

COMMONWEALTH AND CRISIS: EMBRACING EVOLUTION

by

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ABSTRACT

As the world's oldest international organization, the Commonwealth has a history of crises, five in particular: those of 1949, 1965, the 1970s through the 80s, 1991 and 2009. Some argue that it finds itself in crisis again today: among the symptoms is its weakening ability, or will, to influence the behaviour of its member nations. Other symptoms are its lack of focus (as indicated by its sprawling agenda and programs), its low international profile, and the high level of indifference within its member countries.

This dissertation will examine each of these crisis points: their historical context, the challenges and changes they inflicted on the Commonwealth, and the actions it took to meet these challenges. It will also examine the current crisis, adding an assessment of whether the conditions of 2009 amount to a crisis point or not. The dissertation will start with a brief comparison of the Commonwealth and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), the Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (CPLP) and the Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (OEI) and will conclude with an assessment of the lessons that these organizations can learn from the Commonwealth's history of crisis.

Analysis of the five crisis points indicates that the Commonwealth is a reactive and adaptive organization that is affected by, and strives to affect, world events; that it is shaped and influenced by its members, and that crises have served the Commonwealth as an opportunity to re-focus and revise itself. While reinvention is a positive feature, the associated challenges and questions give cause for further investigation. These issues centre on focus.

The analysis and comparison of the Commonwealth's history of crisis also produces insight into how the Commonwealth may better deal with and prepare for future crisis points. Its primary suggestions are that the Commonwealth accept its nature as a living organization by generating a culture of constant revision, while simultaneously focusing its principles and values and bringing its programs into alignment with its principles. The Commonwealth may also seek to adopt better forecasting measures as organizational theory suggests, so that it can remain an agile organization, drawing benefits from the uncertainty that crisis may bring, or drawing benefits so well that crisis does not occur.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
ANZAC	Australia and New Zealand Army Corps
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings
CHRI	Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative
CMAG	Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group
CMF	Ministerial Conference of la Francophonie
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CPF	Standing Council of Francophonie
CPLP	Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa, Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries
CRO	Commonwealth relations Office
CYC	Commonwealth Youth Programme
CYCI	Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative
CYF	Commonwealth Youth Forum
EEC	European Economic Community
FMU	Le Fonds Multilateral Unique
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
MCAP	Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIBMAR	No Independence Before Majority African Rule
OAU	Organization of African Unity

OECD	Organization for Economic and Co-operation and Development
OEI	Organizacion de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educacion, la ciencia y la cultura, Organization of Iberian-American States for Education, Science and Culture
OIF	Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, La Francophonie
PMM	Prime Ministers' Meetings
RCS	Royal Commonwealth Society
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
Summit	Conference of Heads of State and Government of countries having French in sharing
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union ANZAC Australia and New Zealand Army Corps

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

“The Commonwealth has defied the prophets of doom and survived many obituaries in order to remain relevant and credible. It has done so by consistently evolving and adapting to changing needs and new challenges over the last sixty years. It must, of course, continue to do so” (Banerji 2010). These words spoken by Mr. Amitav Banerji, director of the Secretariat’s Political Affairs Division, during a conference on the Commonwealth’s sixtieth anniversary highlight the Commonwealth’s history of crisis as well as the organization’s ability to emerge from tumultuous times with renewed purpose and relevance. This ability was demonstrated in the crises of 1949, 1965, the 1970s and 80s, 1991 and perhaps again in the debated crisis point of 2009.

This paper argues that crisis is part of the Commonwealth’s nature as a dynamic and evolving organization. Indeed, the many crisis points that the Commonwealth has faced have been the catalyst for the research of this paper. While reinvention may be part of the Commonwealth’s nature, and a positive feature at that, there are a number of challenges and questions that have continually arisen during the five crisis points examined in this paper that give cause for further investigation. A pattern in times of crisis has emerged giving insight into the nature of the Commonwealth, and also some of its persistent challenges. Throughout all five crisis points the Commonwealth has been asked questions about its value, relevance and goals, leading the Commonwealth to re-define its core values and principles at each point and shift its focus.

While these crisis points have provided the Commonwealth with the opportunity to evaluate and focus itself, the persistent nature of the questions being asked of the Commonwealth hint that there may be an underlying issue which the Commonwealth may seek to address. These underlying issues centre on focus. At times the

Commonwealth has encountered conflicting values, such as non-racialism and non-interference, which have needed to be clarified and placed in a hierarchy of values. While the Commonwealth's values have remained consistent, the meaning of these values and what they include has changed over time. Thus, revisiting the meaning of the Commonwealth's values at each transition is a positive feature as it allows the Commonwealth's diverse members to reach consensus on the meaning of these values and how they are applied in the world. However, especially in more recent crisis points, the Commonwealth has not taken then extra step of examining the meaning of its values so much as it has just reaffirmed old definitions. If the commonwealth were to clearly define its principles and how they are expressed in the current world these contradictions may be significantly diminished. Also, the Commonwealth has formulated too many programs that try and achieve too many different goals-acting outside its niche and duplicating existing successful programs. This has made the connection between the actions of the Commonwealth and its core values and principles unclear and has caused the Commonwealth to be overextended and inefficient.

Furthermore, the examination and comparison of the five crisis point's yields insight into how the Commonwealth may better deal with or prepare for future crisis. The primary suggestions from this paper are that the Commonwealth accept its nature as a living organization by instituting a culture of constant revision, while simultaneously redefining its principles and values in their modern context and bring its programs into alignment with its values and capacity. The Commonwealth may also seek to adopt better forecasting measures as organizational theory suggests, so that the Commonwealth can remain an agile organization and account for the uncertainty that crisis may bring, or account for it so well that it does not occur.

One objective of this paper is to share the insights gained from the examination of the Commonwealth with other like organizations. As the world's oldest international organization¹, the Commonwealth has been a model for a number of organizations that share eight features: diverse membership, similar organizational structure, common goals, shared values, shared language, shared history or culture, similar programs, and a formal and informal network. A brief comparison of these organizations to the Commonwealth will be conducted in the first chapter of this paper to establish that there are enough similarities between these organizations and the Commonwealth to make the research carried out in the following chapters of relevance to these like organizations. After the examination and comparison of the Commonwealth's crisis points, this paper will revisit the three organizations listed above in order to apply the findings of the paper to these organizations. Since all three organizations have in some way been modeled after the Commonwealth and share the eight components listed above, they can gain insight from the Commonwealth's experience.

The primary research of this paper will be concentrated in examining the historical crisis points of the Commonwealth. The first of these is the birth of the modern Commonwealth in 1949 where the Commonwealth was faced with either evolving or dissolving and accepting its new identity as a multi-racial Commonwealth of equal members. The second historical crisis point occurred in 1965 when the Commonwealth was faced with a ballooning membership of newly independent nations, a lack of capacity of the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) to handle the new demands thrust upon it, growing tensions amongst Commonwealth members against Britain and her decision to

¹ The Commonwealth can be referred to as the world oldest international organization from the perspective that the modern Commonwealth is a historical continuation of the British Commonwealth, and is the oldest political union of nations.

apply for membership to the European Economic Community (EEC) and to limit Commonwealth immigration into Britain. The third point is the 1970s and 80s when the Commonwealth was challenged with the rebellion of Rhodesia and the Apartheid regime. The final point was in 1991 when the Commonwealth faced the anti-climax of its golden age and was forced to redefine itself in the new post-Cold War, post-Apartheid era. These four cases will be examined in chapter two of this paper by first providing the historical context for each crisis point followed by the challenges, changes and actions that the Commonwealth undertook during these times. The purpose of this examination is to look at how and why the Commonwealth got into crisis and how it emerged from these points, with particular attention paid to the questions and challenges that the Commonwealth faced during these points.

Chapter three will extend this examination by looking at 2009 as a potential crisis point. On the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary, the Commonwealth was faced with wide spread ignorance about and indifference toward the institution, a lack of focus and mounting questions regarding its relevance in the twenty-first century and its commitment and ability to act upon its core values and principles. The crisis of 2009 requires its own chapter as it is not an agreed upon crisis point. Some within the Commonwealth argue that the Commonwealth is not threatened but vibrantly alive. Also, because the crisis, if there is one, is not over, is distinct from the historical cases noted above. Chapter three will therefore ask if the Commonwealth is in crisis or not. In order to do this, this chapter will examine 2009 as if it were a crisis based upon the criteria outlined in chapter two while simultaneously engaging this debate. It is unlikely that either perspective can be fully proven. However, this paper will make a comparison between the historical cases and the 2009 case as if it were an accepted crisis point. This comparison will be

undertaken in chapter four of this paper where the prominent patterns and lessons for the Commonwealth will be extracted.

As the world's oldest international organization, the Commonwealth is in and of itself a significant topic, not just because it has lasted longer than any other organization, though that does say something about the organization. The Commonwealth has been a model, for multilateralism and a number of other international organizations, some of which will be discussed below. The Commonwealth also has instituted a number of values and programs that have become foundation pieces of international relations. For example, the principles of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and good governance are values that many if not most organizations have within their mandate. The Commonwealth has given these organizations a good example in this respect, and in operationalizing these principles through practices such as negotiating, suspending non-complying members, elections monitoring, technical and educational exchanges. The Commonwealth provides an example that many international organizations can learn from both in terms of its mistakes and successes. In this way, the Commonwealth also demonstrates one of the greatest or most sought after skills: longevity. In the crowded world that international development and politics is today, competition is strong and the Darwinian rule of survival of the fittest seems ever present. The Commonwealth seems to be one of the fittest; hence, other international organization may take note if they wish to evolve into the next phase of history.

