

**Ninth Meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Environment  
4 February 2003, Nairobi, Kenya**

**SUMMARY RECORD**

The ninth meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Environment was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Gigiri, Nairobi, on 4 February 2003 from 2-5pm. It was attended by Ministers and Senior Officials from 40 countries<sup>1</sup>, and chaired by Sri Lanka's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, the Hon. Rukman Senanayake (a list of participants is at Annex II).

***Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Opening Remarks***

The meeting was opened by Mr Winston Cox, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, who made some introductory remarks (provided at Annex III) before giving the floor to the Chair.

***Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Agenda***

The meeting adopted the provisional agenda CCGE(03)2(Admin) (revised) of December 2002 with no amendments.

Before discussion on the first substantive item of the programme, the Chair invited the Representative of Jamaica to report on the clean-up of Kingston Harbour, a matter that had first been raised by Jamaica's former Environment Minister, the Hon Horace Dalley, at CCGE-8. Mr Miller informed the CCGE that plans were currently being concretised on how to address, among other problems, the matter of effluent discharge into the harbour. He informed the CCGE that these issues would be addressed in collaboration with the private sector and other groups. The Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, Mr Cox, suggested that these experiences might be shared with the Commonwealth Business Council, which may be in a position to assist Jamaica in taking forward the initiative with the private sector.

***Agenda Item 3: A Commonwealth Response to WSSD***

Ministers outlined their priority concerns in implementing the agreements reached at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and proposed areas where the Commonwealth was especially well placed to assist member states in this task. They welcomed the Secretariat paper CCGE(03)1 entitled 'Poverty, Environment and Sustainable Development: Commonwealth Work in Support of WSSD Implementation'.

Under the general discussion of this agenda item, Ministers recognised the critical importance of addressing the link between poverty and environment. Among other approaches, countries needed to build stronger linkages between environment and poverty concerns in a range of processes such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). They also needed practical assistance with eliminating poverty and creating people-centred

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<sup>1</sup> Antigua and Barbuda; Australia; The Bahamas; Barbados; Bangladesh; Belize; Botswana; Cameroon; Canada; Dominica; Gambia; Ghana; Guyana; India; Jamaica; Kenya; Lesotho; Malawi; Malta; Mauritius; Mozambique; Namibia; New Zealand; Nigeria; Nuie; Papua New Guinea; Saint Lucia; Samoa; Seychelles; Sierra Leone; South Africa; Sri Lanka; Swaziland; Tonga; Trinidad and Tobago; Tuvalu; Uganda; United Kingdom; United Republic of Tanzania; Zambia.

sustainable development, concrete impacts on people's lives, and action on issues such as debt. Ministers emphasised the importance of strengthening collaboration with regional institutions, continuing to integrate all three pillars of sustainable development, and working with economic, trade and development colleagues in the implementation of sustainable development, noting that mainstreaming was the key. One representative highlighted the issues of fisheries and coast erosion. Another representative highlighted the need to ensure progress on health and sustainable development, the sustainable management and use of natural resources, and changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.

A number of representatives emphasised that the Commonwealth Secretariat should focus work within its core areas of competency, where it had a comparative advantage and could add value. This would help to ensure that the Secretariat's programmes were complementary in nature, and that resources were not over-stretched or diverted from other areas of core Commonwealth competency. Examples included capacity building and the identification of areas where collective action by the Commonwealth could have an impact. The proposals outlined in paragraph 20 of CCGE(03)1, on consensus building work by the Secretariat, were welcomed by Ministers.

