

Port of Spain Civil Society Statement to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

25 November 2009





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**PORT OF SPAIN
CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT TO THE 2009
COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING**

1. *We*, the representatives of civil society organisations from across the Commonwealth, meeting in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 22-25 November 2009, present the *Port of Spain Civil Society Statement* to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).
2. *Recalling* that several CHOGM commitments and civil society statements on issues addressed in this Statement, including human rights, remain unheeded.
3. *We*, the Peoples of the Commonwealth commit to fulfil the development agenda outlined in the *Port of Spain Civil Society Statement* and to respond constructively and energetically to invitations to form partnerships to bring about social transformation in the Commonwealth.
4. *Welcoming* the theme of the 2009 CHOGM, '*Partnering for A More Equitable and Sustainable Future*,' and highlighting that collective action and responsibility are required to meet the Commonwealth's development challenges, through appropriate and equal partnerships between and among intergovernmental organisations, national governments, civil society, communities and the private sector.
5. *Recognising* that young people under 30 years of age make up over 60% of the Commonwealth's population, there is a fundamental need to include young people as meaningful partners for more equitable and sustainable development.
6. *Underscoring* that the global financial crisis underscores the need for long-term and sustainable investment that is guided and measured by the pursuit of social, cultural and environmental in addition to economic gains.
7. *Stressing* that the need to put people first has never been more pivotal, the Commonwealth has an unprecedented chance to start building a new just, progressive globalisation, with decent and sustainable jobs, and a financial system that serves the real economy and the concerns and needs of working people. The survival of humankind and of all life is imperilled by excessive consumption and the pursuit of short-term over long-term goals and corruption, which demands a reappraisal of the current paradigm of global economic growth in a finite planet, and a redefining of prosperity.
8. *Emphasising* the importance of a comprehensive global deal in Copenhagen to limit global greenhouse gas emissions below 2 degrees Celsius, as well as a commitment to a just transition.
9. *Realising* that unequal access to resources, services and justice threatens the internal stability of our societies, as well as global security, we stress that the costs of achieving a more sustainable future be equitably shared and special protection to the poor and most vulnerable be afforded.

10. *Expressing* extreme concern with the growing trend across the world to restrict the work of civil society organisations, including non-governmental organisations, cultural organisations, trade unions, faith-based organisations, media, social, and political movements.
11. *Urging* that action be taken to uphold and implement universal human rights, particularly in protecting Human Rights Defenders, the Commonwealth should enable mechanisms that regulate membership and members' compliance with Commonwealth values and principles.

COMMONWEALTH VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

12. *Recalling* the *Coolum Declaration*¹ which mandates stronger links and better two –way communication and coordination between the official and non-governmental Commonwealth, as well as among Commonwealth NGOs;
13. *We call* on Member States to ensure that any reiteration and renewal of the Commonwealth's values and principles explicitly acknowledges previous commitments to engage civil society in decision making;
14. *Emphasising* that any restatement of Commonwealth values and principles should take proper account of culture, including respect for cultural diversity, commitment to inter-culturalism, and the recognition of the role that creativity and innovation play across all policy arenas;
15. *We believe* that any reiteration or re-statement of the Commonwealth values and principles must build on existing commitments that countries have made, be owned by all Member States and communicated in a publicly accessible and powerful way;
16. *We further call* on Commonwealth Member States to establish a participatory process to engage civil society in the reiteration of the Commonwealth values and principles, which will ensure that such a process is credible and has practical value;
17. *Expressing* concern that despite repeated assurances of the value and work of civil society in past Communiqués, and unlike other bodies, notably the Organization of American States the structure of the CHOGM does not enable adequate dialogue, at the highest levels, between civil society and the official Commonwealth. *We therefore recommend* a process of joint consultative meetings before and during CHOGM to develop a joint plan of action against which progress can be evaluated at future CHOGMs.

¹ CHOGM, 2002, Coolum Commonwealth Declaration, Coolum, March 2002: internet: http://www.thecommonwealth.org/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/%7B5D88C133-679E-4F04-88E3-688B14E59749%7D_coolumdeclaration.pdf

CULTURE, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

18. *Welcoming the Statement of the Commonwealth Group on Culture and Development*² and urging the implementation of its recommendations;
19. *Affirming* that access to, and enjoyment of, culture and freedom of cultural expression are fundamental human rights;
20. *Recognising* that cultural assets, values, practices and resources have potential, as yet largely unrealised, to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), promote human fulfilment and prevent and resolve conflict;
21. Further *recognising* the significant role that cultural resources and values can play in forging sustainable, ethical paths out of the present environmental and financial crises, particularly by challenging prevailing norms of consumption and economic governance;
22. *Understanding* that support for culture, and a diversity of cultural expressions, can unlock economic value and encourage community confidence;
23. *Expressing concern* about the persistent low levels of ratification of and engagement with the 2005 UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions³;
24. *Recognising* the Convention on Biological Diversity as the international instrument which addresses indigenous knowledge resources;
25. *Underlining* that creativity and innovation are key drivers of development and people's participation, particularly for young people;
26. *Noting* that the rapid growth in the application of new technologies is enabling new forms of international connections, including Diasporic connections;

Culture and Development

27. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
 - a. *endorse* the Statement presented by the Commonwealth Group on Culture and Development and *commit* to implement its recommendations through strengthened partnerships;
 - b. *promote* the potential of cultural assets, values, practices and resources in generating economic and social development, including by commissioning and disseminating research on the economic contribution of culture;
 - c. *strengthen* creative and cultural industries, notably film and digital industries, by designing, updating and implementing cultural policy frameworks to meet

² Commonwealth Foundation. 2009. Commonwealth Statement on Culture and Development. Prepared by the Commonwealth Group on Culture and Development; internet:

http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com/uploads/fckeditor/00000148_Statement_on_Culture_web.pdf

³ UNESCO.2005. Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions: Internet: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

national and local needs, while sharing good practice and experience across borders;

- d. *provide* technical assistance to stimulate the growth of creative and cultural industries, particularly small culture-based enterprises, and the development of cultural entrepreneurs, including through the adaptation of existing mechanisms, such as the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan;
- e. *support* the professionalisation of creative and cultural practitioners;
- f. *engage* cultural civil society organisations in dialogue processes on development and governance issues;
- g. *promote* educational opportunities for early childhood learning in mother tongue languages as a foundation for inter-cultural identity across the Commonwealth;
- h. *mainstream* cultural considerations into decision making at local, sub-national and national levels;
- i. *mainstream* cultural impact assessments into development planning;
- j. *ratify* and *implement* the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, including by: integrating culture into sustainable development strategies; making cultural development projects eligible for support from international development agencies and funds; and contributing, on a significant and recurring basis, to the Convention's International Fund for Cultural Diversity;
- k. *affirm* their resolve to retain the right to apply policies and other measures in support of domestic cultural sectors, as enabled by the 2005 UNESCO Convention;
- l. *initiate* ongoing dialogues with civil society organisations regarding policy actions to strengthen the cultural sector, and ensure that their right to apply cultural policies and other measures is not compromised by liberalisation commitments in trade negotiations;
- m. *strengthen* and *protect* local industries against the dumping of cultural products from other economies, including through legislation for local content quotas, assistance to domestic cultural producers, and strengthened copyright legislation;
- n. *enable* the free movement of creative practitioners, products and ideas, including South-South cooperation, by revisiting visa arrangements;
- o. *ratify*, where they have not done so, and *implement* the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage;
- p. *create* and *strengthen* national heritage legislation to protect locally significant cultural treasures, rituals and artefacts;
- q. *promote* local cultural heritage sites as sources of community employment and livelihoods, sites of identity and tourism hubs;
- r. *promote* purpose-built community centres as primary incubators for cultural production, youth engagement, and community and national identity;
- s. *promote* 'living museums' that facilitate contemporary culture while preserving traditions;
- t. *recognise* and *capacitate* traditional and indigenous cultural knowledge, resources, languages and governance processes to promote sustainable economic recovery and respond to environmental crises;
- u. *support* documentation of cultural memory and cultural legacy to enable knowledge transfer from elders to new generations, including through apprenticeships, and record processes of transmission to generate an indigenous cultural curriculum;