The Commonwealth may also be a good case study or case in point for organizational theorists who note that organizational agility is not only sought after in the sum of millions of dollars, it is also essential for an organization in order to overcome and whether uncertainty (Robert Quinn 2000, 129-130). This agility is something that the

Commonwealth has been unknowingly criticised for, because of its continual crises, but is largely how the Commonwealth has been able to evolve and remain relevant. Thus, other international organizations may want to borrow from these organizational theorists using the Commonwealth as a model.

However, the history of crisis that seems to be inherent in the Commonwealth's nature has raised a number of questions and criticisms amongst insiders and outsiders alike. While some suggest that, at sixty, the Commonwealth has lived out the best of its years and should retire. Others suggest that the Commonwealth is just as vibrant as ever. In the dynamic and competitive field of development and international relations, coupled with a crisis of identity, value and relevance, sixty for the Commonwealth, looks like the beginning of the end. However, the research of this paper will illustrate that crisis is not necessarily a negative feature in the Commonwealth; in fact, it is part of the Commonwealth's nature as a fluid and reactive organization. The putative crisis of 2009 is then merely another chance for the Commonwealth to re-evaluate itself, its structures, and its principles, and to shift its focus towards achieving its goals.

The research conducted in this paper is therefore significant because, the pattern of crisis and insight into what the successive crisis points in the Commonwealth mean has not yet been articulated as such. Thus, crisis appears to be a negative force making the Commonwealth seem tenuous and continually on the verge of dissolving. If the research in this paper is correct in stating that crisis in the Commonwealth is not only a natural phenomenon but also provides the organization with opportunities to strengthen itself, then the Commonwealth may seek to build this culture of constant revision into its framework so as to avoid the drama associated with crisis or at minim, prepare for and channel the benefits of crisis more effectively. The research for this paper has found that

after each crisis point the Commonwealth re-articulates its core values and principles.

This is part of the revision that is a tradition in the Commonwealth, but also indicates that the Commonwealth can be unfocused and unclear on what it was originally mandated to do. This paper will thus suggest that the Commonwealth clearly focus and perhaps narrow its programs to fit within the Commonwealth's current value added areas. The re-focusing along with the acceptance of the Commonwealth's history of crisis may help the organization to answer the nagging questions of relevance and value that occur when it is seen to be in crisis. In this way, the Commonwealth would no longer be fighting against its nature. Instead it could embrace it, creating greater clarity within the organization. This embracing would likely address a number of additional challenges that the Commonwealth faces, such as a low profile and apparent inaction on some of its core values.

At minimum, this paper will provide readers with a better understanding of the Commonwealth as an organization and how it has been able to transition and evolve out of crisis. It will also help readers to gain a clearer picture of the Commonwealth so that the current crisis of 2009 does not look like the ending of the Commonwealth, but rather another transition point. When writing about the Commonwealth at age sixty, former Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General Peter Marshall wrote that "our purpose in observing the anniversary is not simply to recollect, but also to reflect on what the past can tell us about how to tackle the future" (Marshall 2009, 543). It is the intention of this paper to utilize this historical approach to gain insight into both how the Commonwealth reacts in crisis, and how it may use the insights gained from this examination to tackle its future.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPARISONS

The Commonwealth is often referred to as a unique organization. Yet, as the oldest continuing international institution, the Commonwealth may no longer be as unique as scholars claim. While it has undoubtedly created a number of original practices and programs, many of the Commonwealth's innovations have been emulated, creating similarities with organizations that have a diverse membership like the Commonwealth. This trend is easily explained by organizational theory which posits that "stable patterns of behaviour are...likely to develop among organizations, motivated...partly by the goal of reducing uncertainty for all of the actors" (Pfeffer, *Organizational Design* 1978, 158). Further, organizations will also imitate existing organizations in order to appear legitimate (Pfeffer, *Organizations and Organization Theory* 1982, 254). In an increasingly globalized world, the number of international organizations, non-governmental and governmental agencies and civil society groups has ballooned. These groups have taken on a variety of issue areas making the field of development highly competitive. Within the uncertainty of the modern world, the Commonwealth has proven to be an organization that has been successful in carrying out its mandate and surviving. It is therefore a prime candidate for imitation.

There are three organizations which most seem to imitate the Commonwealth in many ways. They are the: 'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie' or in English, La Francophonie (OIF); the Comunidade dos Pais de Lingua Portuguesa or the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP); and the Organizacion de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educacion, la ciencia y la cultura or the Organization of Iberian-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI). Former deputy Secretary General and Commonwealth Scholar, Krishnan Srinivasan, notes the similarities of the

OIF and the CPLP to the Commonwealth by stating that “the Commonwealth was the inspiration for” these organizations (Srinivasan 2005, 83). While it is more questionable whether the Commonwealth inspired the OEI, it does share some similarities with the Commonwealth and does not need to be modeled after the Commonwealth to gain insight from it. There are eight primary criteria for comparison to the Commonwealth - diverse membership, similar organizational structure, common goals, shared values, shared language, shared history or culture, similar programs, and a formal and informal network. The OIF, the CPLP and the OEI all meet, to varying degrees, these eight criteria of comparison. In the following section I will discuss these similarities by briefly examining each organization, its challenges and how it compares to the Commonwealth. I will begin with the Commonwealth, followed by the most obvious organization of comparison, the OIF, then the CPLP and finally the OEI. To conclude I will discuss the seven characteristics that scholars note make the Commonwealth unique.

In a recent article, Timothy Shaw noted that “the absence of comparative studies of today’s several Commonwealths—anglophone, francophone, lusophone and of Iberoamerican states—is a remarkable gap in the field of international relations and institutions” (T. Shaw 2010, 333). While I will discuss some of these ‘Commonwealths’ in this paper and draw comparisons, it is not the focus of my paper, and as Shaw has noted further research would be both beneficial and interesting, Shaw making a strong stride in this direction in his recent article. The objective of this section is however, to explore if there are enough commonalities to make the findings of this paper relevant for the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI. If they are all fashioned in some ways after the Commonwealth, challenges, insights and suggestions for the Commonwealth outlined in this paper may have a foreshadowing effect for these three younger organizations and

other international organizations that share similarities and challenges with the Commonwealth. As the literature and analysis of these ‘Commonwealths’ emerge, even greater insights may be applied to like organizations as well as the inherent value of these ‘Commonwealths’ to international relations.

THE COMMONWEALTH

The era of the modern Commonwealth began in 1949 with the signing of the London Declaration which declared all members free and equal, thus separating the British Commonwealth as a colonial organization from the modern Commonwealth of Nations (See Appendix A for the full declaration). Before 1949, the Commonwealth had existed in varying forms since the 1870s, predominantly as a colonial organization. The modern Commonwealth bears no colonial functions or semblance except for the commonalities of culture, language and history that most Commonwealth countries share because of their colonial roots². Today the Commonwealth boasts fifty four member states, three of which have no colonial links to Britain. The membership of the Commonwealth bridges many divides, North-South, rich-poor, island-mainland, large-small, race, religion and so forth. The Commonwealth’s diverse membership remains one of its strongest defining features as an international institution. Furthermore, these fifty four nations share (at least formally) the Commonwealth’s core values, outlined in the Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles in 1971 and elaborated in the Harare Declaration of 1991, which highlights the rule of law, democracy, human rights, peace, non-discrimination, development and freedom (The Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles 1971). These values are implemented in the Commonwealth’s

² For more information on the Commonwealth’s transition from the British Commonwealth into the modern Commonwealth, and information on the relations between members at the time, see *The Commonwealth and International Affairs: The Round Table Centennial Selection* edited by Alex May.

many programs such as elections monitoring, technical exchanges, youth exchanges, educational summits for teachers, judicial training and exchanges and the Commonwealth Games.

The head of the Commonwealth is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; however, this is more a symbolic role than an active political post. The main representative of the Commonwealth in the international community and Chief Executive of the Secretariat is the Secretary General, currently Kamallesh Sharma³. The Secretary General is elected by member nations for a four year term.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGMs), which are held in a different Commonwealth country every two years, are the main arena where heads of government discuss relevant issues and produce a Communiqué. The Communiqué of a CHOGM is written and agreed upon by a consensus approach whereby each nation has only one vote or conversely, each nation holds a veto. The Communiqué represents the concerns or beliefs of the nations of the Commonwealth and outlines actions that the Commonwealth should take, usually on a specified theme. In addition to the responsibility of each member nation to implement the Communiqué, the Secretariat, which is the main organizational structure of the Commonwealth, is charged with executing the Communiqué and the plans of the Commonwealth Heads of Government through technical support, advice and policy development (W. D. McIntyre, *A Guide to the Contemporary Commonwealth* 2001, 129-38).

³ Kamallesh Sharma was appointed Secretary General at the 2007 CHGOM in Uganda and is the first Indian to take this post. This is significant for the Commonwealth because Sharma represents the first Asian to hold the post of Secretary General, the last region to be represented by this post. It is also significant that an Indian represent this post during the Commonwealths sixtieth anniversary as the creation of the modern Commonwealth began with the joining of India. Further, India is a BRIC country with growing importance in international relations and international economy.

Within the Commonwealth structure, there are two other main bodies that help implement the Commonwealth's shared values: the Commonwealth of Learning and the Commonwealth Foundation. The Commonwealth of Learning is charged with fostering open education and learning networks across the Commonwealth, while the Commonwealth Foundation is the main link to the Commonwealth's large civil society network that undertakes development and cultural awareness programs.

A recent creation in the Commonwealth's timeline is the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), which was founded in 1995 to assess, address and respond to member nations who do not comply with the core principles of the Commonwealth found in the Harare Declaration of 1991 (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991). Nine foreign ministers sit on this council which is convened by the Secretary General annually or when needed. The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, unlike most international organizations, holds the power to suspend a member nation for continued or serious violations of the Hare Declaration and has done so a number of times.