With respect to the Commonwealth's role in supporting implementation of the outcomes of WSSD, Ministers highlighted a number of areas where the Commonwealth Secretariat was well placed to support the efforts of its developing member states. They included:

#### Partnerships

Ministers identified a Commonwealth role in facilitating a dialogue on, and member states' engagement with, partnerships announced in conjunction with the WSSD. Ministers highlighted the need for information and analysis on: the number and range of partnerships that had been formed; how effective they were; what the parameters of these partnerships were; and frameworks on engaging with partnerships. A representative suggested that the CCGE might wish to return to this matter, especially the criteria for partnerships, following discussions on the issue by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). One Minister suggested that the Commonwealth could help developing member states, particularly LDCs and small states, to mobilise and access funds that were being released for implementing elements of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Another Minister emphasised the need for on-going efforts to promote awareness and understanding of the outcomes from WSSD and sensitise a wide range of actors to promote their engagement in partnerships. He also highlighted the need to build the capacity of developing member states to facilitate partnerships and network on available resources.

#### Time-Bound Action Plans

In introducing the issue, the Representative of Sri Lanka noted that the development of time bound action plans were recommended by the JPOI, as they had been for implementation of Agenda 21. To successfully complete this task, developing countries required adequate financial and technical resources, and needed to identify priority areas within the broad JPOI on which to focus their efforts. A number of Ministers emphasised the importance of preparing time-bound action plans, based on time-bound phases, to operationalise the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The Commonwealth

Secretariat could play an effective role in strengthening institutions and building capacities in developing countries to undertake this work.

A representative of a small state called for focused, down-to-earth interventions, supporting the preparation of a handbook on the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and guidance by the Secretariat at the national level for translating the JPOI into local action. He stressed that individual countries needed to identify their own priorities, and that the Commonwealth could focus its work on individual countries, leveraging funding, and providing technical assistance and capacity building. Another representative noted that there were a number of frameworks for sustainable development, including PRSPs, Millennium Development Goals and the JPOI. These frameworks could cause difficulties for developing countries in accessing resources for sustainable development, and the representative suggested that the Secretariat could help to examine the sequencing of frameworks for effective mobilisation of resources. One developing country representative emphasised the need to develop indicators for sustainable development, in collaboration with the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

A developed country representative endorsed the approach outlined in paragraph 11 of CCGE(03)1, in which the Secretariat noted that it would review its plans and programmes in the light of WSSD outcomes and, where appropriate, reflect priorities identified in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in the agendas for discussion by Commonwealth Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Women's Affairs, Finance, Law, Health, Environment, and Education. He said that any assistance that the Secretariat could provide to member states in setting their own priorities and assessing WSSD, would be welcomed.

#### Climate Change and Biodiversity

A number of Ministers supported a role for the Commonwealth in the area of climate change. In this area, and that of biodiversity, developed country representatives stressed that work should be concentrated on areas of comparative advantage, where the Commonwealth could add value through strategic gap filling. The proposals outlined in CCGE(03)1 on climate change and biodiversity issues needed to be further considered in this context.

One Minister congratulated Canada on ratifying the Kyoto Protocol and suggested that areas of work by the Secretariat might include advocacy and the development of negotiating skills. Another noted that countries required capacity building and technical assistance to respond to the after-effects of severe weather events such as floods; for example by developing laboratory capabilities to assess and address river pollution. A number of representatives of small states suggested that the Secretariat should help small island developing states to address adaptation to climate change.

A developed country representative noted that the 2002 Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting agreed that "greater attention should be given to "the Commonwealth's role in promoting dialogue and co-operation to develop a global response to major environmental challenges such as climate change and sea-level rise. The Commonwealth should also influence the broader global debate and the possible emerging consensus on

sustainable development”<sup>2</sup>. She suggested that the Commonwealth might begin a dialogue on broad and balanced participation in the climate change regime in the longer term.

A Minister emphasised the role that the Commonwealth could play on biodiversity conservation, and highlighted the issue of common standards for logging and mining.

### Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

A number of representatives outlined specific areas where Commonwealth support through technical assistance and capacity building would be appreciated. These included: forest mangement; public awareness raising; environmental education; assistance to African countries in the context of NEPAD; trade and environment; fisheries and coastal erosion; municiple waste management; and the development of micro-credit.