- v. *enhance* connections between scientists working on climate change issues and artists to encourage public mobilisation;
- w. *promote* connections between environmentally sustainable tourism and cultural tourism;
- x. *take forward* the idea of a Commonwealth cultural capital city scheme with a connected Commonwealth festival of the arts;
- y. *empower* and strengthen Ministries dealing with culture and national heritage, cultural and arts agencies; and
- z. *integrate* cultural considerations in other policy areas, such as social welfare, trade, health and education.

Creativity and Innovation

28. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:

- a. *promote* a free and diverse media, including traditional and new media;
- b. *promote* programmes to encourage media literacy;
- c. *share* good practice in enabling digital, knowledge-based industries to contribute to economic development;
- d. *respect* intellectual property rights as an incentive and stimulus for creativity and innovation;
- e. *undertake* studies into access to new media for women and promote ways of enhancing equal access in the light of these;
- f. *promote* the use of open source and free software;
- g. *update* existing legislation on internet governance to ensure freedom of expression;
- h. *mandate* Commonwealth agencies to assess the potential of science and technology to contribute to development, democracy and culture in Commonwealth countries;
- i. *mandate* Commonwealth agencies to develop a strategy to support science and technology by the 2011 CHOGM;
- j. *change* education policy to drive the development of a knowledge-based society and enhance cultural capital by encouraging creativity in the classroom;
- k. *enhance* engagement with the Diaspora in Commonwealth programmes;
- l. *engage* young people in policy decision-making processes; and
- m. *work* with young people to develop more innovative and alternative approaches to youth development.

DEEPENING DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

29. *Noting* that one of the Commonwealth's founding principles is the promotion of democracy and that the Commonwealth's dedication to democracy could be the unique role it carves out on the international stage in the 21st century. Yet many today have no idea that this is what the Commonwealth stands for. This is partly due to poor communication on the part of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth needs to urgently communicate its core purpose and values of democracy, freedom and human rights, in order to inspire Commonwealth citizens, particularly young people. Communication must be done in such a way that it captures public imagination and distinguishes the Commonwealth from other international fora;

30. *Concerned* that, at present, not all countries in the Commonwealth adhere to its principles. The Commonwealth must be prepared to be bold in upholding its values; it must show consistency between words and action;
31. *Welcoming* the Commonwealth's mechanism for suspending countries which do not practice democracy, *we call* on this mechanism to be equitably and consistently applied within the context of the Harare Declaration. The Commonwealth should be a badge of honour for its countries. It should say something meaningful about a country's human rights record and its commitment to democracy;
32. *Further concerned* over the lack of fulfilled promises from previous CHOGM Summits, we urge the Commonwealth to set timeframes for the implementation of agreed decisions and adhere to these;

Partnership for Governance

33. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *institute* effective mechanisms for the promotion of partnerships between governments, civil society and the private sector to ensure policy relevance, enhance accountability and enable effective service delivery through mobilising resources; *ensure* the inclusion and build the capacity of women, men and youth to participate in decision-making processes, including those from socially excluded communities; *consider* the Long-term Incentives-Based Partnership Model⁴ as an appropriate governing framework for partnerships, institutionalising the role of grassroots community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, local government, academia and the private sector in working collaboratively with central government; *adopt* a common Commonwealth framework for multi-stakeholder engagement that is guided by these principles; and *support* civil society's further efforts to develop community partnerships and linking between Commonwealth communities.

Democracy Building

34. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States and Commonwealth Institutions to: *prioritise* democratic reform and participatory governance in all aspects of its work; *ensure* transparency and people's participation in law and policy making processes, as well as guarantee the space for democratic dissent and strengthen decentralised structures of local self-governance; *ensure* active participation at all levels of society, recognising free and fair elections as one of the crucial components of democracy; *promote* the sharing of experiences and best practices between and among Commonwealth Member States; and *support* the creation and use of a participatory governance index formulated by civil society as a system of measuring and assessing the actions undertaken by governments to produce more participatory governance.

⁴ Commonwealth Foundation.2009. A Consultation with Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows; Report of the consultation held with Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows, 20-22 March 2009, Windsor, United Kingdom; Internet: <http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com/uploads/documents/Commonwealth%20Scholars%20and%20Fellows%20Consultation%2020-22%20March%202009.pdf>

Accountability and Transparency

35. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: strengthen* good governance at all levels, including through the development of, and adherence to, accepted universal standards and norms of accountability and transparency; *recognise and further strengthen* civil society in promoting and monitoring such standards through stable, predictable and accessible resource allocation; and *develop* transparency criteria for civil society organisations that enhance and uphold good governance practices and do not restrict or prevent expression.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

36. *Recognising* the adoption of the 2007 *Lake Victoria Action Plan*⁵, the CARICOM 2009 *Liliendaal Declaration*⁶, and the 2007 Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change⁷;
37. *Recognising* that since 2007 concerns about climate change and sea level rise have grown more acute;
38. *Recognising* the link between these problems and lifestyles and human decisions;
39. *Mindful* that the Commonwealth is able to play a leading role globally, although some of the biggest per capita polluters are Member States and governments have failed to respond adequately to warnings about climate change or to provide agreed financing;
40. *Mindful* of issues of inter-generational justice and that younger generations will bear the brunt of unsustainable development policies pursued today and, ensuring that younger voices have a significant platform at international meetings;
41. *Acknowledging* that civil society is a force for rapid collective action and system change;
42. *Highlighting* the need for a Green New Deal for a just and equitable transition to a low-carbon future, the emphasis on partnerships, the importance of capacity development, and a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to these issues;

Regional Cooperation and Knowledge-Exchange

43. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: recognise* the opportunities afforded across the Commonwealth for enhanced regional co-operation, North-South, South-North and South-South knowledge exchange for natural resource management; *strengthen* regional governance mechanisms for sustainable development, including but not exclusive to the Commonwealth; *strengthen* relationships between universities, educational institutions and policy-makers; *promote* an integrated and participatory

⁵ CHOGM.2007. Lake Victoria Commonwealth Climate Change Action Plan, 24th November, 2007: Internet:http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/173014/FileName/FinalA5ClimateChangeAW_2col.pdf

⁶ CARICOM.2009. Liliendaal Declaration on Climate Change and Development, issued by the Thirtieth meeting of the thirtieth meeting of the conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, 2-5 July 2009: Internet: http://www.caricom.org/jsp/communications/meetings_statements/liliendaal_declaration_climate_change_development.jsp

⁷ HM Treasury.2007. The Economics of Climate Change, 2007, Cambridge Press.

approach to sustainable development that recognises the mutually reinforcing nature of ecosystem-based and community-orientated development; *enhance* environmental education and awareness through relevant modules in school curricula, non-formal education and youth work, public awareness campaigns and marketing of environmental goods and services; *enhance* the Commonwealth's contribution to regional sustainable resource management initiatives; and *ensure* the active involvement of health and other professionals in decision making about climate change.

