

Delivering a Common Future

Commonwealth Day | 14 March 2022

Commonwealth Day Message from The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Commonwealth Secretary-General

After the change and challenge of the past two years it is fitting that, in such a momentous year for the Commonwealth, we can meet once again as a family to celebrate our special day.

In this year of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, we value the opportunity to pay tribute to her unparalleled service.

Throughout her reign, Her Majesty has been the epitome of duty, stability and wisdom supported by HRH Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh, who is sorely missed, inspiring profound global admiration and affection.

The scale and pace of technological, economic, social and cultural transformation which have marked the decades since her accession underline the Commonwealth's own journey.

Convened after the upheaval and turmoil of the Second World War to "bring a touch of healing" to our relationships, the modern Commonwealth of 54 nations – still rooted in those kinships – stretches across six continents and five oceans.

Today, we renew the values that bind us, enshrined in our charter, of democracy; peace; human rights; equality; tolerance, respect and understanding; stewardship; promotion of youth and protection of the vulnerable.

We celebrate the diversity that enriches us, and the similarities that enable us to work to together.

And we recognise our shared interests.

Our points of unity make the Commonwealth unique in our world. Drawing from the deep wells of our unique history, they enable us to face the challenges of the 21st Century with clarity, unity and purpose.

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PAGE 1/2

COVID-19 has claimed nearly one million lives in the Commonwealth. We stand together in both grief for those we have lost, and resolve to build something better from the crisis as we work together to enable all our nations to access the vaccines and support they need to move beyond the crisis.

We stand together in the face of climate change, which is an existential threat, particularly to our small states, and work together to build more sustainable relationships with each other, and with this beautiful planet which we all share.

We stand together in the face of rising protectionism and unilateralism and work together to maximise the benefits of the Commonwealth's formidable trade and investment advantage for everybody, in every one of our nations.

We stand together in the face of rising populism, and work together to protect and strengthen the process, culture and institutions of democracy.

We stand together against violence and insecurity, for peace and justice.

And in an uncertain world, with multilateralism under strain, the Commonwealth shines as a beacon of hope and promise, inspiring confidence in the benefits of international co-operation and collective action.

As we look towards the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kigali, I reiterate my own commitment to, and love for, the Commonwealth.

To continue to serve the Commonwealth as Secretary-General is my greatest honour, privilege and duty. I will continue to be driven by my unwavering belief in the Commonwealth's capacity to deliver for the public good, serving every one of our nations and their citizens. We must rise to the challenges of our times and, through our indelible shared values, shape the world to come.