The Commonwealth's budget is divided into three separate components, the Secretariat, the Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP) and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC). The Secretariat and recently the CYP are funded through assessed fees by member states which are based on each government's capacity to pay and voluntary donations, while the CFTC is funded solely through voluntary contributions. For the 2009/2010 year, the budget for the Secretariat was close to fifteen million pounds, while the CYP was nearly three million pounds and the CFTC was roughly twenty nine million pounds (Commonwealth Secretariat n.d.). The Commonwealth's operational budgets are miniscule in comparison to other international

organizations that take on similar tasks, which is often a criticism of the Commonwealth. The total budget of the Commonwealth is roughly forty five million pounds, as a point of reference this is about one percent of the annual aid budget of the UK Department for International Development (Banerji 2010).

In addition to the formal Commonwealth, discussed above, the informal Commonwealth, incorporating both civil society and individuals, makes up a significant part of the Commonwealth's programs and global influence. For example, the Commonwealth Games Federation belongs in the informal Commonwealth as does the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS). The Commonwealth's associated civil society groups and non-governmental organizations are amongst the largest networks of their type in the world and are another source of pride and value for the Commonwealth. In fact Marshall writes that "the extent and effectiveness of the cooperation between the diverse unofficial elements and the official elements of the Commonwealth has no parallel in other major international organizations" (Marshall 2009, 539).

While the modern Commonwealth has just celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 2009, the institution faces many challenges and criticisms. Since this paper will detail many of these challenges later on, this description will be brief. The most popular of the criticisms is the lack of knowledge about the Commonwealth within and outside Commonwealth countries. This lack of knowledge often leads individuals to falsely criticize the Commonwealth of being a colonial or neo-colonial organization and to dismiss the organization because of its low profile. This raises another criticism of the Commonwealth that it holds no power to influence its members and enforce its principles

and is therefore useless. Many insiders of the Commonwealth also note that the organization has taken on too many goals and projects which have left the organization difficult to define, hard to finance adequately and without a niche. These three areas represent some of the main criticisms of the Commonwealth today.

LA FRANCOPHONIE

The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) or la Francophonie was shaped after the Commonwealth; however, it does not share the same model of creation as a transitioned organization from colonized to independent states. In fact, France was initially hesitant regarding the idea of the OIF and it was not until Senegalese President Leopold Senghor pushed for its creation that France accepted the idea of a French union.

La Francophonie was, therefore, founded much later than the Commonwealth-in 1970. La Francophonie was formed in order to promote and protect the French language and the humanistic values associated with it. The OIF has fifty-six members, which include countries and regional areas such as Quebec and the French Community of Belgium, and fourteen observers. Eleven of la Francophonie's members are also Commonwealth members. Like the Commonwealth, la Francophonie's fifty-six members bridge the North and the South and make up some of the richest and poorest countries in the world. The OIF also boast members who do not have colonial links to France, such as Bulgaria amongst many others. Hence, the prominent common link between la Francophonie members is not colonial, but rather linguistic and cultural.

In addition, la Francophonie members also share (at least formally) a set of values translated into its four professed missions. The first of these missions is to promote the French language, cultural and linguistic diversity. The next mission is to promote peace, democracy and human rights. The third goal is to support education, training and higher

education. The final aim is to research and to develop cooperation at the service of sustainable development (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie 2009). Of these four missions only the first mission, the promotion of the French language and culture, is distinct from the Commonwealth's missions. These similarities have logically led to the creation of many Commonwealth inspired programs such as elections monitoring, education led human rights and democracy programs, the Francophone Games and associations of institutions for higher learning.

The organizational structure of the OIF bears some semblance to the Commonwealth but also has some key differences. The head of the OIF is not a member of the monarchy, but the Secretary General, currently Abdou Diouf, who shares a similar role to the Commonwealth equivalent. The Secretary General is called the cornerstone of the OIF and is the political figurehead for the organization and the driver of political action (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie 2009). The Secretary General is also elected by the membership at its Heads of Government meeting the Conference of Heads of State and Government of countries having French in Sharing, more commonly known as the Summit.

The Summit is held biannually, is hosted by a different member nation each time and adopts resolutions and produces a Communiqué for the functioning of the OIF. The Summit is the highest authority in the OIF, followed by the Ministerial Conference of la Francophonie (CMF). The CMF representatives are either a minister of Foreign Affairs or a Minister responsible for la Francophonie. These ministers meet annually to ensure that agreements made during the Summits are implemented and to prepare for the next Summit. The CMF is also responsible for deciding multilateral routes of action and adopting the OIF budget.

Following the CMF, the Standing Council of Francophonie (CPF) is also responsible for the preparation and implementation of the Summits and is chaired by the Secretary General. The CPF is charged with ensuring the performance of the decisions made by the CMF, examines proposals for the distribution of multilateral funds and acts as a facilitator, arbitrator and coordinator. In terms of structure, both the CMF and CPF are distinct from the Commonwealth, as are a number of the other structures not discussed above⁴.

The budget of la Francophonie is much larger than the Commonwealth's, but is collected in a similar manner, with the exception of funding received from associate and observer nations, as the Commonwealth does not have this system. The OIF budget is comprised of mandatory fees and donations by member nations and governments, in part based on national wealth, and by the voluntary contributions of associate and observer nations, and governments who are not required to contribute to the OIF. The operational budget of the OIF in 2007 was over seventy-nine million euros and nearly ninety million euros in 2009, sixty-three percent of which was allocated to running the OIF's programs (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie 2009). The OIF also has a special fund, Le Fonds Multilateral Unique (FMU), which is dedicated to financing multilateral cooperation programs. While CMF is responsible for adopting a budget, the Secretary General directs budgetary decisions to the administrator, who acts as the main organizational component of the OIF and is responsible for managing the financial affairs of the OIF.

Some of the major criticisms that the OIF encounters are: that France controls the OIF's finances, that France imposes the OIF's Secretary Generals and that the Académie,

⁴ see www.francophonie.org for full details on the OIF's operational structures.

which is responsible for the French language, is controlled by France. These three criticisms are part of a broader claim that the OIF is manipulated by France and is, therefore, a neo-colonial organization.

Since France contributes roughly two-thirds of the OIF budget, approximately fifty-six million euros based on the 2007 budget, it is often accused of directing the funds to fit its political and economic advantage (Milhaud 2006). With members like Switzerland and Canada, France is by no means the only economic power in the OIF and its overwhelming contributions to la Francophonie are, therefore, suspect. Regarding this point, D.E. Ager notes that Africa, for example, is often a source of wealth for France and “[e]ven if such a neo-colonialist view is too simple and too cynical, economic contracts between France and Africa are more significant than for many of France’s competitors” (Ager 1996, 148). This criticism is further accentuated by France’s poor record of its administration of aid, particularly in Africa where reportedly less than five percent is put into development and the majority is returned to France through ‘tied aid’ in contracts between French firms, the most controversial of these being military contracts (Barber 1991). France’s control of the OIF budget is, therefore, seen as an extension of its national interest and foreign policy.

Discussing the question of who benefits financially from la Francophonie, Ager writes that it can be hard to tell, but “France’s own foreign trade shows clearly that Francophonie, for her, is an economic success”, further noting that in 1994 France’s “positive situation in Francophonie was some 47 billion francs” (Ager 1996, 104). Whether these economic linkages and profits are the result of innocent partnerships created as a result of old colonial links, or the strategic manipulation of the OIF budget; the latter is a consistent criticism of the OIF and of France.

An additional argument concerning France's control of the OIF and neo-colonial tendencies is the accusation that France imposed the last two Secretary Generals over the preferences of many members. This argument has been articulated by Olivier Milhaud, author of *Post Francophonie?* (Milhaud 2006). Ager writes that under then French President Chirac, Boutros-Boutros Ghali was imposed "as 'elected' Secretary-General [after] the withdrawal of the alternative candidate (former President Zinsou of Benin). [This] provoked a near rebellion by African countries, who saw Chirac's realization of his personal promise to the former Secretary-General of the United Nations as one more proof of the continuing strength of the 'old ways'" (Ager, *Identity, Insecurity and Image: France and Language* 1999, 189). Furthermore, Milhaud suggests that current Secretary General Abdou Diouf was also imposed upon the OIF by France after the other candidate, again, withdrew their application (Milhaud 2006). France's position in this regard is not helped by the close relationship that Abdou Diouf has with former President of France, Francois Mitterrand (Public 1990).

In addition, France has also been reproached for controlling the French language through the French Académie, which is the main body that controls the language. The French Académie was created in France and remains a French organization. It is therefore easy to accuse France of controlling this national organization. The critique finds its main traction in the Académies' refusal to accept new words and definitions from Africa, Quebec and so forth, in an effort to keep the language pure (Milhaud 2006). However, this is in contradiction to the OIF's principle of promoting linguistic and cultural diversity. Though France champions the promotion of cultural diversity Ager notes that, "France backs cultural diversity mainly to protect her own culture and language, seen as dangerously threatened by English and American culture" (Milhaud 2006). Having been

the birth place of French and having the French Académie on national soil, France is placed in the awkward position of being seen as the arbiter of the debate on whether to keep the French language pure, or to make it more vernacular. Perhaps this is an unwanted position for France where it is falsely accused, or perhaps, it is an intentional strategy whereby France uses its positioning to promote or even impose its values upon the rest of the French speaking world, using la Francophonie as its global stage.

Thus, the claims that France disproportionately funds the OIF to gain political control of the organization; that France has imposed the OIF's Secretary Generals; and that France controls the French language through the Académie, help strengthen the broader claim that la Francophonie acts as neo-colonial organization.