Climate Change

44. We call on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *agree* a comprehensive deal in Copenhagen to limit global greenhouse gas emissions so that global temperature increase by a maximum of two degrees Celsius, based on legally binding cuts in emissions by industrialised countries and a commitment to low-carbon development in developing countries;
 - b. *ensure* that a global climate deal implements a 'just transition,' providing adequate finance and technology transfer for developing countries, especially the most vulnerable, for mitigation and adaptation;
 - c. *plan* and *implement* a Commonwealth 'just transition' and emissions reduction strategy, building in biennial reporting;
 - d. *provide* financial incentives for socially responsible and green investment, and low-carbon development strategies, including through internalising externalities, and providing decent work and social protection, including active development of 'green skills';
 - e. *implement* projects to assist coastal communities to deal with the impact of sea level rise;
 - f. *recognise* and *apply* ecosystem-based and integrated natural resource management approaches for climate change adaptation;
 - g. *apply* environmental impact assessment to development projects;
 - h. *encourage* behaviour change including recycling and renewable energy generation;
 - i. *commit* to expanded regional cooperation on climate change adaptation, especially in the context of shared threats and resources;
 - j. *recognise* climate change's contribution to an increasing number of global environmental refugees and *agree* on measures to protect climate refugees;
 - k. *commit* to reducing deforestation and promoting afforestation through the REDD-Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation, and *agree* on forest definitions that protect virgin forests;
 - l. *develop* action plans to reduce agriculture-based sources of emissions, *acknowledging* the immediate impacts of climate variability, and the need for sustained food production;
 - m. *expand* research capacity and the knowledge base on the impacts of climate change;
 - n. *fund* more widespread application of practical technologies supporting alternative forms of transport and energy;
 - o. *scale up* the application of tools for disaster relief planning and post-disaster recovery; and
 - p. *create* community and regional level structures that can deliver rapid assistance in the event of disasters and extreme weather events.

Water Security

45. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *support* the development of universal standards on water quality across the Commonwealth; *develop* integrated land and water management plans in, and across, the Commonwealth; *develop* regional cooperation plans for climate change adaptation in the context of trans-boundary water resources; and *recognise* the need to build capacity for integrated land and water resources management in Commonwealth developing countries, and finance initiatives to this end.

Energy Efficiency and Clean Technology

46. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *develop* and *enforce* minimum standards of energy efficiency for consumer goods, public works and private companies; *incorporate* environmental externalities into energy prices and the prices of goods and provide subsidies for energy efficient technologies; *direct* spending towards research and development of clean technologies to scale, complemented by the development of forums where clean and low-energy technologies can be shared; and *develop* binding rules on the extent to which such investments by developed countries can be counted as part of their national greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Waste Reduction

47. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *mainstream* the principle of 'reduce, reuse, recycle'; *develop* policy and legislation to incentivise minimum packaging and wastage throughout the lifecycle of a product, and *agree* minimum standards across the Commonwealth; and *develop* integrated water management, flow and quality standards.

Human Settlements and Urbanisation

48. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *make* human settlements a standing agenda item at CHOGM; *support* the proposed research programme 2011-2016 arising from the report '*The Commonwealth's Urban Challenge: Scoping the State of the Commonwealth Cities*'; *recognise* the value of cities in wealth creation and the opportunities they create for poverty alleviation, as well as the challenges of uncoordinated urbanisation; *support* the key role played by local government and strategic, integrated planning in delivering sustainable urban development; *support* local climate change strategies, including emissions reduction initiatives; *share* know-how and develop capacity on appropriate planning and land management systems; *share* good practice about participatory slum upgrading and spatial planning; and *apply* development standards which are realistic and affordable.

Marine, Coastal and Freshwater Resource Management

49. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to:*
- a. *endorse* the recommendations contained in the Commonwealth Foundation's publication '*From Hook to Plate: The State of Marine Fisheries*⁸;
 - b. *recognise* the full contribution of small-scale fisheries to national economies, food security, poverty alleviation and social cohesion, and the negative social impacts from the collapse of these fisheries;
 - c. *commit* to strengthening and implementing international and regional obligations and mechanisms for the protection, conservation and sustainable use of marine resources and ecosystems, including systems for data collection on small scale fishing;
 - d. *recognise and mitigate* the negative effects of overfishing by transnational and national corporations on coastal fisher folk communities and marine ecosystems;
 - e. *recognise* the costs of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and *reassert* efforts to combat IUU through enhanced monitoring, control and surveillance, and preventing abuse of flags of convenience;
 - f. *address* the impacts of land based and marine-based waste discharges on marine ecosystems and health;
 - g. *avail* themselves of, and heed, scientific knowledge and reporting;
 - h. *support* activities across the Commonwealth to raise awareness about the decline of Commonwealth fisheries and need for urgent action, using traditional and new media;
 - i. *support* fisherfolk through public spending in developing their capacity to use their resources sustainably, including creating opportunities for adding value and developing alternative livelihoods;
 - j. *provide resources* to strengthen and empower fisherfolk organisations at all levels, including in the five year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Plan of Implementation⁹;
 - k. *establish* a Commonwealth Ministerial Task Force to provide policy guidance on climate change adaptation strategies, the elimination of IUU fishing and the sustainable use of marine resources and ecosystems;
 - l. *convene* a Commonwealth Fisheries Conference; and
 - m. *develop* a voluntary Commonwealth Fisheries Fund to support capacity building.

Biodiversity and Forestry

50. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: recognise* that forestry is a key source of livelihood and first line of defence against climate change, entailing the need to promote forest restoration as a key component of climate change strategy; *support* mangrove conservation initiatives because of the key role of mangrove forests in coastal ecosystem protection; *support* forest communities and institutions in developing knowledge and capacity, facilitate participatory processes and recognise traditional knowledge; *note* and *support* the Commonwealth Forestry Conference to be held in

⁸ Bourne, R and Collins, M. 2009. From Hook to Plate: The State of Marine Fisheries – A Commonwealth perspective, Commonwealth Foundation, internet: <http://publications.thecommonwealth.org/from-hook-to-plate-780-p.aspx>

⁹ United Nations, 2005, Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Plan of Implementation, 13 January 2005: Internet: http://www.un.org/smallislands2005/pdf/sids_strategy.pdf

2010 under the theme '*Restoring the Commonwealth's Forests: Tackling Climate Change*'; and *support* sustainable forest management initiatives, including development of flagship projects.