### CSD-11 and the UNEP GC/GMEF

The Chair invited Hon Mohammed Valli Moosa, South Africa’s Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, to address the CCGE in his capacity as Chair of the eleventh session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-11). Minister Moosa outlined the achievements of the Johannesburg Summit, including the highest-level global commitment to act on sustainable development to be expressed in the past decade. He noted that the action-oriented outcome from WSSD was one that had been discussed by the CCGE at its February 2001 Meeting in Nairobi. Thirty-seven concrete targets had been set in Johannesburg, and a strong link had been established between poverty eradication and sustainable development, as well as between all three pillars of sustainable development.

Minister Moosa saw the challenges ahead as follows: keeping the focus on implementation; ensuring that the linkages are maintained between poverty and sustainable development, and between the three pillars of sustainable development; consolidating the regional focus; increasing the momentum on the WEHAB agenda (on water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity); and following-up partnerships at the domestic, regional and international levels. As the first major inter-governmental gathering since WSSD, Minister Moosa saw the UNEP Governing Council Meeting/Global Environment Ministers Forum as an important starting point on these issues. CSD-11 had the responsibility of setting the CSD’s multi-year programme for the next decade, and he urged Commonwealth Ministers to be personally present in New York (28 April – 9 May 2003) for this critical session.

### Conclusion of the Debate on Agenda Item 3

The Deputy Secretary General, Mr Cox, warmly welcomed Ministers’ comments on priority areas of work: these would be studied closely and used to build a balanced work programme in response to WSSD. He stressed that the Secretariat’s resources were at full stretch, and that action on the outcomes of WSSD would have to be implemented within the existing budget. The Secretariat would welcome additional extra-budgetary resources to address the priority concerns of Commonwealth developing countries and small states in

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<sup>2</sup> Report by the Commonwealth High Level Review Group to Commonwealth Heads of Government, Coolum, Australia, as adopted by Heads of Government at their meeting in Coolum on 3 March 2002.

engaging effectively in partnerships and implementing sustainable development commitments.

The Deputy Secretary General indicated that the Secretariat recognised that climate change was a sensitive area, but that the Commonwealth had a clear mandate from Commonwealth Heads of Government to address this concern and needed to respond to the needs of those that were most vulnerable to climate change. Delivering on this mandate was a challenge, and the Secretariat would pay careful attention to the various view points that had been expressed. Partnerships had been highlighted as an area of priority concern and the Secretariat would consider how it could best help member states to draw on the full range of organisations (business, governmental, local government and civil society) that forms the network of the Commonwealth. He clarified that the Secretariat's role on biodiversity was focused on assisting members to incorporate relevant conventions into domestic legislation, which required both an awareness of the richness of biodiversity, and the capacity to respond. He further indicated that the area of debt management was one example of work in other sectors related to WSSD's commitments that the Secretariat was actively engaged in. Others included trade, finance, education, health, gender mainstreaming, and public service delivery.

#### ***Agenda Item 4: Preparations for Barbados+10***

Ministers welcomed Commonwealth support for the review and preparations for the international meeting on implementation of the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, as outlined in document CCGE(03)2.

Senator the Hon Dr Marcus Bethel, Minister of Health and Environment of The Bahamas, speaking on behalf of the CARICOM, commended the Secretariat for its support to small island developing states (SIDS) on economic and environmental issues, and emphasised the need for further support with: national reporting processes; institution strengthening for sustainable development and building capacity in international negotiations; and focussed studies and further dialogue on thematic issues such as the harmful tax initiative.