Additional criticisms that the OIF faces revolve around its exclusionary nature as a language based organization and its members' lack of commitment to the principles of the organization. Since the primary purpose of the OIF is the promotion and protection of the French language, its membership and applicability to the world at large is seemingly limited to the French geographic. The OIF is therefore criticized for being restricted to operating in the French speaking world. Further, the OIF is criticized for the lack of commitment of its members to its principles and the organizations inability or lack of will to enforce its principles. For example, some of the OIF's members are currently or have been among the worst violators of the organization's principles of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. These members include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti, to name a few. The OIF has not enforced its principles in these countries. Delinquent nations draw negative attention to the organization and weaken its credibility amongst members and internationally, bringing the organizations value into question. In other words, if the OIF cannot bring its members, who have upon

joining agreed to the organizations principles, into alignment with these consensual values, what credence does the organization have? However, this is a criticism which most international organizations face and one which the Commonwealth is not exempted from.

La Francophonie is often referred to as the organization that most closely resembles the Commonwealth because it was inspired by the Commonwealth and therefore has since adopted many comparable structures to the Commonwealth, as noted above. In fact, so closely related are the OIF and the Commonwealth that the Secretary Generals of the Commonwealth and la Francophonie have cooperated on a number of occasions. In fact, French President Nicolas Sarkozy commented at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2009 that “your organisation and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), have a need to work more closely together because the global challenges, with which we are currently confronted, require ever more united solutions”. (Sarkozy 2009) Co-operation between the Commonwealth and the OIF is not a new phenomenon as the two Secretary Generals have provided position papers to other international organizations, such as the recent G8 summit in Huntsville, Ontario, Canada, for a number of years.

THE COMMUNITY OF PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

The next organization that bears resemblance to the Commonwealth is the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP). The CPLP was formed in 1996 by seven founding members: Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Since its creation the CPLP has gained one new member, East Timor, in 2002 and three observers, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius and Senegal. Of the CPLP’s membership and observers only Mozambique and Mauritius

belong to the Commonwealth. The CPLP's members are joined by having Portuguese as an official language, often accompanied by a shared history, culture and vision of development and democratic goals.

The CPLP's main objectives are: to promote linkages between member nations within many fields, including diplomacy, business, education, health, technology, defence, sports and justice, to strengthen member nations' influence in international organizations; and to promote the Portuguese language and culture through its programs (Countries 2006). To achieve these goals the CPLP maintains connections with civil society, but nowhere near the number or diversity of the Commonwealths network. Like the Commonwealth, the CPLP has a history of elections monitoring, has similar goals such as the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, and shares similar programs such as a technical cooperation programme and similar youth exchange programs and the Lusophone Games.

The CPLP's structure shares similarities with both the Commonwealth and la Francophonie. The CPLP has both a Secretariat and a biannual Heads of Government meeting. The Conference of Heads of State and Government represents the highest level of the CPLP and guides and develops policy for the organization, creates legal instruments and affiliate organizations for the running of the CPLP, and elects the Executive Secretary. Like the Commonwealth, all decisions made at the Conference of Heads of State and Governments are made through consensus.

Below the Conference of Heads of State and Government is the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers approves the CPLP budget, selects candidates for the Executive Secretary, chairs the Conference of Heads of State and Government, coordinates and oversees the operations of the CPLP, makes policy recommendations to

the Heads of State and Government and conducts special tasks requested by the Heads of State and Government (Countries 2006).

Not dissimilar in principle to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, the CPLP has a Standing Committee for Consultation that is comprised of a representative from each member nation. The committee meets monthly to assess the compliance of member nations to the values, principles, decisions and recommendations of the CPLP and to monitor its programs (Countries 2006). This body however, does not have the power to suspend non-complying members.

The Executive Secretariat, like the Commonwealth and the OIF Secretariats, is responsible for implementing the decisions made at the Conference of Heads of State and Government. The Executive Secretariat is also charged with designing and implementing the CPLP's programs and initiatives, monitoring and attending intra-organizational meetings and examining the implementation of decisions made at the Ministerial Meetings, which are meetings held by the ministers of specific intra-organizational bodies such as youth, education and the like (Countries 2006). At the head of the Executive Secretariat is the Executive Secretary, Domingos Simões Pereira, who has a role similar to the Secretary Generals of the Commonwealth and la Francophonie. The Executive Secretary, along with the other five Executive Secretaries, whose position is similar to the status of Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth, is elected for no more than four years or two terms (Countries 2006).

Funding for the Executive Secretariat is made up of contributions from the CPLP's eight members, as determined by quotas developed by the Council of Ministers. Additional finances are collected through voluntary donations of member and associate states as well as private entities, for a special fund, similar to la Francophonie's FMU,

dedicated to the concrete actions of the CPLP (Countries 2006). This fund is governed by separate rules and procedures which must be approved by the Council of Ministers.

A unique feature of the CPLP is its military and defence involvement with member nations. Defence ministers of the CPLP hold international meetings and symposiums with regards to defence strategies, security, peace and the like. The CPLP also conducts humanitarian and elections monitoring missions with the joint forces of member nations for the purpose of promoting stability, peace and democracy. The CPLP has been actively involved in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and East Timor.

However, the political actions of the CPLP coupled with its military cooperation have left the CPLP open to criticism. For example, the CPLP became involved in Guinea-Bissau after a military coup in 1980 which installed Joao Vieira as President, a post he retained for nearly twenty years. While the actions of this mission do not reflect some of the CPLP's principles such as democracy, the intentions of the organization were also brought into question by Vieira who "felt [that], Portugal and Cape Verde were using the CPLP as a vehicle for their own interests" (MacQueen 2006). This is one example that demonstrates the perceived or real lack of neutrality of the CPLP in its missions, thus opening the organization to criticism.

Furthermore, because of the CPLP's political involvement, it suffers from criticisms regarding the progress of the countries it operates in. For example, the CPLP has been involved in Angola for a number of years to promote stability, democracy, development and peace. However, the president has been in power for over thirty one years, conflict still occurs, freedom of speech is limited and poverty is still rampant. Amidst these pervasive problems, the CPLP can be questioned for its continued support of the Angolan government and the success of its mission, the nation's compliance with

the founding beliefs of the CPLP and indeed whether the CPLP should be politically involved in member nations. Perhaps military based missions and political involvement should be left to the United Nations, regional groups such as the African Union, or agreements between individual nations, leaving the CPLP to focus its efforts on development work and the characteristics which make the organization unique, such as the shared history and language of CPLP members.

ORGANIZATION OF IBERIAN-AMERICAN STATES

The least regionally diverse organization of the three being compared to the Commonwealth is the Organization of Iberian-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI). The OEI began as an educational office in 1949, transitioned into an inter-governmental organization in 1954, broadened its scope again in 1985 and in 1991 expanded into its modern role as a Heads of Government led organization. The OEI's membership is mainly comprised of Latin American states, with the exceptions of Spain, Portugal and Equatorial Guinea. The OEI currently boasts twenty-two members and observers.

Like the previous organizations discussed, the members of the OEI share a similar history and culture and speak either Spanish or Portuguese or both. The main objectives of the OEI are to foster greater understanding and cooperation between Latin American countries and Europe, to encourage the Spanish and Portuguese language and culture through science, technology and education, and to use this promotion as a method for stimulating development, peace, human rights and solidarity.

The OEI is structured by three authorities: the General Assembly, which is made up of member states Heads of Government or representatives, the Board of Directors, and the General Secretariat. The General Assembly, the most powerful body of authority, is

responsible for setting the budget, approving programs and electing the Secretary General. Each official member is granted one vote, while observers may voice their positions but cast no vote. The passing of general agenda items are achieved with a simple majority, while amendments to a Statute of the OEI must pass by a two-thirds majority. The General Assembly meets annually, unless an extraordinary general assembly, which discusses special topics, is called.

Next, the Board of Directors is constituted by respective member nations' ministers of education and is responsible for the overall governance and administration of the OEI. The Board of Directors also approves the activity report, the biannual program and the budget and financial status of the OEI. The budget of the OEI is made up of mandatory quotas for full member nations, voluntary contributions by members, associate members, observers, private and public companies and organizations (Regulation: Nature and Purpose 1985). In 2007/8 the total budget of the OIE was over fifty-five million United States Dollars (Cultura 2007). See Appendix B for a partial budget. Of this budget the largest amounts were allocated to the governance of public institutions, educational reforms and the improvements, the promotion of educational policies to increase educational opportunities and equity, and funding for institutes for development and educational innovation (Cultura 2007).

The next level of authority is the General Secretariat, which is charged with representing the General Assembly and the overall direction of the OEI. At the head of the General Secretariat is the Secretary General-a post currently held by Alvaro Marchesi Ullastres. The General Secretariat oversees the executive, technical and administrative direction of the OEI, and liaises between the OEI, governments, companies and

organizations. The General Secretariat is also responsible for the overall implementation of the OEI's programs and initiatives.

Programs that the OEI implements include emergency relief, educational facilities and programs, teacher training, environmental programs and efforts such as the elimination of plastic bags, community projects which foster solidarity and the spread of culture, innovation in health related technology and practices, and technical exchanges (Countries 2006). While many of the OEI's projects are more local and regional than the other three organizations, there are a number of commonalities which include the promotion of education through higher learning institutes, technical and educational exchanges, especially amongst youth and developmental efforts through environmental sustainability, education, health and culture.