FINANCIAL CRISIS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

51. *Noting* that the 2009 CHOGM comes at a time when the world faces enormous challenges, and that the on-going global financial crisis has exacerbated the already pressing social, economic and environmental crises, particularly with an increase in food and energy prices and job losses;
52. *Further noting* that the crisis, caused by the most industrialised economies, has come to impact more harshly on the least developed economies, most of which are hugely indebted, and face problems of disease, starvation and over dependence on aid, among other challenges;
53. *Expressing concern* that a large number of the poor and vulnerable countries are part of the Commonwealth, it is therefore a crisis for the Commonwealth itself, that is bound to negatively impact the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

Global Economic Governance and Regulation

54. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
 - a. *partake* actively in challenging and reappraising the rules governing the existing global financial system, in order for the system to become an effective tool in the accomplishment of the MDGs;
 - b. *reassert* the role of governments and civil society in ensuring sustainable, equitable and regulated economic development;
 - c. *develop* the appropriate structures to involve social partners and organised civil society, at large, in the process of consultation and decision-making at all levels;
 - d. *ensure* that stimulus packages and/or other forms of financial assistance provided to banks and other financial institutions are short term in nature, and conditional upon their implementation of strategies consistent with the establishment of a global green and sustainable economy;
 - e. *agree on* and *incorporate* core values for corporate governance within respective financial systems, such as Accountability, Corporate Social Responsibility, Transparency and Integrity;
 - f. *review* legislative and policy frameworks to ensure that these core values are implemented therein and make the necessary amendments where necessary in order to achieve this objective;
 - g. *recognise* the importance of public investment in social and environmental capital, including healthcare, education and ecosystems;
 - h. *adopt* economic models that do not to rely solely on deregulated market-based approaches;
 - i. *enhance* the role and capacity of governments to provide social protection and security;
 - j. *revoke* tax haven status and *develop* an alternative status that is in the interest of global financial and economic co-operation;
 - k. *support and advocate* for the implementation of the recommendations of the Report of the Commission of Experts of the President of the General Assembly

- on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System (Stiglitz Report)¹⁰, in particular the Global Economic Coordination Council;
- l. *demonstrate* leadership by integrating regional stakeholder consultations on international institutional reform, specifically the World Bank, World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund, to address the social and environmental concerns of Commonwealth people;
 - m. *conduct* a comprehensive review of the framework for financial regulation and supervision with the participation of the traditional regulatory agencies and civil society;
 - n. *adopt* a global Currency Transaction Levy to generate funds for development;
 - o. *provide* leadership in establishing a mechanism for a Currency Transaction Levy and *work* with civil society to establish accountable processes for the administration and distribution of funds for social and economic advancement;
 - p. *establish* a Commonwealth-based pilot project in order to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of the Currency Transaction Levy, while supporting research on other financial transaction levies; and
 - q. *endorse* the ILO Global Jobs Pact¹¹ to ensure that employment and social protection are put at the heart of economic recovery efforts.

Green Economy and Sustainable Recovery

55. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *reorientate* global financial investments into a global green and sustainable economy;
 - b. *invest* in environmental assets, social capital and livelihoods in order to create an ecological civilisation;
 - c. *recognise* and *promote* the dual social and environmental benefits of creating 'green' jobs and the synergies of the 'green' and 'brown' agendas, giving particular emphasis to opportunities afforded to youth and women;
 - d. *challenge* the existing global paradigm of consumption-fuelled growth and *redefine* prosperity according to social and environmental gains;
 - e. *invest* in micro-finance projects guided by the principles of sustainable recovery and a green economy;
 - f. *deliver* development opportunities directly to the poor, including small business owners most affected by the global financial crisis;
 - g. *develop* effective strategies in response to the food, financial and climate crises to ensure food sovereignty and secure livelihoods, especially for communities that are dependent on natural resources.
 - h. *develop* systems and *provide* finance for technology transfer to development countries that will assist low carbon development; and
 - i. *support* calls for the green economy to be the major focus of a Rio+20 event in 2012.

¹⁰ United Nations, 2009, Report of the Commission of Experts of the President of the General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System (Stiglitz Report), 21st September 2009: Internet: http://www.un.org/ga/econcrisissummit/docs/FinalReport_CoE.pdf

¹¹ International Labour Office. 2009. Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact, 19 June 2009, internet: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_115076.pdf

Strategic Resource Use and Exploitation

56. *Noting* the ten year review of progress towards the MDGs in 2010, we *reiterate* that without significant additional resources, the MDGs will not be achieved, and *urge* Commonwealth donor governments which have not yet set clear targets and timelines to reach 0.7% of GDP to do so prior to 2010;
57. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *responsibly* manage domestic natural resources in developing countries and *ensure* that such resource exploitation serves the public good through the promotion of sustainable development; *enhance* the capacity of developing countries to participate, more equitably, in the value chain through transforming raw materials into finished products before exportation; *empower, educate* and *improve* access to capital and other business development services for women, youth, informal sectors, indigenous people and other vulnerable groups; *implement* concrete measures to create social safety nets and upscale the level of social dialogue and social expenditure to alleviate poverty; and *provide* incentives to multinational businesses to diversify their supply chain in developing countries as a way of increasing job creation, promoting local entrepreneurship and strengthening the local business environment.

Trade and Subsidies

58. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
- a. *recognise* the links between the financial crisis and financial trade agreements;
 - b. *adopt* and *implement* the recommendations of the Stiglitz Report to revisit existing financial services agreement, suspend obligations where possible, and cease to negotiate new agreements;
 - c. *reaffirm* the impact that inequitable trade agreements have on the achievement of the MDGs;
 - d. *ensure* that future trade agreements are driven by social and development objectives, and not by markets;
 - e. *abolish* developed country agricultural subsidies which hinder developing country competitiveness in world markets and undermine the livelihoods of local producers;
 - f. *halt* the dumping of products by developed countries on developing countries;
 - g. *end* unfair competition by transnational corporations which threaten local industries and employment;
 - h. *conduct* genuinely participatory civil society-led studies on the impact of trade agreements, which will seek to make citizens knowledgeable and empowered to participate in decisions about proposed negotiations; and
 - i. *establish* an observatory to analyse the effects of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and potential World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements on Commonwealth Member States, and develop a strategy to mitigate negative economic and employment impacts of EPAs.

Commonwealth Measures

59. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *hold* annual meetings of Commonwealth Labour Ministers; *develop* a two-way accountability process whereby leaders report back to civil society at the next CHOGM on what actions have been taken on the recommendations put forward and why actions were not undertaken; *create* a Global Financial Crisis Fund that will be administered by the Commonwealth Secretariat with amounts available to Commonwealth Member States; *establish* a Commonwealth Knowledge Bank and Social Investment Bank geared towards reformulating assets and liabilities so that capital is viewed in a more dynamic and innovative manner to include knowledge and expertise; *formulate* a Commonwealth Committee that will be responsible for ameliorating the effects of the global financial crisis; *develop* concrete action plans at the national level between civil society organisations and governments; and *commit* and *designate* resources in a mutually-agreed time frame to implement the above mentioned actions through a strengthened Secretariat that is effectively empowered by stakeholder consultation.
60. *We call* on the Commonwealth Foundation to establish, within the next six months, a civil society working group on the implementation of the Currency Transaction Levy with attention to best cases, transparent and participatory governance and distribution of funds.

