

Final Communiqué

8TH COMMONWEALTH YOUTH MINISTERS MEETING (8CYMM)

PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, APRIL 16-19, 2013

Young People at the Centre of Sustainable Development

1. The 8th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (8CYMM) was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea from 16-19 April 2013 under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Loujaya Toni, Minister for Youth, Religion and Community Development in Papua New Guinea.
2. Delegations from 30 countries attended 8CYMM, of which 18 were led by Ministers. The meeting included three parallel forums for (a) Young Leaders, (b) Senior Officials and (c) Stakeholders in Youth Development, which together contributed specialised knowledge and diverse perspectives for Ministerial deliberations on advancing the Commonwealth youth development agenda. The meeting also featured “innovation showcases”, which demonstrated applications and approaches in youth development with proven or potential positive impacts for young people.
3. The Honourable Peter O’Neill, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea opened the Meeting. He welcomed guests to Papua New Guinea and thanked the Secretariat and Ministers for deciding to host the meeting in Port Moresby. He described the Commonwealth as an enormous force for good in a very demanding and changing world -- a powerful force for democracy and freedom, and an organization, which has championed the role of youth. He said that the CYMM theme is highly relevant for Papua New Guinea, where half the population is aged 20 or younger, presenting enormous opportunities and challenges. He outlined some new development strategies that his Government has implemented for young people observing that the country’s unprecedented political stability is also benefiting youth, accounting for improved delivery of services, including education and health and also economic development and employment growth. In closing, the Prime Minister said governments and leaders of governments need to be more pro-active in looking at ways of empowering young people to assist them to achieve the utmost in education, their ability, and their capacity to work hard.
4. The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister, government and people of Papua New Guinea for hosting 8CYMM. He drew reference to the 40th anniversary of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the pioneering work carried forward since 1973 through the regional centres for Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The Secretary-General looked ahead to the inauguration by ministers of the Commonwealth Youth Council, an autonomous youth-led body, for the voice of young people which will support sustained and collective participation in Commonwealth affairs. He observed that the recently-signed Commonwealth Charter reflects the importance of young people in the Commonwealth, making clear the central place accorded by the Commonwealth to the contribution that young people can and must make as nation builders.
5. The Chair of the pan-Commonwealth Youth Caucus, addressed the opening ceremony, calling on Youth Ministers, Senior Officials and Stakeholders to engage authentically with Young Leaders at the Meeting, and in their everyday pursuit of inclusion of the young people

of their countries in democracy and development. She highlighted that young people's creativity, passion and future focus bring different and valuable perspectives to policy making, and that young people's needs should be considered as unique and important.

6. Across all 8CYMM forums, delegates highlighted and confirmed the importance of putting young people at the centre of development, and the need to commit significant resources to ensure youth development and empowerment for the future of member state and the Commonwealth.
7. Ministers in their deliberations, reconfirmed the 2009 CHOGM Declaration on 'Investing in Youth', and noted that the challenges and successes experienced to date in aiming to meet the benchmarks set reemphasized the need for clear and publicly acknowledged priority focus on youth development and empowerment by Commonwealth countries, including through appropriate investments; and by requiring regular monitoring and reporting on Governments' performance in youth development.
8. Ministers welcomed and endorsed inputs to the Meeting from multiple stakeholders, who emphasised young people's views on the value and importance of placing young people at the centre of development policy and planning.

Young People at the Centre of Development

9. Ministers received presentations on the 8CYMM theme - *'Young People at the Centre of Sustainable Development'*, including the Keynote paper delivered by the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. He reiterated the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to youth development, as well as the need for enabling frameworks and cross-sectoral youth policies, creating mechanisms for genuine participation in policy and decision-making, and a clear recognition on the part of Governments of the value and role of youth organizations to national youth-initiated development.
10. The Meeting noted successful Commonwealth and other global initiatives shaped and led by young people that supported young people's own acceptance of their place "at the centre of concerns for sustainable development". Finally, the example of the Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs was shared as a youth-led and youth-driven collective network that connects the business sector, governments and young people on actions to benefit young entrepreneurs. It was noted that CAAYE has in place a virtual platform to support new and potential members and is demonstration of youth-led entrepreneurship and employment generation for sustainable economic development.
11. The Meeting commended the reports and noted the need to value and invest in the potential of Commonwealth young people, and to ensure that each country has in place policies and enabling environments that promote youth engagement and empowerment at social, economic and political levels, in line with the adopted recommendations.