Other representatives, speaking on behalf of CARICOM, outlined the current status of preparations for the review and urged the Commonwealth to deliver its assistance within the framework that was being developed through the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). This framework emphasised the need to enhance understanding and leadership in addressing the increasing vulnerability of SIDS, which was due to three important factors: the new trade regime; climate change; and the fall in foreign direct investment. The review and international meeting should create a better understanding of the interventions that were needed to: improve trade relationships for SIDS; build sustainable institutional capacities (given that the capacity of SIDS is often lost to industrialised countries); and increase access to investment capital. The process also needed to lay the framework for SIDS-SIDS co-operation, as technical advice from other quarters was not always appropriate to the SIDS context.

Ministers noted that the Secretariat's assistance might include support for the preparation of national and regional reports, and analysis on key substantive issues. The Representative of Mauritius called on the Commonwealth to start considering its approach to implementation of the Barbados+10 outcomes. The Deputy Commonwealth Secretary noted

that the emphasis on implementation had been raised to a new level with the conclusion of three key processes: Doha; Monterrey and the WSSD. In 2002, Commonwealth Finance Ministers agreed a Commonwealth Action Plan on Delivering the Monterrey Consensus: such time-bound action-oriented documents may become more of a feature of Commonwealth meetings and may be an appropriate response to the outcomes of the review and international meeting.

Ministers commended the Commonwealth Secretariat for its collaboration with regional organisations on preparations for the review. Samoa's Minister of Lands, Surveys and Environment, Hon Tagaloa Tuala Sale Tagaloa, thanked the Secretariat for its support to Pacific Island Countries in their preparations for WSSD, and urged that this support be continued for the review, the international meeting in 2004, and beyond.

***Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business***

**Arrangements for CCGE-11**

Ministers agreed to meet again immediately before the Eighth Special Session of the Governing Council of UNEP/Global Environment Ministers Forum in 2004.

**Selection of the Chair for CCGE-11**

Ministers noted that consultations to identify a Chair for CCGE-11 had not been completed, and asked the Secretariat to continue these efforts, giving due consideration to rotation between geographical regions, size (small, medium, large states), and type of economy (developed/developing). The Deputy Secretary-General undertook to inform member states of the outcome of these consultations in due course.

**Close of the Meeting**

The Chair brought the meeting to a close, thanking representatives for their contributions, and undertaking to prepare and circulate a Summary Statement of the discussions the next day (this is provided as Annex I).

### Summary Statement by the Chair

Commonwealth Environment Ministers and Senior Officials met on 4 February 2003 for the ninth session of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Environment (CCGE). The meeting was convened to coincide with the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Governing Council of UNEP/Global Environment Ministers Forum held in Nairobi, Kenya. Sri Lanka's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, the Hon. Rukman Senanayake, chaired the meeting.

Ministers focused their discussion on Commonwealth follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and preparations for the review and international meeting on implementation of the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados+10).

With respect to the Commonwealth's role in supporting implementation of the outcomes of WSSD, Ministers highlighted a number of areas where, in the context of its limited resources, the Commonwealth Secretariat was well placed to support the efforts of its developing member states. They included the following issues:

- A Commonwealth role in facilitating a dialogue on, and member states' engagement with, partnerships announced at WSSD. Ministers highlighted the need for information and analysis on: the number and range of partnerships that had been formed; what the parameters of these partnerships were; and how member states might effectively engage in partnerships to support implementation of sustainable development. A representative suggested that the CCGE might wish to return to this matter, especially the criteria for partnerships, following discussions on the issue by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). One Minister suggested that the Commonwealth could help member states to mobilise and access funds that were being released for implementing elements of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Another Minister emphasised the need for on-going efforts to promote awareness and understanding of the outcomes from WSSD and sensitise a wide range of actors to promote their engagement in partnerships.
- The preparation of time-bound action plans to operationalise the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. In this context, a number of representatives emphasised the role that the Commonwealth Secretariat could play in strengthening institutions and building capacities in developing countries to undertake this work.
- In the areas of climate change and biodiversity, work on these concerns should be concentrated on areas of comparative advantage, where the Commonwealth could add value through strategic gap filling. This would help to ensure that the Secretariat's programmes were complementary in nature, and that resources were not over-stretched or diverted from other areas of core Commonwealth competency.
- Ministers also emphasised the importance of strengthening collaboration with regional institutions, continuing to integrate all three pillars of sustainable development, and working with economic, trade and development colleagues in implementing sustainable development. Ministers recognised the critical importance of addressing the link between poverty and environment. Among the approaches, stronger linkages needed to be built

between environment and poverty in a range of processes such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

- A number of representatives outlined specific areas where Commonwealth support through technical assistance and capacity building would be appreciated.