GENDER

61. *Highlighting* that gender equality is viewed not only as a goal in its own right, but also as a key factor in enhancing democracy and peace, eradicating poverty and violence against women, ensuring education for all, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality and combating HIV and AIDS;
62. *Recognising* that advancing gender equality across the Commonwealth will contribute to the deepening of democracy, development and peace, *we call* on Commonwealth Heads of Government, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation, private sector, youth, women's and men's organisations, to forge partnerships in the spirit of respect and understanding;
63. *Reaffirming* the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)¹²; Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women¹³; the UN Millennium Declaration (2000)¹⁴; the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)¹⁵; the Monterrey Consensus on Financing Development, Mexico (2002)¹⁶; the World Summit Outcome Document (2005)¹⁷; and the

¹² United Nations.1979. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (A/RES/34/181), 18 December 1979; internet: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

¹³ United Nations.1995. Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/CONF.177/20), Beijing, China, 4-15 September 1995; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/off/a--20.en>

¹⁴ United Nations.2000. United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), 8 September 2000; internet: <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

¹⁵ United Nations.2000. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; 31 October 2000; Internet: http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf

¹⁶ United Nations.2002. Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/CONF.198/11), Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March; internet: http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/aconf198d11_en.pdf

¹⁷ United Nations.2005. United Nations World Summit 2005, New York, internet: <http://www.un.org/summit2005/documents.html>

Doha Statement to Strengthen the Global Partnership for Financing for Development (2008)¹⁸.

64. *Expressing concern* that the economic crisis is having serious socio-economic consequences for women, especially in poor countries;
65. *Recognising* that gender equity implies equality for all and therefore issues related to non-normative sexualities, such as sexual and gender minorities;
66. *We urge* all Commonwealth Member States, policy makers, the international community at large and civil society to join us as we pledge our full commitment to ensuring that women are at the centre of actions that we take in our countries to make gender equality a reality.
67. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *implement* the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality (CPOA)¹⁹; forge genuine partnerships and reinforce the capacity of civil society to contribute to the realisation of the CPOA; facilitate civil society involvement in the Mid-Term Review process at government level, and develop national policies on gender through wide consultation and partnership with women.

The Commonwealth Foundation

68. *We call* on the Commonwealth Foundation to: *support* and *strengthen* the Commonwealth Women's Network as a mechanism for the promotion of gender equality; *assess* its work on gender and ensure that adequate mechanisms are put in place in order to contribute further in achieving the goals for gender equality; *provide* resources to civil society organisations; and ensure there are gender experts in all CPF Assemblies or workshops.

Media

69. *We call* on Media Organisations to *refrain* from reinforcing gender oppression and gender stereotyping in advertising and programming and *give equal* voice to women and men in all areas of coverage including increasing the number of programmes for and by women on gender specific topics and that challenge stereotypes.

National Governments

70. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to:
 - a. *amend* repressive laws that discriminate based on gender;
 - b. *put in place* policies on sexual and reproductive health rights, in particular rights related to people with disabilities;
 - c. *recognise* the needs of people with disabilities and the needs of care givers, including remuneration for their services;
 - d. *recognise* that many *children* are care-givers and have the double burden of care, and denial of educational opportunities;

¹⁸ United Nations.2008. Doha Statement to Strengthen the Global Partnership for Financing for Development (2008) Internet: <http://www.ffd-qatar.com/english/viewlastnews.php?id=64>

¹⁹ Commonwealth Secretariat, 2005, Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality: Internet: http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/33902/38116/poa_2005_2015/

- e. *institute* gender mainstreaming in all planning and development initiatives, particularly through a process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, to ensure that the wealth created by urbanisation is shared equally;
- f. *recognise* that the state of the built environment impacts directly on both conditions for crime and violence, and that safety audits are a proven means of risk reduction, especially for vulnerable groups, as well as access to employment;
- g. *recognise* that insecure tenure has a gender dimension and therefore Commonwealth governments must remove all impediments to purchase, ownership and succession to land and property;
- h. *take action* towards the elimination of gender-based violence in the Commonwealth; and
- i. *protect* women in conflict situations, including refugees and internally displaced persons.

Transgenders, Gays and Lesbians

71. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to address gender and sexuality, including issues regarding violence and discrimination against sexual and gender minorities, in all Commonwealth activities.

Deepening Democracy

72. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *ensure* equal representation of women at all levels of decision-making and leadership positions by achieving the 30% target set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Commonwealth Plan of Action; *strengthen* women's citizenship roles by actively engaging women in the political process and increase their presence in the political space; *promote* inclusive gender policies; and *provide* training and incentives for young women to get involved in politics.

Economic Crisis

73. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *ensure* that the needs of women and girls are specifically addressed in policies and interventions to address the crisis; *encourage* the full engagement of women in decision-making on how to stimulate the economy in the context of the financial crisis. In this regard, women in all their capacities and levels of vulnerability must be engaged, whether as heads of households, workers, home-makers, care-givers, persons with disabilities, youth and older persons, rich, poor, employed or unemployed; *ensure* that support is available to the small scale enterprises that are often run by women and on which the survival and welfare of many depend; *promote* women's full and equal participation in the labour market, through relevant education programmes including technical and vocational training; *comply* with international commitments and multilateral environmental agreements, particularly in the areas of transfer of technology, capacity building, provision of new and additional financial resources through efficient and effective mechanisms, and ensure that these benefit women; *design* guarantees and incentives for financial institutions promoting women's access to credit and entrepreneurship; and *increase* gender disaggregated data, leading to gender-sensitive employment creation schemes and gender mainstreaming in the economy.

Climate Change

74. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *stress* that a gendered understanding of how people see their environment is important in developing policies to combat climate change; *ensure* that women's and men's needs and capacities are equally recognised in responding to environmental disasters and conflicts; and *conduct* a gender impact assessment on the environment.

The Family

75. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *establish* institutions that address gender-related issues, such as Family Courts; *recognise* that people have the right to choose to be parents who work in the home only with social support; and *provide* families with fair opportunities to raise children and nurture families, thereby reducing societal decay.

HEALTH

76. *Recognising* that chronic non-communicable diseases are by far the leading cause of mortality in the world, representing 60% of all deaths;

77. *Acknowledging* the significant advancement made by some Commonwealth Member States in advancing the goals of health for all;

78. *Noting* with concern the lack of progress in many areas and that health disparities across the Commonwealth are widening, so fuelling poverty and hindering development;

79. *Underscoring* the need for governments to focus on health as a major priority;

Engagement and Consultation

80. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *place* greater emphasis on the need for primary health care and health promotion for the achievement and maintenance of health, the prevention of chronic disease conditions, and the provision of palliative care; *ensure* that health care policies reflect the needs of those they are intending to serve through consultation at the local and grassroots level; *develop* and *strengthen* public primary healthcare delivery systems designed with the objective of health for all; *support* the development of partnerships between healthcare institutions in different countries, with the objective of improving mutual performance and practice; *ensure* the involvement of governments in e-health technology, particularly for the benefit of improving the health of rural communities and providing rural health care professionals with education and support; and *recognise* that young people are a vital resource for raising awareness of health issues among their peers and improving their health and well-being.