The challenges that the OEI faces are similar in many respects to the other organizations discussed above. The OEI has been faulted from within for lacking power and the ability to act. In 2007 the Nicaraguan President, Daniel Ortega, asked in frustration, "why don't we transform this forum of the Iberian-American nations and fill it with meaning, instead of just coming here to chat, take pictures, have lunch and dinner?" (Ortega propone transformar la Cumbre Iberoamericana en el sustituto de la OEA 2007). Considering this criticism, the OEI has been faced with questions about its relevance, especially in comparison with other organizations such as the Organización de Estados Americanos or the Organization of American States (OEA, OAS), which includes Canada, the United States and the Caribbean region. The OEA has not only been in existence longer than the OEI, it has larger donor countries, shares many of the same values and principles as the OEI and holds more international weight because of these factors. The prominent differences between the OEA and the OEI are the OEI's

connection with Spain and Portugal, the shared history of the member nations and the emphasis on a common language and culture. Perhaps then, the OEI would be better served by exploiting these differences as a specialized organization, as opposed to its current all-encompassing portfolio of programs which bears strong similarities to the OEA. The criticism that the OEI should remain within its niche is also one that the Commonwealth shares, with some differences, and will be discussed later in this paper.

Concomitantly, attendance at the General Assembly meetings has been erratic, indicating the lack of priority that the OEI holds and perhaps the political divide within the organization. For example, at the XIX General Assembly meeting, seven Heads of Government were missing, notably countries whose political position is located to the left of the political spectrum such as Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, Raúl Castro of Cuba and Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua (Los resultados de una Cumbre de ausencias 2009).

In addition to member fees, the OEI gains funding for its annual budget from some of the largest corporations in the area and the world, including Microsoft, Ford, Telmex, South America's largest telecommunications company, and Petrobras, a large oil company in Brazil (Cultura 2007). While the financial support of these major corporations allows the OEI to better fund its programs, it is possible that these companies gain in some way from their contribution and may hold some influence over the decisions of the OEI as the organization would seek to maintain their support. This, however, is speculative.

COMPARISONS

One objective that all three organizations hold that is distinct from the Commonwealth is the promotion and preservation of a language. While the Commonwealth promotes education, it does not have a specific mission to preserve and

spread the English language. In fact, the largest English speaking country, the United States, is not a member of the Commonwealth at all. This difference is most significant because the element of language is not only a founding principle of each of the other three organizations, but remains a key qualifier for membership and legitimizes the organization and their work. Also, these three organizations face the similar challenge of preserving their respective language as part of their identity in a progressively more English-speaking world. The Commonwealth faces no such challenge and threat to identity. This can be seen as both a negative and positive factor. While the Commonwealth does not face this threat, the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI are in some ways reinforced or legitimized by a sense of purpose in defending, promoting and preserving their threatened languages and related cultures. Thus, when these organizations are asked about their identity and purpose, the answer is easier to explain based on the language component. Since these organizations have a claim to the preservation of a language, they are less susceptible to the challenge of value added.

In an increasingly globalized world, the number of international organizations, non-governmental and governmental agencies and civil society groups has rapidly expanded. These groups have taken on a variety of issue areas making the market for international organizations and the work that they carry out a saturated field. At the time of the Commonwealth's creation, there were few international organizations and even less that dealt with democracy and human rights. Now there are thousands, making the questions of relevance, value added and niche all the more important. There are much fewer organizations that are specifically mandated to preserve and protect a language and its accompanying culture; this can be considered a niche. While the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI all engage in the highly competitive field of development work, this work is

always reinforced by the notion of preserving a language and culture, and is therefore unique from other development work that does not have this value added aspect. Hence, while the preservation of a language and culture is particularly challenging in a world that is dominated by English and increasingly becoming integrated and homogenous, this challenge also gives these three organizations a legitimacy that the Commonwealth must work much harder to find.

The disadvantage of the language connection is the threat to the organization and its relevance if the language declines. The OIF is particularly vulnerable to this as the French language declines in popularity. A recent *MacLean's* article highlighted this sore point for the OIF by noting that Rwanda which threw out French as the official language of the country in 2008 in favour of English (Hasserlriis 2010). Further, Rwanda left la Franconphonie before joining the Commonwealth at the 2009 CHOGM in Trinidad and Tobago (T. Shaw 2010, 337). Indeed, the Commonwealth has taken note of this tension, as the director of political affairs at the Secretariat hinted when mentioning that Rwanda was admitted “well after the French President’s plane had taken off” (Banerji 2010).

There is no doubt that English dominates the international world; it is often referred to as the language of commerce and has the most internet content on the World Wide Web. In terms of native speakers, English ranks third with three hundred and twenty-eight million speakers and second in total speakers with over a billion speakers of the language, second only to Chinese (Lewis 2009). French does not even appear among the top ten languages spoken and is actually ranked sixteenth (Lewis 2009). Spanish is third on the list with over three hundred million native speakers, while Portuguese is seventh with one hundred and seventy-eight million native speakers (Lewis 2009). While the CPLP and the IEO do not need to be concerned about a challenge to their identity

based on the declining relevance of the respective languages in which they operate and protect, the OIF is subject to this pressure. Hence, the protection and promotion of a language and its accompanying culture can either reinforce or erode the legitimacy of an organization based on the rise or decline of the language. While the Commonwealth escapes this challenge, it also is excluded from its benefits.

While the Commonwealth does not have an obvious niche such as the promotion and preservation of a language and accompany culture, it does have a number of distinguishing features which amount to the areas where the Commonwealth can add value. The Commonwealth and its followers often refer to the Commonwealth as a unique organization. This uniqueness is said to have come largely from seven features. First, scholars point to the nature of its membership. It is not universal-there are very real restrictions on who is allowed to join-it is not regional, as is increasingly becoming the trend, and it encompasses a wide diversity of countries both rich and poor that bridge the North-South divide and fill the Commonwealth with vibrant diversity. Second, the Commonwealth boasts member countries that are currently emerging world powers, such as India and South Africa, and developing middle powers like Jamaica, Malaysia and Tanzania. Third, all Commonwealth members adhere to the common principles upon which the institution was founded-democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights, though some more than others. The Commonwealth has been noted to be a federation of democracies, and though the standards of democracy may vary among member nations, there is a real dedication within the Commonwealth to upholding this principle. This is indeed a unique feature; even though other organizations such as the OIF possess the ability to suspend members, in practice they rarely do. This is highlighted by Timothy Shaw who noted in 2007 to reporters that “the Commonwealth deserves

respect because it does what other international organizations, like the UN and la Francophonie won't-suspend members for failing to abide by democratic principles...regimes that misbehave don't deserve a seat" (Freeman 2007).

Fourth, the Commonwealth has historically been a trend or norm setter and continues to fulfil this role. It was the Commonwealth which first championed the process of elections monitoring, now a wide spread practice. The Commonwealth was among the first to champion women and youth equality and rights. The idea of micro-credit was first introduced in Bangladesh, a Commonwealth country, and micro-credit programs are found throughout the Commonwealths initiatives as demonstrated in the Commonwealth Youth Programmes (CYP) Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI). Currently, the Commonwealth has championed environmental sustainability and provided such weight in this subject area that non-members such as France's President, Nicolas Sarkozy and the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago last year to find out what the Commonwealth had to say and build consensus and momentum leading to the Copenhagen summit to ensure its effectiveness. Additionally, the progress made in Trinidad and Tobago was seen as preparation for the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

Fifth, the Commonwealth has a history of modest success, from the ending of Apartheid in South Africa, to the Colombo plan in Sri Lanka, to the continued support for the development of small island states, to the technical and educational programs that the Commonwealth supports like the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). The Commonwealth has also acted as an honest broker with success. The diplomatic process of naming, shaming and

suspending belligerent states has been fairly successful in highlighting issues and shaming member countries into amending their policies and practices. The Commonwealth is also unique because it follows through on the suspension of members that violate organizational principles, like Zimbabwe in 2002, Pakistan in 1999 and again in 2007, and Fiji in 2000, 2006 and full suspension in 2009.

Sixth, the Commonwealth has an enormous base of civil society groups from educational training, to sport programs, to youth development, to scholarship and essay competitions to cultural exchanges. The civil society network of the Commonwealth is unrivalled by any other organization in the world and, as will be noted later, is one reason why some say the Commonwealth is not in crisis today. Seventh, the Commonwealth provides a valuable opportunity for Heads of Government to interact with each other informally and test ideas out as formally equal and diverse members; this point is strengthened by the unique nature of the Commonwealth's membership. These seven areas are widely accepted by scholars as the key identifiers of what makes the Commonwealth a unique institution and constitute the Commonwealth niche areas.

However, the discussion of the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI has made it clear that fundamentally these three organizations share many similarities with the Commonwealth. While these three organizations have met all eight of the comparison criteria, the strongest points of comparison with the Commonwealth are in the areas of organizational structure, shared values, common goals and programs. These organizations also share many of the same challenges with each other and with the Commonwealth. This paper will highlight some of those challenges and in doing so may provide the OIF, CPLP and the OEI with insight regarding the management of their challenges.

CHAPTER 2 HISTORICAL CRISIS POINTS

As the world's oldest international organization, the Commonwealth has undergone many challenges and transformations. This chapter will highlight what are arguably the four most significant crises in the modern Commonwealth's history: the beginning of the modern Commonwealth in 1949, the reorganizing of the Commonwealth facilitated by the creation of the Secretariat in 1965, the political turmoil associated the Rhodesian issue and with Apartheid in South Africa in the 1970s and 80s and the redefining of the Commonwealth's principles at the Hare Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1991. These dates have been selected because they represented a clear challenge to the Commonwealth as an organization and have also resulted in a transition. These cases will be observed by examining the historical background of the situations, the questions and criticisms of the Commonwealth during these times and how the Commonwealth overcame these challenges. The objective of this method is not to provide a detailed historical account of each time period, rather to provide enough information so that a comparison and analysis can be made⁵. Each crisis point will be examined in turn, while the next chapter will discuss whether the Commonwealth is in crisis today, and if so, how this crisis compares to the crisis points outlined below.

