tabai, President
<b>Lesotho</b>	The Hon M V Molapo, Minister of Foreign Affairs
<b>Malawi</b>	Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda, President
<b>Malaysia</b>	Tan Sri Muhamad Ghazali Shafie, Minister of Foreign Affairs
<b>Malta</b>	Dr The Hon Joseph Brincat, Minister of Justice
<b>Mauritius</b>	Dr The Rt Hon Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Prime Minister
<b>New Zealand</b>	The Rt Hon Robert D Muldoon, Prime Minister
<b>Nigeria</b>	Alhaji Shehu Shagari, President
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	The Rt Hon Sir Julius Chan, Prime Minister
<b>St Lucia</b>	The Hon Peter Josie, Minister for Foreign Affairs
<b>Seychelles</b>	The Hon Jacques Hodoul, Minister of Foreign Affairs
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	Dr The Hon A O Conteh, Minister of Foreign Affairs
<b>Singapore</b>	The Hon Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	The Hon Ezekiel Alebua, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	The Hon Ranasinghe Premadasa, Prime Minister
<b>Swaziland</b>	HRH Prince Mabandla Dlamini, Prime Minister
<b>Tanzania</b>	HE Mwalimu Julius K Nyerere, President
<b>Tonga</b>	HRH Prince Fatefehi Tu'ipelehake, Prime Minister
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	Mr Isidore C Rampersad, Permanent Secretary to the Prime Minister and Head of the Civil Service
<b>Uganda</b>	The Hon Otema Alimadi, Prime Minister
<b>Vanuatu</b>	The Hon Father W H Lini, Prime Minister
<b>Western Samoa</b>	The Hon Taisi Tupuola Efi, Prime Minister
<b>Zambia</b>	HE Dr Kenneth David Kaunda, President
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	The Hon Robert G Mugabe, Prime Minister
<b>Commonwealth Secretariat</b>	HE Shridath S Ramphal, Secretary-General