Investment in Healthcare Infrastructure and Affordable Access to Healthcare

81. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: intensify efforts on the provision of primary health care for the prevention of illness and disease; support the urgent implementation of strategies to meet the MDGs for the reduction of maternal and infant mortality and morbidity; commit to and ensure the provision of sufficient human and material resources to eradicate preventable disease such as HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and debilitating lifestyle diseases such as cardio-vascular disease, hypertension, obesity and diabetes; affirm that access to health care should be free at the point of access, affordable, ongoing, appropriate and sustainable, catering to the needs of the most vulnerable; ensure the provision of a sufficient and well-educated and sensitised health care workforce; and support the implementation of a Currency Transaction Levy to generate funds for health care.*

Monitoring and Accountability Frameworks

82. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: develop a global comprehensive framework for primary healthcare that outlines minimum standards for delivery by Member States by 2011; develop and implement clear frameworks for monitoring the effectiveness of healthcare delivery according to a range of social impact indicators; ensure that, in the case of private sector involvement, delivery agencies are subject to the same scrutiny, monitoring, accountability and evaluation as public sector bodies; and mandate the Commonwealth Secretariat to report on progress in these areas at the next CPF.*

Civil Society Actions

83. *We urge civil society to support the formation of a Commonwealth Professional Association on Food and Nutrition by 2011, and work with the Commonwealth Foundation and Secretariat in the monitoring and evaluation of private sector involvement in health care delivery*

HIV AND AIDS

84. *Noting that the highest rates of HIV and AIDS infection in the world are among the Commonwealth Member States. Further noting that despite recent expansion of access to antiretroviral treatment especially in sub-Saharan Africa, access to treatment services is falling far short of need and that the global economic crisis raises further concerns about access;*

85. *Concerned about recurring discriminatory practices and laws against people living with HIV and AIDS and vulnerable groups;*

86. *Concerned with insufficient awareness and education programmes;*

87. *Noting that financing for HIV and AIDS is facing serious shortfalls;*

88. *We call* on Commonwealth Members States to:
- a. *honour* their previous commitments to fund universal access to prevention, treatment and care;
 - b. *collaborate* for regional investment in the local production of generic drugs and anti-retrovirals and fully utilise mechanisms such as the UNITAID Patent Pool;
 - c. *increase* access to viral load testing, first line regimen that contains Tenofovir and to second and third line treatment combinations;
 - d. *promote* a multidimensional approach including the SAVE approach to HIV and AIDS (Safer practices, Access to treatment and nutrition, Voluntary counselling and testing and Empowerment) and ABC (Abstinence, Be faithful and Condoms);
 - e. *adopt* and *follow* the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) *Code of Conduct on HIV and AIDS and the World of Work*²⁰ by 2011;
 - f. *support* the adoption, in 2010, of the draft ILO recommendation on HIV and AIDS and the World of Work;
 - g. *work* to actively remove and prevent the establishment of legislation which undermines evidence-based effective HIV prevention, treatment and care available to marginalised and vulnerable groups, such as sexual minorities, sex workers and drug users;
 - h. *earmark* an appropriate level of total HIV and AIDS funding for children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS
 - i. *implement* National Plans of Action for children and orphans affected by HIV and AIDS;
 - j. *establish* or strengthen national programmes for HIV and AIDS peer education and healthy lifestyles promotion; and
 - k. *develop* comprehensive policy instruments to address stigma and discrimination in all Commonwealth countries and *legislate* anti-discrimination acts in support of people with HIV by 2011.

HUMAN RIGHTS

89. *Noting* that any attack on human rights defenders is an attack on the human rights of entire societies. Taking into account enormous threats faced by human rights defenders we urge Heads of Governments to urgently create effective mechanisms to prevent this;
90. *Noting* that many Commonwealth Member States continue to violate human rights through restrictive laws and practices, particularly the glaring violations of Commonwealth values and principles since the last CHOGM, we welcome opportunities to work with civil society and governments in these countries to ensure the full realisation of human rights. In particular, we highlight:
- a. increasing evidence of human rights violations culminating in a statement by the President of The Gambia threatening human rights defenders with death;
 - b. intimidation and harassment of civil society actors, including the killing of journalists in Sri Lanka and violence against activists in Swaziland;
 - c. introduction of an Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda that seeks to violate the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Intersex persons and sexual rights activists; and

²⁰ International Labour Office. An ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, internet: <http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/normativeinstrument/kd00015.pdf>

- d. an NGO Bill in Zambia that restricts the work and independence of the NGO sector.

91. *We urge* the Commonwealth to address human rights violations committed against the people of Zimbabwe although their government has left the Commonwealth and in Fiji although it has been suspended from the Councils of the Commonwealth.

Mechanisms

92. *Noting* extreme human rights violations, including police misconduct, limited access to justice, repressive laws in the name of emergency or counter-terrorism and the death penalty, *we call on* Commonwealth Member States to: *establish* effective and independent national and regional human rights institutions compliant with the Paris principles, noting that only 14 Commonwealth Member States have National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) that are in status A category of the International Coordinating Committee; *ensure* that such bodies have a duty to consult with civil society; and *guarantee* that they are independent and adequately resourced to implement their mandates and are reviewed according to the Paris Principles.

93. *We call on* Commonwealth Member States to: *strengthen* Commonwealth human rights mechanisms and ensure there is an effective compliance procedure for individuals and civil society organisations to report human rights concerns, referring to and drawing on resources of other human rights bodies; *ensure* the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group fulfils its mandate to effectively address and take action on serious and/or persistent human rights violations, including by missions of evaluation; *expand* the mandate and strengthen the resources and capacity of the Commonwealth Secretariat Human Rights Unit; *mandate* the Commonwealth Secretariat to develop a Commonwealth policy to protect Human Rights Defenders. This should build on the Commonwealth's work with governments to establish NHRIs mandated to protect and work with human rights defenders and include efforts to create National Action Plans on Human Rights that include space for human rights defenders in line with the Commonwealth's Model National Action Plan; and to raise awareness among human rights defenders on protection and complaints mechanisms; *ensure* members ratify and implement UN and regional human rights conventions and ILO core conventions; and publish a biennial review of progress of each Member State, incorporating reports from civil society; *apply* human rights criteria in selection of host countries for Commonwealth meetings; and *improve* Commonwealth membership mechanisms ensuring that the process is open, inclusive and transparent, and that applicants for Commonwealth membership, including Rwanda, meet democracy and human rights standards prior to admission.

Human Rights Defenders

94. *Noting* that since the 2007 CHOGM, laws have been passed that criminalise or restrict the activities of Human Rights Defenders and that defenders have been arbitrarily detained, killed and forced into exile. There is a worrying increase in restrictive laws against minorities, such as sexual minorities, as well as abuses against indigenous peoples, women and disabled people. It is of vital importance that the Commonwealth recognise the serious abuses committed against Human Rights Defenders.

95. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: recognise the importance of the work of Human Rights Defenders in implementing the human rights principles in the Harare Declaration and in protecting the human rights of entire societies; abide by the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*²¹ and ensure domestic implementation of the Declaration; and *prioritise* the protection of Human Rights Defenders through law, policy and institutional reform and implementation of standards contained in domestic, regional and international law and commitments.

Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups

96. *We call on Commonwealth Member States and Institutions to: recognise and protect the human rights of all individuals without discrimination on the grounds of disability, race, caste or ethnicity, sex, political opinion, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, national origin, economic and social status, religion, refugee or migrant status, HIV status or any other status; repeal legislation that leads to discrimination, such as the criminalisation of same sex sexual relationships, and in addition call on the Commonwealth Foundation to facilitate a technical review of such of laws; and stop discriminatory cultural practices, including the ingrained caste system and female genital mutilation.*
97. *We further call on the Commonwealth Member States to ensure universal access to basic services for marginalised and vulnerable groups, including the homeless, stateless, the displaced, tribal and indigenous peoples, those with disabilities, and sexual and gender minorities. This includes education and training for all.*
98. *We call on the Commonwealth Secretariat to make disability the theme for the year following Commonwealth Day in 2010.*

Freedom of Expression, Association and Assembly

99. *We call on all Commonwealth Member States to guarantee freedoms of expression, association and assembly, and the right to information as guaranteed in international law. They should: enact and implement laws particularly on access to information that protects these freedoms, repeal laws that impede them, and take practical measures to shield the defenders of these freedoms; create and preserve an enabling environment for civil society to express democratic dissent, access information, communicate, build capacity, raise funds, participate in decision-making processes and express solidarity across borders; and mandate the Commonwealth Secretariat to lead by example by ensuring effective civil society participation in its policy processes and by embracing maximum disclosure and full transparency in all its activities.*

²¹ United Nations. Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (A/RES/53/144), internet: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/defenders/docs/declaration/declaration.pdf>

Economic Social and Cultural Rights

100. *We call on Commonwealth Member States and Commonwealth Institutions to: monitor the achievement of MDGs by Member States; take urgent steps to eradicate poverty and realise the universal rights to food, shelter and water, prioritising human needs; provide equitable access to basic infrastructure and secure tenure of land; promote decent work policies and targets and monitor progress regularly at the Commonwealth level; realise workers' rights and ensure that trade unions can freely operate work together and with other partners to promote and disseminate action research on human settlements; and protect the cultural rights of all people that are compatible with the International Bill of Rights.*

PEACE AND CONFLICT

101. *Building on the November 2007 Kampala Communiqué and the Munyonyo Declaration on 'Respect and Understanding,' we call on the Commonwealth family to advance respect and understanding as an essential dimension of the Commonwealth's core values;*
102. *Emphasising that a peaceful Commonwealth, as well as capable, accountable and responsive States are pre-requisites for environmental protection, poverty reduction and development;*
103. *Recognising that conflict is a broad subject and that contributory causes of conflict are rarely individual but include social, political, economic and environmental injustice;*
104. *Noting that several Commonwealth Member States are making the transition to becoming conflict free. Disarmament is a key step towards this, while persistence of arms in post-conflict societies threatens lasting peace;*
105. *Expressing concern that the use of small arms in crime, including guns and knives, in many Commonwealth Member States, appears to be on the rise, bringing increased threats to personal security and community harmony. There are current attempts to establish a unified Arms Trade Treaty to regulate the weapons trade, while the Cluster Munitions Convention is increasingly gathering support;*
106. *Noting that security and conflict have strongly gendered dimensions and that woman and children are on the front line as victims of terror during conflict. Further noting that young urban men are being drawn into crime, violence and extremism, both as perpetrators and victims;*
107. *Noting that the global financial crisis has undermined the capacity of States to provide services to their citizens and expressing concern that internal and international disputes are likely to start over land, water, food, fuel and migration, driven by economic inequalities and climate change;*
108. *Noting that respect for human life underlies all conflict resolution; and that this requires increased community involvement with validation by those communities and the advocating / advancing of human rather than national security, the former including personal and community security;*

Crime and Violence

109. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: recognise the proliferation of gang cultures including the guns / gangs / drugs syndrome which impacts communities / genders / masculinities with both local and global impacts; contain counter-productive State violence which is leading to the escalation of private security responses; advance communication between generations / genders / communities; give priority to funding of comprehensive, integrated and multi-sectoral violence prevention plans; and reject unjudicial use of violence to deal with criminal behaviour.*

Armaments

110. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: endorse and comply with UN Convention and Treaties, including the UN Cluster Munitions Treaty; refrain from funding and resourcing the proliferation of armaments; develop minimum standards and criteria for the trade of armaments between Commonwealth Member States; advance UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security²²; encourage the opening of global talks on a small arms treaty; mandate the Commonwealth Secretary-General to use his good offices to focus on the prevention of conflict; and develop a mechanism to abolish the practice of financing and supplying arms to non-state groups.*

Education and Social Development

111. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: recognise that education offers a key means of strengthening social capital and can serve peace building by encouraging tolerance of difference. There is a need to ensure that education systems reach the marginalised, help build connections between different groups, and continue to operate in situations of conflict and displacement due to conflict; recognise that strong communities and young people's involvement in associations can build social capital and foster resilience to prevent the mobilisation of young people into violence; recognise that some education systems can promote elitism and exclusivity which can lead to cultures of violence among youth; and that education systems should be inclusive; focus on an assets-based approach to young people's participation in peace-building and development rather than a deficit-based approach which sees youth solely as a problem or threat; and advance peace education from day-care to primary school.*

International Community Partnership Links

112. *We call on Commonwealth Member States to: recognise that partnership links and exchanges between communities in different countries reduce conflict by creating greater understanding and contribute to gender equality, empowerment and social cohesion (as well as making contributions to the health and well-being of community members); recognise that many civil society organisations in the Commonwealth have responded with considerable impact to the Kampala CHOGM Communiqué's²³*

²² UN Security Council. *Women, Peace and Security (S/RES/1325)*, 31 October 2000; *Women Peace and Security S/RES/1820*, 19 June 2008.

²³ CHOGM.2007. Kampala Communiqué, paragraph para 79.; internet: http://www.thecommonwealth.org/shared_asp_files/GFSR.asp?NodeID=174528

encouragement that civil society should support partnerships and linking for progress in health systems, education for all and sustaining the environmental resource base; *welcome* civil society's continued commitment to develop community partnerships and linking; and *commit* to support for international linking partnerships between Commonwealth communities.

Arts

113. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to *recognise* that the arts can provide a unique contribution to conflict avoidance, peace building and reconciliation.

Media

114. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *recognise* that since the last CHOGM journalists have been killed in several countries, while others have been subject to beatings, kidnappings and intimidation of families and closure of news outlets; *recognise* that free, open and diverse media plays a key role in ensuring the accountability and transparency of governing institutions, in building awareness of development issues, and in helping different people and communities better understand each other; and that the news media are a crucial element of Commonwealth principles; *recognise* that freedom of expression and the right to know are vital to democratic governance; *condemn* any systematic abuse of journalists; and *condemn* any deliberate attempts to limit access to and dissemination of information.