The findings of this section will be relevant for the three organizations discussed in chapter one, the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI as they share some of the challenges that the Commonwealth has faced. However, the analysis in this chapter is of particular importance to the Commonwealth. It is likely that the questions and challenges of the Commonwealth in each crisis share some key similarities. If this is correct, then the

⁵ For a more in-depth analysis and assessment of the Commonwealth and its purpose and programs from 1966 onward, see *The Contemporary Commonwealth: An Assessment 1996-2009* edited by James Mayall.

research in this paper will provide useful insights for the Commonwealth, and like institutions, on how it has handled crisis and how to avoid these situations in the future, or at least anticipate and manage crisis more effectively. Furthermore based on the patterns revealed, the Commonwealth may seek to answer recurring issues and questions in a clearer manner so as to avoid repetition. At minimum, the combination of how and why the Commonwealth continually gets into and out of crisis should provide some insights that will be useful for the Commonwealth today, such as its need to embrace the process of revision, the need to focus and its particular vulnerabilities to its membership and changing world events.

CRISIS OF 1949: THE MODERN COMMONWEALTH

1949 is treated as a crisis point in this paper because it represents a major transition phase in the history of the Commonwealth. The beginning of the modern Commonwealth was marked in London in 1949 when India became a Republic and joined the Commonwealth as a free and equal member according to the terms of the London Declaration (The London Declaration 1949). While many current members did not gain independence until roughly ten years later, India's independence indicated a shift in British foreign policy and set a precedent for the independence of other colonies. 1949 is thus, the birth of the modern Commonwealth as an international organization and represents a point of major change, challenge and action.

1949 represents a transition for the Commonwealth because the British union of nations and British foreign policy was entering a point of change. If the Commonwealth had not transitioned from the British Commonwealth into the modern Commonwealth as an association of independent nations, the Commonwealth might not exist today. Part of what makes the Commonwealth and the British tradition unique is the relatively peaceful

transition from colonialism into diplomatic relations. It is doubtful that the empires of France, Portugal and Spain could have transitioned into the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI directly following decolonization because of the turbulent decolonization process that occurred in many of their former colonies. This in part explains why the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI were created many years after decolonization. This is not to say that they are colonial organizations; rather it refers to the fact that the organizations are predominantly based on a shared history and language that member nations obtained through colonization, and reconnected with through these organizations. Just as the Commonwealth is independent from its British colonial links, the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI are also, not colonial organizations, but have a shared history because of those connections.

The British Commonwealth's peaceful transition into the Commonwealth was partly due to the British style of colonial rule. Most importantly for this argument, though, was Britain's willingness to grant Dominion and Republican status to its former colonies. Britain had granted status out "of her own will, not through any lack of power to continue her rule. She wished to give others the freedom she so much prized herself" according to Duncan Sandy, then Commonwealth and Colonial Secretary; though, the account is likely closer to Dr. Banda of Malawi's reply to Mr. Sandy: "You British have not been as pig-headed as other imperialists. You have recognised in time what is inevitable and accepted it gracefully" (Smith 1981, 2). Hence, if Britain had held on to power past the dates of her colonies' independence, it is likely, as in many independence movements, that she would have been forcefully removed. By granting independence before tensions escalated, Britain maintained stable and reciprocal relations with her former colonies, leading to the creation of the modern Commonwealth. 1949 was thus a

transition point because it marked a turn in British foreign policy, which would allow colonies who were poised for independence to gain free and equal status under the Commonwealth of Nations and retain strong ties with Britain and other Commonwealth members. India's independence set the precedent for this.

The events that led the Commonwealth to the crisis of 1949 are mainly historical. Since 1949 represents the birth of the modern Commonwealth, this crisis point is a bit different in that, crisis did not occur as a result of the actions of the organization but because of historical events. This is significant nonetheless, because it demonstrates that the Commonwealth is affected by world events and is consequently a living organization. Even though this case is distinct the pattern for crisis remains, in terms of what constitutes a crisis point: there must be significant challenge, change and action. 1949 featured a significant challenge, the transition of these roles and the answering of criticisms; a significant change, from colonial union to diplomatic organization; and significant action, establishing a legal and diplomatic organization with an identifiable purpose. This pattern can provide insight into how the organization gets into a crisis as a general reference. When the organization is facing a significant challenge, change or action, a crisis could be present or eminent.

After the creation of the modern Commonwealth, it was criticised and charged with answering a series of questions. Of these questions, asking how the Commonwealth is different from the British Commonwealth is perhaps the most poignant challenge. Connected with this, was the charge of relevance and accusations of neo-colonialism. The first challenge was greatest in 1949 because it was the first time that the association claimed to be separate from British administration and supported this claim through law, though the Commonwealth was still operated through the British Commonwealth

Relations Office (CRO). The Commonwealth was thus, required to define itself apart from Britain as a legitimate and purposeful institution. Yet, 1949 was an awkward time for the Commonwealth because most current members did not gain independence until nearly ten years after its creation, making the distinction between the British Commonwealth and the Commonwealth difficult to identify. This time period was, therefore, mixed with old colonial relations between states not yet independent, and new diplomatic relations between members of the Commonwealth.

Part of what made, and still makes, this distinction difficult is the fact that the Commonwealth is steeped in and born out of British traditions. The structure and ideology of the institution are direct descendants of the British system. The British Crown is the Head of the Commonwealth and a large portion of the Commonwealth's funding, especially initially, comes from the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the tradition of heads of government meetings was a re-formation of the Imperial Conferences beginning in 1887, later made more exclusive and re-named Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meetings (PMM) and finally evolving into the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM) only after the creation of the Secretariat in 1965. The location of these meetings until the CHOGM held in Nigeria in 1966, was always in Britain and chaired by the British Prime Minister.

Further, the roles and responsibilities of the British government and the Commonwealth overlapped making the separation of the organization and Britain convoluted. Typically, the role and responsibility of helping former colonies become independent is left to the colonizer. However, the Commonwealth's initial task was to assist member nations in their transition from colony into country. While this understandably caused much confusion for all parties - Britain, colonies of Britain, the

Commonwealth, the media and the general public - the Commonwealth may have been the best suited organization to assist former British colonies on their journey to independence. In this way, McIntyre writes that “for Britain the task of providing for [former colonies was] daunting. But as the New Commonwealth members built up their own stores of wealth, self-confidence and skill, Britain may well find partners better fitted than herself to administer the final tasks of empire liquidation” (D. W. McIntyre 1966, 356). Thus, the shared history and experience of Commonwealth countries provided resources in terms of wealth, wisdom and collaboration that Britain alone could not have provided. The Commonwealth excelled in this role; yet Britain also filled this role independently as well as within the Commonwealth, causing confusion between the Commonwealth and the role of Britain.

In addition to the Commonwealth defining itself apart from Britain, challenges of neo-colonialism and relevance were also present during this time. Critics claimed that the creation of the Commonwealth was merely a way for the British to deal with the reality of a depleting empire and that the new Commonwealth was nothing more than a scheme to save the British the shock of losing their empire. As noted earlier, the main operational system of the Commonwealth was still under British jurisdiction under the CRO and many of the traditions and structures remained. It is therefore, easy to imagine that the Commonwealth would be criticized for being a way for Britain to maintain its colonial grasp under a new guise thus, relieving Britain’s worries of empire loss. In fact, Commonwealth scholar W. David McIntyre writes that critics “pass off the Commonwealth only as an historic device to ease the transition from empire”; however, according to legal advisor Sir William Dale, “though [the Commonwealth] has no charter or written constitution, the first of the modern declarations in 1949 was...of ‘a constituent

nature', giving the Commonwealth 'a rudimentary, autochthomus constitution'" (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90* 1991, 3-4). Thus, the Commonwealth in 1949 was a legal entity separate from British foreign policy and therefore not a mere tool for easing British minds. This separation would become clearer with the creation of the secretariat in 1965.

Moreover, the Commonwealth was, and remains, a voluntary organization; if it were a neo-colonial institution, it is unlikely that independent nations would seek membership as India had specifically done in 1949. Further, both Ireland and Burma declined membership proving the voluntary nature of the organization. Additionally, many member nations have demonstrated their independence when making decisions contrary to the interests of Britain, such as Canada and many other nations' decision not to support Britain in a war against Egypt over the Suez Canal in 1956 (D. W. McIntyre 1966, 349). Thus, indicating the separation from British foreign policy and the Commonwealth.

Regardless of these arguments criticism's regarding the new Commonwealth's degree of independence from British interests remain a persistent challenge to the organization. Thus, 1949 was a challenging time period because of the transition that the Commonwealth underwent in addition to the negative criticisms it faced.

Along with the challenges of 1949, this date also represents a period of substantial change. 1949 marked the beginning of the modern Commonwealth as a voluntary association of free and equal member states. While the Commonwealth maintained many colonial links and connotations, 1949 was the beginning of the transition from a colonial association into a diplomatic one. If India could gain republican status and join the Commonwealth as a free and equal member, then other colonies could do the same. In

this way, India's 1949 independence "pioneered the way for the Asian, African and Caribbean members of the [British] Commonwealth" (D. W. McIntyre 1966, 209).

Though Ceylon, now known as Sri Lanka, had gained independence and membership into the Commonwealth the year before, the independence of India, as the jewel in the British crown, is often seen as a more significant event, especially in conjunction with the occasion of the London Declaration. Furthermore, India's wilful choice to join the Commonwealth set a precedent for other soon-to-be independent colonies. If India, after her struggles with Britain, could see merit and value in the Commonwealth, surely other colonies could as well. The foundation and identity of Britannia was changing and along with it, Her empire and their connection with each other.

