



**Concluding Statement of the
59th Meeting of the
Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group**

Virtual Meeting, 2 December 2021
1200 - 1445 GMT

1. The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) held its fifty-ninth meeting by video conference on 2 December 2021. The meeting was chaired by Ambassador Raychelle Omamo SC, EGH, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Kenya. Ministers and Representatives of Australia, Barbados, Belize, Ghana, Malaysia, Namibia, Samoa, and the United Kingdom also participated in the virtual meeting.
2. Ministers noted that Barbados became the 34th republic in our Commonwealth of Nations on 30 November 2021.
3. More than a year and a half after the first lockdowns were imposed in many Commonwealth countries, Ministers remained concerned about the ongoing disruptions and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While noting the significant progress made with the distribution of vaccines, Ministers expressed a strong commitment to a fair and equitable procurement and distribution of vaccines, noting that small and vulnerable Commonwealth member states have disproportionately low vaccination rates compared to their larger counterparts.
4. Ministers noted that the virus has continued to mutate and urged that countries' responses to the emergence of new variants be fair and equitable, and based on scientific analysis of the virus. Ministers reiterated the need to cooperate on a way forward to fight the war against the virus. Ministers noted the concern raised by a number of members regarding border closures in response to the new variant, and the social and economic implications of these measures on their countries.
5. Ministers welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to strengthen processes to assist with identifying issues of concern in accordance with the Group's enhanced 2011 mandate. The Group also acknowledged that a key element of the Secretary-General's Good Offices is providing countries with opportunity, time, and support to address issues of concern before the matter is brought to the attention of CMAG and that accordingly, the identification of a serious or persistent violation of Commonwealth values and principles is a measure of last resort.

Secretary-General's Good Offices and Secretariat's Promotion of Commonwealth Fundamental Values

6. The Group received an update from the Secretary-General on her Good Offices engagements and bilateral visits, as well as technical support to enhance member governments' efforts in strengthening their human rights, rule of law, and democratic processes including through the Secretariat's rapid response mechanisms. The Group reaffirmed that the Secretary-General's Good Offices complements CMAG's pursuit of its 2011 enhanced mandate. Ministers congratulated the Secretary General on her extensive Good Offices work and commended the Secretariat's ongoing democracy work.
7. Ministers reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to advancing and supporting the fundamental political values and principles in the Commonwealth Charter, in accordance with the Group's enhanced mandate. The Group committed to working proactively and constructively with member governments to address these challenges, and to recommend measures for collective Commonwealth action aimed at addressing the root causes of these issues.
8. Ministers noted the progress in processes which could lead to the admission of new members and the re-admission of returning members, and looked forward to welcoming them as members of the Commonwealth once they have demonstrated their adherence to the values and principles set out in the Commonwealth Charter.

Next Meeting

9. The Group agreed that, in principle, its next meeting will take place in the first quarter of 2022.

ENDS