The Commonwealth Secretariat warmly welcomed Ministers' comments on priority areas of work: these would be studied closely and used to build a balanced work programme in response to WSSD.

Hon Mohammed Valli Moosa, South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, addressed the CCGE in his capacity as Chair of the eleventh session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-11). Minister Moosa outlined the achievements of the Johannesburg Summit, including the highest-level global commitment to act on sustainable development to be expressed in the past decade. He outlined the challenges ahead as follows: keeping the focus on implementation; ensuring that the linkages are maintained between poverty and sustainable development, and between the three pillars of sustainable development; consolidating the regional focus; increasing the momentum on the WEHAB agenda (on water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity); and following-up partnerships at the domestic, regional and international levels. As the first major inter-governmental gathering since WSSD, Minister Moosa saw the UNEP Governing Council Meeting/Global Environment Ministers Forum as an important starting point on these issues. CSD-11 had the responsibility of setting the CSD's multi-year programme for the next decade, and he urged Commonwealth Ministers to be personally present in New York (28 April – 9 May 2003) for this critical session.

Ministers welcomed Commonwealth support for the review and international meeting on implementation of the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados+10). The Representative of Belize, on behalf of CARICOM, outlined the current status of preparations for the review and urged the Commonwealth to deliver its assistance within the framework that was being developed through the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). This assistance might include support for the preparation of national and regional reports, and analysis on key substantive issues. Ministers commended the Commonwealth Secretariat for its collaboration with regional organisations on preparations for the review. Samoa's Minister of Lands, Surveys and Environment, Hon Tagaloa Tuala Sale Tagaloa, thanked the Secretariat for its support to Pacific Island Countries in their preparations for WSSD, and urged that this support to continue for Barbados+10. The Representative of Mauritius called on the Commonwealth to start considering its approach to implementation of the Barbados+10 outcomes.

Ministers agreed to meet again immediately before the Eighth Special Session of the Governing Council of UNEP/Global Environment Ministers Forum in 2004. They asked the Secretariat to continue on-going consultations to identify a Chair for the next session, giving due consideration to rotation between geographical regions, size, and type of economy.

Nairobi, Kenya – 5 February 2003

**List of Participants**

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**Mr D LIVINGSTONE**

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**THE BAHAMAS**

**Senator The Hon Dr Marcus C BETHEL**

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## **MOZAMBIQUE**

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**Hon Tagaloa Tuala Sale TAGALOA**  
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## **SEYCHELLES**

**Hon. Ronny JUMEAU**  
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**Opening Remarks by Mr Winston Cox**

Ministers, Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome to the ninth meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Environment. I would like to extend especially warm greetings to those who, like me, are participating in the work of the CCGE for the first time; and to the Hon Rukman Senanayake, Sri Lanka's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, who will be our Chair for today.

As you know, the CCGE is the Commonwealth's primary intergovernmental forum for consultations on environment and sustainable development issues. We hope that these meetings provide Ministers with a chance to take part in a frank, informal, and free-ranging debate about their priorities and concerns with respect to sustainable development.