Decolonization occurred at a rapid pace for Britain, especially following Ghana's independence in 1957, with over thirteen states following suit over the next several years. During this time the Commonwealth underwent a major change, from managing colonies to managing diplomatic and economic relations as a broker, and not a colonizer. The Commonwealth became a multi-racial, voluntary organization of former British colonies who wished to maintain ties across the globe in diplomatic, developmental and economic terms. This transition represented a major shift for the Commonwealth: whenever a major change occurs an opportunity for crisis is present and vice versa, thus 1949 is an essential date to study in the Commonwealth's history.

As noted earlier, the Commonwealth was challenged with defining itself apart from the British Commonwealth and British foreign policy, the Commonwealth attempted to answer these challenges through a series of changes and actions. This was achieved in a number of ways. First through the London Declaration, which establishes the Commonwealth as a legal entity; outlines the status of membership; changes the name

of the existing association from the British Commonwealth into the Commonwealth; upholds the British Crown (at the time the King) as the Head of the Commonwealth; and recognises India as a republic with full voluntary membership into the Commonwealth. The London Declaration can in some ways be seen as the basis for the legal separation from the British Commonwealth into the Commonwealth and as the organization's first constitution, as noted above (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90* 1991, 4).

The second way that the Commonwealth began to define itself apart from Britain was through the characteristics of its membership and greater equality within of the organization. In 1949 there were only eight members of the association, all of which were in some way independent of Britain. While Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa had been considered Dominions for some time, the recent introduction of Ceylon, India and Pakistan changed the nature of the association. Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa were regarded as mainly colonies of British stock and settlement (although this disregarded the African majority in the case of the latter) and as such enjoyed a special relationship with Britain. This group was in some ways the elite of the British colonies and enjoyed a more equal relationship with their colonizer.

When India joined the Commonwealth in 1949, it symbolized the end of this elite club or special relationship, and the beginning of a multi-racial, diverse, formally equal, new Commonwealth. In this context Pakistani Prime Minister, Muhammad Ali Bogra, gave a speech in 1954 highlighting the Commonwealth's past elitism but noting that since 1949, "with the emergence of India, Pakistan and Ceylon as independent states, the character of the Commonwealth has undergone a radical change. The population of Pakistan alone (76 million) is more than the total white population of the Commonwealth.

In addition India has over 350 million and Ceylon over 7 million people. It has thus become a multi-racial, a multi-cultural and a multi-lingual Commonwealth” (Cowen 1965, 13-4). The shift in the balance of racial, cultural and linguistic populations within the Commonwealth changed the dynamics of the institution, indicating that the white populations within the Commonwealth no longer held majority power. This shift also allowed the Commonwealth to expand, as new colonies were much more likely to join knowing that they would be part of the majority and that other former colonies found equality and worth within the Commonwealth. Moreover, the addition of the three new members brought a far greater diversity of perspectives, opinions, wisdom and focus making the Commonwealth perspective more global than Euro-centric (Evatt 1949).

In connection with the changing dynamics of the new Commonwealth, a third way that it began to articulate its independence from the British Commonwealth was through the relationship of Commonwealth members and the decision making process of the organization. Members of the new Commonwealth were either independent or much closer to this goal than other British colonies. They were, therefore treated differently within the Commonwealth than they had been under British rule. In this way, there was much greater cooperation and consultation between the members of the Commonwealth than between Britain and her dependencies. In this connection, the Right Honourable Herbert V. Evatt, then Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, wrote in 1949 that “the practical and personal contributions of the three Prime Ministers [India, Ceylon and Pakistan] were perhaps the most important feature [of the new Commonwealth as] they gave a balance and breadth to all our deliberations and they ensured a world rather than a mere continental approach to problems confronting all the representatives” (Evatt 1949).

Hence, the new membership of the Commonwealth added a richness that was largely absent prior to 1949 and the formalizing of the sovereign equality of its members.

Also, the new Commonwealth began to act as a unified and equal organization, as opposed to a group of consulted representatives within a British organization. The idea of consulting with representatives from British colonies was not new; as noted above, Imperial Conferences had been held since 1887 with representatives from all over the British Empire. However, representatives, aside from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, were mainly there to listen and contribute their perspective, with the final actions of the conferences and decisions being Britain's alone in terms of bearing responsibility for those decisions. From 1949 onward, the decisions and actions of the Commonwealth were jointly made by all members and on behalf of the Commonwealth, not Britain. This process also marked the beginning of the consensus approach which the Commonwealth is famous (or infamous) for, where all Commonwealth countries must agree in order to pass a resolution, or conversely, each country holds a veto. This equality indicates a clear distinction from the politeness of the British consultation of the Imperial Conferences to the legal equality of consensus.

Thus, the Commonwealth responded to the challenges of 1949 by instituting a number of changes and actions such as defining the organization as a legal entity, through the characteristics of its membership as diverse and equal members and through the equality in decision making that each member held. Yet, these few examples of how the Commonwealth attempted to address the challenges of 1949 demonstrate that the change from the British Commonwealth into the Commonwealth, while significant, was not a visibly drastic conversion. Rather, the changes were more evolutionary. In this way, the

Commonwealth slowly articulated its differences from the British Empire in a progressive manner.

After 1949 the Commonwealth began to re-define itself and answer challenges of relevance. The Commonwealth's first primary role as an organization was to assist member states in the decolonization process while clearly defined goals of the organization were to be articulated later. One of the often noted characteristics of the Commonwealth is its ability to transform or reinvent itself in order to stay relevant in the modern world. The British Commonwealth of Nations began this tradition as evidenced through Britain's adaptation to the growing independence of its dominions. Yet, 1949 represents one of the most significant transformations that the Commonwealth undertook, and began a modern legacy of reflection and adjustment that continues today. However, the transitory nature of the changes that the Commonwealth undertakes does not yield clear answers to the criticisms noted above. For example, the Commonwealth was asked how it differed from the British Commonwealth, arguably, the Commonwealth answered this question over a number of years as it transitioned and evolved from the British Commonwealth into the Commonwealth; maintaining many of the existing structures and traditions until there was a need for a change, as was the case in the next crisis point. The ability of the Commonwealth to evolve in this way has made it incredibly resilient, but difficult to define. In fact, Arnold Smith, the Commonwealth's first Secretary General, wrote that the Commonwealth was "harder to describe than to operate" (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90 1991*, 4). In this way, the Commonwealth has had difficulty defining itself in a definitive manner and at this time apart from Britain.

Yet, the Commonwealth addressed the challenges indirectly in three main ways: through legal avenues via the London Declaration, through the diversity and changing

nature of Commonwealth membership and through the equality of its members in decision making. The distinction that these three points depict also highlights the relevance of the new Commonwealth as an institution which would: assist member nations with their transition into statehood, continue the bonds of brotherhood, as King George VI noted in his speech on the occasion of the London Declaration, and contribute to the diversity, knowledge and opinions of the Commonwealth giving it a broader world view and thus a world focus for the global good (Marshall 2009). Hence, the combination of the challenges, changes and actions that the Commonwealth underwent in and around 1949 precipitated major change for the institution. 1949 therefore, represents a significant time in the history of the Commonwealth - a time where it was faced with either dissolving or evolving. The Commonwealth chose to reformulate its identity, as independent of British foreign policy, to restructure its purpose and objectives and carve out a niche in the realm of international relations as a unique and worthwhile organization of diverse but equal members.

CRISIS OF 1965: THE CREATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

The next crisis point is another example of how the Commonwealth has been able to evaluate and adjust its structures in order to remain relevant. 1965 was the year that the Secretariat was introduced to the Commonwealth and is arguably “the most important landmark in the evolution of the present Commonwealth” (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90* 1991, 46). The events that led to the creation of the Secretariat and the challenges, changes and actions associated with this time period, coupled with their significance are what make 1965 a noteworthy time period-

characterized here as a crisis point. For a brief overview of the Commonwealth and its members in 1960 see *The Times* article entitled *1960 Commonwealth*⁶.

The historical context for this crisis point, which led to the disenchantment with the Commonwealth, is: large-scale immigration into Britain coupled with racism and nationalism, strained economic relations, and Cold War politics. The challenges that the Commonwealth faced during this time were, the management of this disillusionment and the political tensions, and the structural challenges that the Commonwealth faced with regards to its large-scale growth in membership and agenda.

While the creation of the Secretariat is the most prominent action arising from 1965, its creation was the necessary result of the disenchantment with the Commonwealth during this time. Politically, the 1960s was not a favourable time for the Commonwealth. Relations between Britain and new Commonwealth members were not warm. Still reeling from the tensions of the Suez crisis, British-Commonwealth relations in the 1960s were not off to a good start. The 1956 Suez crisis created bitter divisions within the Commonwealth for a number of reasons: first, Britain did not consult Commonwealth members before attacking Egypt and did not feel that it was necessary to do so; second, many Commonwealth members felt that Britain expected them to readily join Britain in her attack, while only Australia and New Zealand did; third, a number of Commonwealth nations, mostly from Africa and Asia, saw the British action as a return to colonial “gunboat diplomacy” to which they were fundamentally opposed (Cowen 1965, 72-3). To this end, Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson remarked that due to Britain’s actions the Commonwealth was “badly and dangerously split [and] on the verge of

⁶ *The Times*. "1960 Commonwealth." January 1, 1960: 11 col. B.

dissolution” (Cowen 1965, 72). While the Commonwealth survived the strife of the Suez crisis, Britain’s decision to ignore the Commonwealth’s principle of consultation left many members bitter.