Youth Participation and Voice

12. Ministers noted that the CYC, endorsed by Heads of Government at CHOGM 2011, is being presented as a new phase of action by Commonwealth youth to replace the PCYC, build upon the successes and address the limitations of the former PCYC, and also strengthen youth governance and representative networks in Commonwealth countries by leveraging

young people's innovation, ideals and social capital to enhance genuine youth engagement in the social, economic and political development of Commonwealth countries.

13. The Meeting examined the current context of decision-making in and beyond the Commonwealth, and the extent to which there is meaningful youth participation, and informed access to decision making processes. Ministers noted the novel, non-traditional and youth-designed and youth-led approaches to youth engagement and participation that have been taking place. They also marked the significance that young people are placing on opportunities to have their say, and how such networks and platforms, in light of technology and the rise of social media, have resulted in a more empowered and connected youth cohort. As such, young people are demonstrably impacting policy and driving public opinion and thinking at national and global levels.
14. Ministers reiterated the need for their Ministries to take a lead role at national level to promote and support youth voice and youth led activity, and to ensure active support of, and engagement with, representative youth networks including national youth councils.

Young People in the post 2015 Development Agenda

15. Delegates examined submissions on the implications for impacting measurable development for a heterogeneous youth population in the post 2015 development agenda. Noting that the MDGs did not have specific goal focused on young people. The Meeting noted that they had an excellent opportunity to raise a collective Commonwealth voice to advocate for a specific youth focused goal to be included in the new post 2015 development agenda and developed a recommendation to the Un High-Level Panel.

.Values-Based Leadership

16. The Meeting discussed the concept of values-based leadership and its relationship to sustainable development, and how this can be promoted and role modelled in the Commonwealth as standard leadership practice and an ethics-based model for youth- and adult-led organisations, including through active involvement of young people in governance, government and adults leading by example, using youth-friendly approaches of sports, music, performing arts and technology to spread messages; and involving youth in the active education and promotion of human rights. The growing youth concerns about values-based leadership was summarised in the context of reported corruption, poor governance, social and political upheaval, human rights violations, among other concerns in some Commonwealth countries.
17. The Meeting acknowledged that the ownership for the issue of corruption and values-based leadership needs to be addressed collectively at all levels; family, community and society in general, noting further that culture, religion and sport could greatly assist in imbibing the ethical values from an early age.

Youth Employment and Enterprise

18. The Meeting benefitted from key thinking and discussions on youth employment, which is a major concern in Commonwealth. Discussions focused on the need for policies that promote decent work for youth, for public works programmes that increase labour demand, and for greater efforts, including partnerships with the private sector to ease the constraints to youth entrepreneurship. At the same time, it was acknowledged that youth employability issues

must be addressed in tandem to ensure that youth receive relevant skills for work; information about the benefits of staying in school; that they access second chance programmes, and for skills training to be delivered in innovative and flexible ways, including using low-tech ICTs.

19. The Meeting also noted the need for proper diagnostics of the employment needs of a heterogeneous youth population in order to address youth economic participation more meaningfully. In particular, the meeting noted the immense importance of linking national youth employment policies to national macroeconomic development plans and the need to involve young people in national and local-level labour policies and programmes.

