



Commonwealth  
Finance Ministers Meeting

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Provisional Agenda Item 3

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**ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION  
THE FUTURE OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEBT SUSTAINABILITY FORUM**

Paper for the Commonwealth Secretariat\*

Commonwealth Secretariat  
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\* Paper prepared by Rappidd Consultancy. The views expressed do not necessarily represent the position of the Commonwealth Secretariat or member Governments of the Commonwealth.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### **The Future of the Commonwealth Debt Sustainability Forum**

The attached paper sets out the options for Ministers in considering the future of the Forum. There are three questions which the Ministerial discussion should answer:

#### **I. The Subject Matter of the Forum**

2. The Report recommends that the Forum be based on two pillars: ensuring debt sustainability and achieving the MDGs.

**Do Ministers agree that these two elements should be the focus of the Forum?**

#### **II. Eligibility for Membership of the Forum**

3. The membership of the Forum should reflect decisions about the subject matter of the Forum. The report discusses a range of possibilities, recognising that there is a trade off between the size of the group and its cohesiveness and effectiveness as a Forum. The putative Membership is summarised in the table overleaf.

4. There are three broad options:

- (i) *Including Low Income IDA-only countries*: This raises the number to 15 if all IDA only countries are included.
- (ii) *Including all IDA only countries*: This would include those which are IDA-only in practice and the countries with Small Economy exception status in IDA. The number eligible would be 22.
- (iii) *Option of making all IDA-only and IDA-Blend countries to be eligible*: The number would be 28.

5. A hybrid approach could be undertaken in which membership was extended to those in the first group with those in the other groups receiving a special invitation (as Kenya and Nigeria currently do).

**Do Ministers agree with adopting a hybrid approach to extending membership?**

#### **III. Timing and Duration of Future Meetings**

**Do Ministers agree that the pattern of meetings should be:**

- A day and half meeting at the Spring Meetings in Washington. The first day would be a meeting of the CMDSF followed by half a day meeting jointly with the OIF.
- A three hour meeting at the time of CFMM to provide a milestone for assessing progress and maintain the linkage to the wider Commonwealth Group.

## Membership in Different Scenarios

	<b>Option (i) (1/17)</b>	<b>Option (ii) (22)</b>	<b>Option (iii) (27)</b>
Existing Membership	Cameroon The Gambia Ghana Guyana Malawi Mozambique Sierra Leone Tanzania Uganda Zambia	Cameroon The Gambia Ghana Guyana Malawi Mozambique Sierra Leone Tanzania Uganda Zambia	Cameroon The Gambia Ghana Guyana Malawi Mozambique Sierra Leone Tanzania Uganda Zambia
IDA only Low Income countries	Bangladesh Kenya Lesotho Nigeria Solomon Islands	Bangladesh Kenya Lesotho Nigeria Solomon Islands	Bangladesh Kenya Lesotho Nigeria Solomon Islands
IDA only (in practice)	Papua New Guinea Sri Lanka	Papua New Guinea Sri Lanka	Papua New Guinea Sri Lanka
IDA only Small States exception		Kiribati Maldives Samoa Tonga Vanuatu	Kiribati Maldives Samoa Tonga Vanuatu
IDA blend			Dominica Grenada India Pakistan St Lucia St Vincent and the Grenadines