Extremism

115. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *reject* the use of force or other mechanisms which may limit human rights as a means of dealing with extremism; and *develop* more relevant approaches to fostering resilience and combating extremist and militant behaviour and indoctrination.

Reconciliation

116. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *recognise* that conflicts are often played out along identity lines, with faith offering one key component of identity for many Commonwealth people; *recognise* that the interaction between faith and culture, and the ways in which different faiths can sit successfully side by side, need to be better understood. Belief, tradition and spirituality may all be employed as resources in reconciliation and reconstruction; and *recognise* that multi-ethnicity is frequently a critical element in reconciliation which must be addressed to ensure sustainability.

Refugees and Displaced Persons

117. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *set an example* in passing and upholding legislation to protect the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people, in line with customary principles of international refugee laws, whilst advocating for such protections to be afforded universally; and *uphold* the right to education of marginalised and displaced children, men and women and advocate alternative and innovative means of education.

GLOBAL CRISIS FOR YOUTH

118. *Underlining* that young people aged under 30 years make up over 60% of the population of the Commonwealth, but that despite this demographic importance their needs are being insufficiently addressed or resourced;
119. *Emphasising* that the emergence of a global demographic ‘youth bulge’ is affecting all aspects of poverty and development efforts in Commonwealth Member States;
120. *Recognising* that the transition of youth to adulthood is being prolonged or blocked and young people are increasingly unable to attain the social and economic status of adulthood;
121. *Concerned* that a disproportionate percentage of the current youth generation live in poverty, affected by widespread disease, hunger, poor sanitation and inaccessible health care and secondary education;
122. *Alarmed* that the largest ever cohort of young people are also the largest ever cohort of unemployed and that policy responses are ineffective;
123. *Noting* the importance of youth empowerment and that Commonwealth young people are a crucial yet largely untapped asset for our societies and development and a catalyst for global consensus-building;

High Level Commonwealth Commission on Youth

124. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *establish* a high level Commonwealth Commission on Youth to address the global issues impacting negatively on our young people and to explore solutions in the context of an assets-based approach in partnership with Commonwealth young people themselves; and *recognise* that failing to harness young people as a positive resource or invest in their development would be to miss an immense economic and social opportunity.

Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007–2015

125. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *enhance* implementation of the *Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015*²⁴, based on broad stakeholder engagement and the participation of young people themselves, and as an assets-based approach to youth development; *intensify efforts to monitor and systematically evaluate* progress made in youth development in Commonwealth countries, using the Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) Government Action Points and Indicators and developing a Youth Development Index as a measuring tool; *engage* young people in greater decision-making and as partners in democracy and development; *provide* the enabling conditions for youth empowerment in our societies by allocating adequate financial and human resources; *promote* youth networks and fora, sporting and cultural contacts and exchanges to foster tolerance, understanding, capacity building and co-operation; and *allocate* and *source* financial resources and

²⁴ Commonwealth. 2007. Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015; internet: http://www.thecommonwealth.org/shared_asp_files/GFSR.asp?NodeID=169313

assist in creating the enabling environment for the establishment of programmes similar to the Caribbean Group of Youth Business Programmes which provide unemployed and underemployed, entrepreneurial youth with the start up loan capital business mentoring and other opportunities vital for them to create decent work for themselves and others.

Government Action for Mainstreaming Youth Development

126. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to: *recognise* that a commitment to mainstream youth development is a crucial part of achieving the MDGs; *introduce* a youth empowerment perspective to the work of all relevant government departments; *develop* a National Youth Policy and operational plans by 2010 and have a youth consultation mechanism in place; *establish* meaningful and constructive mechanisms to engage young people in policy making at all levels, specifically supporting and developing representative structures such as National Youth Councils and building young people's decision-making capacities; *mainstream* education and employment opportunities for vulnerable young people, especially those marginalised by disability; *strengthen* national support for young women and men in the areas of youth health issues and reproductive health, emotional health, well-being and healthy lifestyles, the prevention and control of HIV and AIDS, and social protection schemes; *develop and implement* measures to promote the economic enfranchisement of young people, including self-employment, micro-enterprise and credit schemes and gaining access to land; and *support* youth serving and civil society organisations and initiatives adequately as partners in development and participatory democracy.

Commonwealth Youth Pact

127. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to *establish* a Commonwealth Youth Pact in every Commonwealth country as an agreement with young people in order to institutionalise participatory citizenship education and involve young people in decision-making at all levels.

ZIMBABWE

128. *We urge* Commonwealth Heads of Government to take note of the conclusions of the Commonwealth Organisations' Roundtable, held in Johannesburg from 7-9 July 2008, organised in response to the commitment expressed in the Kampala Civil Society Statement 'Realising People's Potential', urging Commonwealth engagement with the people of Zimbabwe.
129. *We commend* to Heads of Government the proposed Commonwealth Special Programme for Zimbabwe that has arisen out of that Roundtable as a valuable means of supporting civil society, local government and other partners in Zimbabwe, in the context of the inclusive government's recovery programme and the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement. *We urge* Commonwealth member states and all in a position to do so to actively support the Special Programme. In this context, *we also urge* Commonwealth Heads of Government to send a positive signal to the people of Zimbabwe as an expression of support for their efforts to achieve a return to democracy by stating that the Commonwealth looks forward to their eventual return to full membership.

REVITALISING THE COMMONWEALTH

130. *Noting* the findings of the Commonwealth Conversation, the largest ever public consultation on the future of the Commonwealth;
131. *Acknowledging* that while there seems to be widespread support for the Commonwealth, there is also a sense that the whole Commonwealth family, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, needs to modernise to realise its true potential;
132. *Noting* that there considerable evidence that the low profile of the Commonwealth hampers the reach and effectiveness of its activities;
133. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to address the low profile of the Commonwealth by:
 - a. *rearticulating* the principles of the Commonwealth and clearly demonstrate to its citizens how the Commonwealth is both upholding and promoting these principles among all Member States;
 - b. *strengthening* the Commonwealth Secretariat and Foundation, as well as working with civil society to implement the official Commonwealth's programme of work, so as to increase its value as an international actor;
 - c. *bolstering the* unique people-to-people networks that exist across the Commonwealth by supporting civil society organisations and professional bodies to expand their reach and work in innovative ways to recapture the imagination of the new generation;
 - d. *promote* learning about the Commonwealth, its history, values and the rich diversity of peoples and cultures by calling for the support and investment of Commonwealth organisations and individual governments in information and education services;
 - e. *recognise* that experience in the education sector demonstrates the potential of co-operative action and partnerships in the Commonwealth between the intergovernmental agencies, national governments, voluntary organisations and professional groups constituting civil society, and the private sector; and
 - f. *undertake* a review, leading to firm proposals for action, of ways in which civil society bodies, Commonwealth agencies and governments can develop fruitful partnerships in education and other sectors to benefit all Commonwealth peoples.
134. *We call* on Commonwealth Member States to consider ways in which the Commonwealth can give fresh impetus to collaboration in education by building on the successful examples of co-operation and exchange.