



The Commonwealth

Commonwealth Secretary-General Arrives Zambia

Secretary-General Patricia Scotland arrived in Lusaka, Zambia on 6 August 2017 for a four-day official visit to the country. The Secretary-General was welcomed upon arrival at the Kenneth Kaunda International airport by the Minister at the Office of the Vice-President Hon. Sylvie Chalikosa, the Permanent Secretary for Higher education, Mr Owen Mugemzulu and Zambia's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom HE Muyebe Chikonde.

On arrival, the Secretary-General said, "I am delighted to be here in Zambia and look forward to successful consultations with stakeholders to discuss priorities for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, build on the longstanding engagement with Zambia, exchange on climate change, trade and opportunities for supporting youth development. Of the 2.4 billion people in the Commonwealth, 60 percent of them are under the age of 30, so it's right that we concentrate on how to put the wealth back into Commonwealth and the common back into wealth so that we can make sure that our young people have a vibrant and good future.

"Zambia has always been an exemplar of peace and tranquillity in Africa and this visit also reaffirms the Commonwealth's commitment to supporting peace and political cohesion, especially in the context of this year's Commonwealth theme, ***A Peacebuilding Commonwealth.***"

Over the years, support from the Commonwealth Secretariat has spanned the political, economic and judicial sectors. During last year's general elections, the Secretary-General deployed a peace envoy and a Commonwealth Observer Group to the country.

Since her arrival, the Secretary-General has so far held meetings with President Edgar Lungu, the main opposition leaders Mr Hakainde Hichilema and Catholic bishops. The Secretary-General has reaffirmed the Commonwealth's commitment to continue supporting peaceful political dialogue and promoting cohesion in the country. The Secretary-General reiterated the importance of honest, peaceful and constructive engagement by all stakeholders, to help build an atmosphere of trust and maintain Zambia's global image as a cradle of peace and a peacebuilder in Africa and beyond.