

## **Biography of Kamalesh Sharma**

The career of Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma has been largely as a member of the Indian Foreign Service (1965-2001), in the course of which he has had wide-ranging diplomatic experience in various parts of the world, culminating as Ambassador in five missions.

He is currently the High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom.

Since 2004, as a member of the Board of Governors of Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation, Ambassador Sharma has taken very keen interest in the activities and advocacy of the Commonwealth, significantly enhancing India's active engagement with it. He represented India at the meetings of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group in February and November 2005 and led India's delegation at the pre-CHOGM Foreign Ministers Meeting in Malta. Some of the major events hosted in India during this period are the meeting of the Chief Election Officers of Commonwealth countries, held in New Delhi in February, 2005; Regional Colloquium on Democracy and Development in New Delhi on 25-26 August, 2005 and the International e-Partnership Summit of Commonwealth Connects Programme in March 2007. Over the next few years, India will be hosting the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference in September 2007, the Commonwealth Youth Games in 2008, Commonwealth Games in 2010 and Conference of Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers also in 2010.

Ambassador Sharma was the first Special Representative of UN Secretary General to independent Timor Leste (2002-2004) with the rank of Under Secretary General. The Security Council mandate gave the SRSG responsibility for internal security and for laying the foundation for all areas of public administration, particularly those of justice, financial administration, policing and protection of human rights.

At headquarters in New Delhi, all the three assignments of Ambassador Sharma in the Foreign Office were concerned with the full range of global multilateral issues and engagement within the NAM and G-77. He was head of division of the Indian programme for technical cooperation, particularly in support of building human resource capacity in fellow developing countries (South-South Cooperation). In an assignment to the Treasury, Ambassador Sharma was responsible for the hydrocarbon sector of the Indian economy and the administration of development assistance from Europe. Ambassador Sharma organised the 1995 SAARC Summit in New Delhi including the leaders' Retreat in Shimla.

Ambassador Sharma's specialisation has been in multilateral affairs. As the Indian Permanent Representative to the UN offices in Geneva, he acted as the spokesperson for developing countries in UNCTAD during the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations. During his tenure as the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York, he chaired the Working Group on Financing for Development, the success of which led to the 'Monterrey Consensus' between the North and South in a conference in Mexico.

Throughout his career, Ambassador Sharma has shown a strong commitment to all facets of equitable global relationships, enlightened governance, gender equity and engagement with issues of global regimes involving trade, technology and finance. During the Millennium Summit in New York he was closely involved in the process, which resulted in the development of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other collective aspirations of the world community. Ambassador Sharma initiated focused consideration within the UN Membership of the primary challenge of youth unemployment, which resulted in an independent and continuing initiative known as 'YES' (Youth Employment Summits), of which several have been held in various countries. Ambassador Sharma is a frequent speaker on and advocate of the need to strengthen human solidarity and the conviction that collective challenges of the 21st century require collective engagement and solutions, as well as on the theme of the challenges and opportunities created by the era of globalisation and rapid change. Ambassador Sharma was editor of 'Imagining Tomorrow – Rethinking the Global Challenge', which contains contributions from many prominent thinkers on global challenges and 'Milles Fleurs Poetry from around the World', which contains poems contributed from diverse languages of the world in the original script as well as in translation, to illustrate both the diversity and unity of the global community.

Ambassador Sharma was educated in Delhi University and King's College, Cambridge. He was awarded an Hon. Doctor of Laws from De Montfort University, UK. He was a Director of the Peace Academy, New York. He is the recipient of the medal of the Foreign Policy Association of the US. He is a Fellow of Harvard University. He has been particularly involved in the field of education as a Director on 'Education Consultants India Limited'. He is a Governor of Ditchley Foundation.

Ambassador Sharma is married and has two children. His interests involve literature, cosmology, cricket, Indian and western classical music and jazz.

(Source: Indian High Commission, London website. <http://www.hcilondon.net/press-release-2.html>)