Now that governments have had time to make a preliminary assessment of the work that lies ahead of them in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, we must look at the key challenges that face the Commonwealth in implementing those agreements. If there was one message to emerge from Johannesburg, it was above all else, the need for us to make greater, demonstrable, progress on sustainable development in the coming years. It is a goal that is very close to the Commonwealth's heart, and priorities identified by Ministers today will help to frame the Secretariat's work over the next five years. So, what changed as a result of WSSD to help us to make progress? What new approaches are needed? The Johannesburg Plan of Action gives us some useful starting points:

- The first is its overarching focus on poverty eradication, continued efforts towards sustainable production and consumption patterns, and governance and human rights issues. These are all areas in which the Commonwealth has a particular strength. For example, many of you will be aware of the work of the Commonwealth's Expert Group on Democracy and Development, which is examining ways in which democracies can best be supported in combating poverty. Its report will be considered by Commonwealth Heads of Government when they meet later this year in Nigeria.
- second: negotiators in Johannesburg recognised that sustainable development can not be achieved by governments alone. They therefore encouraged the establishment of practical international partnerships as an outcome of WSSD. We would like to hear of ways in which the Commonwealth might support these initiatives, for example by using its network to bring a variety of actors to the table, or to examine areas in which partnerships are being formed and where new and additional resources for sustainable development are being released as a result of these processes. In particular you may wish to address an issue that has been raised by the Jamaican government for discussion today: that of engaging the private sector in environment protection.
- Johannesburg was witness to a deepening of the integration of economic and social issues into the sustainable development paradigm elaborated through the UN. Of course, a number of these concerns became real crunch-points in the negotiations, but this was to

be expected. If the first ten years since Rio saw us picking lower-hanging fruit, the harvest of the next ten years will require us to climb the tree. As we reach for the goals of yet more integrated development, we will need even greater resources. People need sustainable choices in their life-style and in how they generate their livelihoods, and they need freedom from poverty, and concrete strategies for reducing vulnerability – an issue highlighted to us recently by Mozambique.

- fourth: Johannesburg was also characterised by efforts to set more concrete goals on sustainable development for the coming years. For today's discussions, the Sri Lankan government has raised the issue of developing time-bound action plans for delivering the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Millennium Development Goals. I also hope that today's debate will help to identify areas where collective action by the Commonwealth would help to promote progress.

Meeting in Nairobi on the eve of Global Ministerial Environment Forum, I would like to extend a warm thank you to the UNEP Executive Director, Mr Klaus Töpfer for the co-operation and assistance that he and his excellent staff have extended to the Commonwealth Secretariat in organising this Commonwealth session. The theme before Ministers at the Global Ministerial Environment Forum is 'Poverty alleviation, the environment and sustainable development in a globalised world', with a particular focus on the cross-cutting issues of trade and environment; benefit-sharing of genetic resources; promoting sustainable production and consumption; financing for sustainable development; capacity-building; and the regional dimensions of work resulting from the World Summit on Sustainable Development. You may wish to caucus on these matters during this session, to prepare for the wider deliberations with your colleagues in the Forum.

Another critical element for us to consider is the way in which the CCGE can interact effectively with the process under the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. The CCGE was constituted following the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 to facilitate Commonwealth consultations on the implementation of sustainable development. We are keen to maintain a strong link with the New York process, to contribute to post-WSSD implementation. The next session in April, which will have a broad and important agenda related to designing the CSD's multi-year programme and methods of work on the basis of the outcomes of WSSD. You may wish to raise issues for CSD-11, and we are particularly interested to hear how the Commonwealth can best interface with the New York process through the CCGE.

Finally, under Agenda Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda, we will consider the forthcoming review and international meeting on implementation of the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Commonwealth has a strong interest in this review because it concerns over half our member states. CFTC provided technical assistance to small states during the Rio negotiations, and in many ways this support came to fruition with the convening of the Barbados Conference in 1994. The CCGE itself undertook a review of implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action in 1997, and we hope to continue this support to our small member states.

I look forward to a constructive dialogue on these and other issues. And so, it is with pleasure that I now give the floor to your Chair, Hon Rukman Senanayake.

Thank you.