

## Commonwealth Heads of Government

### Leaders' Statement

1 We met in Malta from 27 to 29 November 2015 for our Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. In a year of exceptional global challenges and opportunities, our summit convened under the theme, 'The Commonwealth: Adding Global Value', with the aim of addressing issues of common concern and bringing tangible benefits to our citizens.

2 We discussed peace and security, especially the fight against radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism, which are worldwide threats. We condemn terrorism and violence by extremist groups, which often target vulnerable groups and individuals. These threats should not be associated with any particular religion, race, nationality or ethnicity.

3 We agreed that such threats must be countered through strong national, regional and international action and co-operation. We renewed our commitment to implement national strategies to counter threats and to support each other. We agreed that it is imperative to counter the use of the internet by extremist groups to radicalise and recruit fighters. We call upon all member governments to implement fully their obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014).

4 We recognise the particular role that can be played by the Commonwealth, including through implementing the recommendations of the Commonwealth report, *Civil Paths to Peace*, and we are committed to harnessing the potential of the full family of Commonwealth governments and organisations in a coordinated way.

5 We welcome the newly established Commonwealth Countering Violent Extremism Unit and mandated it to advance the Commonwealth's role in international efforts to counter extremism, especially through civil society networks and education.

6 2015 has been a year of global achievements especially with regard to sustainable development for all. Our discussion was inspired by the clear links between the values of the Sustainable Development Goals and the values of the *Commonwealth Charter*, both of which affirm that human rights, the rule of law, accountable institutions at all levels, and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies are essential for sustainable development.

7 We welcomed the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* on financing for development and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. These show the commitment of all world leaders to address the challenge of financing and the need to create an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of

global partnership and solidarity. We recognised the economic potential that can be unlocked by tackling discrimination and exclusion. We reaffirmed our commitment to support the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and agreed to support a strong role for the Commonwealth in championing its implementation.

8 We highlighted the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. We also recognised that the development of a sustainably managed ‘blue economy’ offers significant opportunities for economic growth and general development for many Commonwealth member states.

9 Migration, if properly harnessed and managed, can deliver economic and social benefits which improve the resilience and prosperity of Commonwealth member states. We underlined the importance of safe, orderly and regular migration and of ensuring full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of all migrants as well as refugees and displaced persons. We agreed to enhance national and international efforts to address the causes of irregular migration. We are deeply concerned by the increase in flows of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants which entails suffering, abuse and exploitation, particularly for children and women, and unacceptable loss of life. We also acknowledge that the worsening impacts of climate change will increase climate-induced migration, and note the need to formulate appropriate response mechanisms to address it. We are committed to responding decisively, guided by the principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. We noted the outcomes of the recent Valletta Summit on Migration, and call on all concerned to work towards enduring solutions.

10 With our CHOGM taking place on the eve of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, climate change featured high on our agenda. We met in a Special Executive Session to discuss climate action, recognising the leadership exercised historically by the Commonwealth on this urgent and pressing issue, and we adopted the *Commonwealth Leaders’ Statement on Climate Action*.

11 We are conscious that 31 of our members are small states, which have their own particular strengths and opportunities as well as vulnerabilities in addressing today’s global challenges, especially climate change. We welcome and encourage the continuing support of the Commonwealth, including advocacy and technical assistance, to support small states in building their resilience, advancing growth and prosperity, and creating a better future for their citizens.

12 In taking note of the reports of the four pre-CHOGM Forums, we thank all concerned for their contribution to our summit, and particularly welcomed the first Women’s Forum. We recognise the valuable role that civil society organisations can play in advancing Commonwealth values and principles.

13 Young people, who comprise 60% of the Commonwealth’s population, have an important role in building stable, secure and prosperous societies. We

undertook to promote youth participation in national development and peace building.

14 Corruption is a significant challenge facing the world today. We agreed to work together to strengthen international, regional and national **responses to corruption** including through enhanced transparency and collaboration among law enforcement bodies. The Commonwealth is doing important work to address corruption and this should be strengthened in future.

15 We reaffirmed our shared and enduring commitment to the values and principles of the *Commonwealth Charter*. We are dedicated to achieving continued **renewal of the Commonwealth** as an association of governments and peoples, and a rich diversity of organisations that support them. With this in mind, we agreed to launch the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, the Commonwealth Trade Finance Facility, and the Commonwealth Small States Centre of Excellence. We are convinced that these will add value that enhances the Commonwealth's relevance and practical impact.

16 During our summit, a number of us dedicated our attention to the fight against **poliomyelitis**. Since 1988, polio cases have decreased by over 99%. This is a remarkable achievement, but more needs to be done to make polio the second disease in human history to be eradicated. To this end, we agreed that accelerated action and renewed financial support are needed to eradicate polio.

17 We are deeply grateful for the warm and generous hospitality extended by the President, Prime Minister and Government, and people of Malta.

18 We adopt herewith the annexed Communiqué, which records the full breadth of matters addressed during our Meeting.

Malta  
29 November 2015

**ANNEX: Commonwealth Communiqué**