Role of CYP in Commonwealth youth empowerment

20. Ministers noted the 2008-2012 report presented to the Meeting, and also noted that the CYP is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2013. Ministers congratulated the CYP on its work and achievements and noted the strategic direction and priorities proposed for the upcoming period of 2013-2016. Ministers particularly discussed the importance of continued focus in the areas of:
 - Fundamental youth development priorities (National Youth Policies, National Youth Councils, youth mainstreaming strategies)
 - Promoting youth employment and youth enterprise;
 - Creating a professional Youth Development Work sector;
 - Support for the emergence of youth-led networks;
 - Development of key tools such as the Youth Development Index, the PAYE, the *Guiding Framework on Youth Investment*, and the *Guidelines for Advancing Development through Sport* and
21. The Meeting received a presentation on the creation of a Commonwealth Youth Development Index (YDI) for Commonwealth countries. The YDI is a composite index, aggregating global youth-specific data and examines Commonwealth youth development under five domains: health, education, employment, civic participation and political participation.
22. Ministers commended the CYP and the technical expert group on the work completed, and also stated the need to build on the YDI for the development of national youth indices, which several countries had already achieved and agreed. It was noted that the YDI would be available for review by member states via a secure website until June 15, 2013.
23. Delegates also emphasized the importance of ensuring Commonwealth tools and guides are regularly reviewed in light of emerging priorities, and aligned / combined with other global youth development frameworks / mechanisms. To ensure a fuller participation by member governments in the review of the PAYE 2007-2015, the Meeting encouraged all members that had not already done so, to provide national inputs to the mid-term PAYE evaluation that is being extended up to June 2015.
24. Ministers reaffirmed the continued importance of the work of the YAD/CYP to overall Commonwealth development and support of individual Youth Ministries, acknowledged that it has been achieved with a limited budget and other challenges, and reiterated the need for all Commonwealth countries to support the CYP to the fullest possible extent.

Partnerships and Collaboration

25. Ministers commended the work of the parallel forums in supporting decision making and shaping recommendations of 8 CYMM: **Youth Leaders Forum, Senior Officials in Youth Development; and Youth Stakeholders Forum.** Acknowledging the potential and power of collective impact, they endorsed the need for partnership at all levels for evidence-based and asset-based youth development that will respond to the life stages and discrete needs of varying youth cohorts.
26. Ministers noted the development of the Pacific Youth Development Framework (PDF) as an example where collaboration amongst agencies has resulted in a more effective structure for coordinating youth development assistance across the region.
27. Ministers reaffirmed the importance of mainstreaming youth development not only in the Commonwealth Secretariat and in Governments, but in an attempt to optimize the use of resources, the designing and implementation of coordinated programmes and the linking of young people to development sources and resources.

Resolutions

28. Ministers resolved:
 - a. Young People at the Centre of Sustainable Development
 - i. To take steps to integrate young people into the design and implementation of National Youth Policies and action plans that allow young people to make measurable contributions to and for benefit across all sectors of national development;
 - ii. To consider reserving special seats for youth in parliament and / or other governance structures, according to applicable national conditions.
 - iii. To recommend to CHOGM that:
 - a. National Development Plans and policies of Governments should include a role for, and investment in youth; and that all policy and programming areas prioritise their unique contributions and needs;
 - b. More consideration be given to increasing Governments' investments in young people's needs including increased budgetary allocations to Youth Ministries and Departments and to NYCs
 - c. Governments prioritize the gathering of relevant youth-specific data to inform investment in youth development, including through requiring youth demographic data in the national census
 - iv. That Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Youth should gather on a regional basis in the intervening period between CYMMs. These Regional Youth Ministers Meetings (RYMMs), which should include representation of CYC members from the region, should be self-financed.
 - v. That Commonwealth Senior Officials for Youth should convene regionally on a self-financing basis at least once a year to report and monitor progress on youth development, in particular with regard to approved Commonwealth tools and models for youth development; and to agree on good practice and standards to enhance overall Commonwealth youth development.
 - vi. To recommend to CHOGM that Governments consider placing the youth development agenda in the highest office for cross-governmental and inter-

sectoral coordination purposes, and to ensure greater success for national youth mainstreaming efforts.

- vii. That the Commonwealth Secretariat should develop youth mainstreaming principles and guidelines to support member states implement national youth mainstreaming.
- viii. That all Governments should develop a youth mainstreaming strategy and prioritise its implementation by 2015.
- ix. To commend the *Pacific Youth Development Framework*, as a strong example of cross-border, cross-sectoral, cross-generational collective action for youth development, and to consider its applicability to other Commonwealth regions.
- x. To commend and encourage youth ministries to recognise and strengthen the Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network, and other existing Commonwealth youth networks, as good examples of young people's participation in sustainable development.

b. Youth Participation and Voice

- i. To commend and endorse the Pan- Commonwealth Youth Caucus Report and its recommendations on the strategic direction and priorities for youth development from the perspective of Commonwealth young people.
- ii. To commend and endorse the establishment of an autonomous Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC), that is grounded in Commonwealth principles and values to replace the Pan-Commonwealth Youth Caucus.
- iii. To commend and endorse the appointment of a Working Committee to review and finalize the CYC Constitution, which Committee should be guided in its work by issues flagged by Ministers;
- iv. That the final revised CYC Constitution be made available for review by youth ministers by June 2013, to ensure the Constitution is finalized for endorsement by CHOGM within six months.
- v. To recommend the creation of a special Fund, that will serve as a mechanism for the CYC to mobilise and raise funds from a variety of sources to meet its needs.

c. Young People in the post 2015 Development Agenda

- i. That the Secretariat take steps to ensure that Commonwealth youth development is adequately represented in the post 2015 global development agenda, and that CYP should explore alignment between Commonwealth and other youth development frameworks.
- ii. To appoint an expert and representative team to work with the Commonwealth Secretariat to determine the direction and strategy for the implementation of the PAYE beyond the 2007-2015 period and to encourage fuller participation by member governments in the review of the PAYE 2007-2015, by providing national inputs to the mid-term PAYE evaluation by June 2013.
- iii. That the Commonwealth should recommend to the UN High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that the framework include a specific goal on youth empowerment and participation and there should be youth related indicators for all goals; and the creation of a specialised UN Agency for youth.

d. Values-based leadership

- i. That the Commonwealth continue its work towards the strengthening of institutions, which advance principles of good governance, human rights and efforts to root out corruption.

- ii. To commit to promoting and exhibiting values-based leadership as role models for young people, and for the future of their societies.
- iii. To recommend to CHOGM that components of values-based leadership, human rights, entrepreneurship and anti-corruption be embedded into countries' educational / action-learning curricula from an early age.

e. Youth Employment and Enterprise

- i. To endorse the communiqué from the inaugural summit of the *Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (CAAYE)*, and recommend to CHOGM that Governments invest in enhancing national ecosystems for youth enterprise;
- ii. To commend that CAAYE as a good practice model on youth entrepreneurship, should be considered in other regions of the Commonwealth; and in particular that a virtual platform model should be created to take the process forward;
- iii. To recommend to CHOGM that Governments commit to developing / strengthening, by 2015, economic policies that will promote youth employment, employability and youth enterprise development, mindful of equality concerns around gender and socially disadvantaged groups, and in cooperation with finance / trade / commerce/ labour ministries, central banks and multi-sector institutions.

f. Role of CYP in Commonwealth youth empowerment

- i. To endorse the CYP 2008-2012 report and strategic direction for the 2013-2016 period;
- ii. To commend and endorse the CYP tools and guidelines developed for the use of member states in general; and to agree in principle to the YDI as a universal set of indicators to be used by countries in assessing youth development progress, and which will be available for the further consideration of member states on a secure site.
- iii. That the Commonwealth support capacity development, where requested by member countries to develop and implement the YDI and manage monitoring and evaluation responsibilities;
- iv. To recommend the continued adoption of new approaches for youth engagement and empowerment using a rights based and asset based approach.
- v. To recommend to CHOGM that:
 - a) Member governments be encouraged to increase contributions to the CYP Fund, to reflect the continued and growing importance of youth development, and the work of the YAD/CYP, to national and overall Commonwealth development.
 - b) All efforts be made to ensure countries committed to the Commonwealth remain mutually committed to the CYP.
- vi. To recommend to CHOGM that governments support and strengthen efforts for the professionalization of youth work.

Other youth-related matters in the Commonwealth

29. Ministers welcomed the information presented in relation to the 9th Commonwealth Youth Forum, Sri Lanka, November 2013 and by the Government of Samoa in relation to the Commonwealth Youth Games in Samoa 2015; and in Saint Lucia, 2017.

30. Ministers acknowledged the importance of these upcoming activities to young people and their development, and agreed to take steps to maximize youth participation from their respective countries.

Next Meeting

31. Ministers expressed appreciation to the Government of Papua New Guinea for its hospitality and for hosting 8CYMM in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat. They welcomed the offer of the Government of Uganda to host 9CYMM in 2016.

***Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
April 19, 2013***