The 1960s also brought large scale de-colonization across the Commonwealth, changing the relationship of these new nations with Britain and other Commonwealth members. With the number of countries gaining independence in 1960-2, and the experience of chaos and poverty associated with independence, migration into the United Kingdom was explosive. A 1962 article in *The Times* reported that immigration from the Commonwealth and other countries was “likely to exceed 160,000, which was double the estimated total for 1960” (Concern at Total Of Immigrants 1962). Racism was still a factor to be considered amongst the general population in Britain as were nationalistic sentiments as evidenced by Member of Parliament Mr. Bernard Braine who in 1965 addressed a group of Young Conservatives on Commonwealth immigration noting that “we have no right to ignore the deep and growing distress caused to our own kith and kin by the continuing influx of strangers” (Limit Reached on Immigrants, Tory M.P. Says 1965) (Immediate Changes Urged in Immigration Law 1965).

Growing resentment towards the apparent large-scale immigration from the ‘coloured’ Commonwealth coupled with deep-rooted racism began to cause political turmoil at home and abroad. During a political visit to Canada in 1965, former Foreign Secretary Mr. Patrick Gordon Walker said that “you have to have some kind of control, as Canada does...unless you do [,] I don’t think you can tackle the colour problem” (Change of Opinion on Migration 1965). Feeling the pressure of such comments, coupled with the influx of immigrants from Commonwealth countries, Britain began to limit non-white immigration from abroad through the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962. This

decision was unpopular with many Commonwealth countries including Jamaica which sent Mr. Norman Manley, leader of the Opposition, to London in 1965 to discuss the new restrictions which Britain had instituted, along with an acclamation accusing the British government of imposing the restrictions based on “racial prejudice and not economics” (Jamaica Anger Over British Immigration Curbs 1965). Much of the resentment found in former colonies towards Britain’s new restrictions stemmed from feelings of injustice. After assisting Britain in the Second World War and helping to rebuild the British economy, many former colonies not only felt that Britain should accept them based on their historical contributions and proven economic benefit, but that Britain should do so willingly (Jamaica Anger Over British Immigration Curbs 1965).

In sum, the multi-racial Commonwealth that had boasted a type of Commonwealth citizenship which made travel and immigration easier between Commonwealth members was not popular with most Britons and limitations under the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act were made, often to the frustration and detriment of other Commonwealth members.

Furthermore, Britons were becoming more European minded, especially with the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 and the Organization for Economic and Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1961. Commonwealth relations were stressed during this time as the United Kingdom debated entry. There was concern that if the United Kingdom joined the EEC, Britain would not be allowed to uphold Commonwealth preferences as they would be in conflict with the special relationship that Britain should have with EEC members.

Members of the Commonwealth had always enjoyed special economic treatment among member states, but most importantly with Britain. The strength of these economic

relations was of particular importance in the 1960s as newly independent countries struggled to fit into the world market. The possibility of weaker trade relations with Britain was of significant concern, especially amongst the Commonwealth's developing nations which constituted most of the Commonwealth membership, where most countries were producers of raw materials. The developing nations of the Commonwealth needed a manufacturer-a developed nation-to buy their raw materials, and Britain was their primary market. This economic relationship was also of benefit to Britain because it had access to a cheap and reliable supply of raw materials and was able to manufacture the goods and sell them back to the countries which she purchased the raw materials from. There was therefore, a reciprocal import and export relationship between both developed and developing nations within the Commonwealth-though one that was unbalanced in terms of profits and therefore often a source of resentment among developing countries.

Historically, a policy of imperial preference gave Commonwealth products priority over non-Commonwealth goods, helping developing nations integrate into the increasingly competitive and at the times depressed world economy. Such imperial preferences had officially begun in 1932 in Ottawa where bilateral agreements were negotiated between various Commonwealth countries, typically pertaining to the reduction of tariffs (Cowen 1965, 93). However, many of the Commonwealth tariff negotiations had to be revised upon members' entry to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), now known as the World Trade Organization (WTO). Though the global reduction of tariffs were being negotiated, largely through the GATT, protectionist policies such as import tax and subsidies presented a serious challenge for developing nations whose economies were just developing. Furthermore, Cold War politics saw a resurgence of isolationism and alignment, making the global economy harder to

penetrate. Hence, any trade preferences were of considerable benefit and the prospect of heavier tariffs was viewed with concern.

As a result of these concerns, the United Kingdom met with a number of potentially affected countries to discuss its potential membership to the EEC. Additionally, the Commonwealth hosted a special meeting in Accra Ghana to address Britain's membership in the EEC and its impact on the Commonwealth (Cowen 1965, 90-1). Noting the political and economic ramifications of such a decision, the United Kingdom stated its position in 1961 as follows: "if the negotiations fail and we are unable to secure special arrangements to protect vital Commonwealth interests, then Britain will not join the Common Market. That is our declared position and we have no intention of shifting from it" (Cowen 1965, 91).

Given the possible consequences of Britain's decision and its potential impact upon commonwealth members, tensions were high amongst, and especially between, Britain and fellow Commonwealth members. However, Britain, succumbing to internal pressure and economic stagnation, began to change its original position. Feeling the tension and pressure for the United Kingdom to decline EEC membership, then British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, noted to fellow Commonwealth Prime Ministers that "we are independent, too" indicating that Britain was no longer responsible for Her former colonies and that She too would need to act in Her best interests (Cowen 1965, 92). The British economy began to stagnate in the 1960s, never fully recovering from two World Wars and the economic loss of decolonization, causing Britain to be more inward looking. Joining the EEC, in which members were experiencing national and trade related growth, seemed to be in Britain's best interests, prompting the United Kingdom to apply for membership in 1963 and again in 1967, both times without success. As an explanation

or justification for the United Kingdom to apply for membership, Lord Casey wrote that “as things are at present each independent country of the Commonwealth has to act solely in the interests of its own people. No government can afford to be generous to other countries, even Commonwealth countries, or even afford to be *thought* generous... this eliminates trade as a cohesive factor in the Commonwealth, except where the interests of two or more Commonwealth countries happen to coincide” (Cowen 1965, 97-8). This sentiment seemed to violate the supposed brotherhood that the Commonwealth was based upon and consequently caused resentment and tensions within the Commonwealth. Hence, the economic relations of the 1960 were a major stressor in Commonwealth relations.

Additionally, the Cold War offered a distraction that was difficult to ignore; in fact, during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers plenary sessions of 1964 a number of Heads of government had to remind fellow members to focus on Commonwealth goals and not the Cold War (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90* 1991, 49). Security was a significant priority during this time and there were real concerns over what the newer alliances, namely the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), would do to the bonds within the Commonwealth. Commonwealth members wondered if the new non-Commonwealth alliances would create stronger bonds with Europe and the United States, in particular, to the detriment of intra-organizational relationships (Cowen 1965, 89).

The British Commonwealth had once collaborated to a high extent amongst members especially in the area of the Navy. Yet, the role of the modern Commonwealth in military affairs has always been minimal as the organization does not possess a military and strives for peace and cooperation. The military aspects that the Commonwealth used

to be involved with were: links between Britain and Her colonies, such as the navy relationship between Britain and Singapore in 1923; or independent countries, as in the case of the military alliance between Australia and New Zealand; the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC). The modern Commonwealth as an institution, therefore, was not directly responsible for any military operations. These historic defensive connections, however, helped to strengthen the bonds within the Commonwealth and secure the value of cooperation, though these relationships were outside the organizational bounds of the Commonwealth. However, such cooperation dwindled with the independence of Britain's colonies, with some exceptions.

While most Commonwealth countries, with the main exceptions of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand and Canada, were non-aligned or newly independent, the politics of the Cold War and the pressure for alignment also caused political tensions between Commonwealth members. This was especially felt in the developing world, where nations were often 'fought' over by the Soviet Union and the American alliance through special political and economic relations (Loescher 2001, 105,139). Hence, the securitization of the Cold War; the political instability and pressure to align; and the new military alliances between the old Commonwealth members and non-Commonwealth members, added to the pressure on Commonwealth relations in the 1960s.

These three factors, large-scale immigration into Britain coupled with racism and nationalism, strained economic relations, and Cold War politics, form the historical context for the disenchantment with the Commonwealth and the crisis of 1965. The challenges that the Commonwealth faced during this time were manifold, but two stand out. First, the Commonwealth had to manage growing disillusionment and political

tensions in a way that would not erode the fabric of the organization. In short, the Commonwealth needed to redefine itself as a purposeful organization. Second, it faced a structural challenge with the influx of the newly independent countries obtaining membership.

As indicated above, the 1960s was a tumultuous time for not only the world, but in particular, the Commonwealth. The events of the 1960s left many Commonwealth countries wondering what the purpose of the organization was: if not a family which assisted each other through free migration, special political and economic relations and the solidarity of alignment, then what was the benefit the Commonwealth for member nations? Furthermore, the introduction of many new members in the 1960s changed the character of the Commonwealth, perhaps more so than when India joined in 1949. In this way McIntyre writes that during this time “there was a sense of lack of direction, growing cynicism and apathy. There was also a determination by a few to seek a new sense of purpose” amongst whom were the New Zealanders, according to McIntyre the most loyal of the Old Dominions, who hoped that the organization could revive its “waning sense of purpose” (McIntyre, *Britain and the Creation of the Commonwealth Secretariat* 2000). Faced with such sentiments, the Commonwealth sought ways to rejuvenate itself and adjust to its growing membership. The creation of the Secretariat was one way that the organization could act on these challenges, as it gave the organization a more effective and distinct system in which members could collaborate more easily and separate the Commonwealth’s identity and purpose from Britain’s. The Commonwealth also created the Commonwealth Foundation, which sought to harness the linkages within the Commonwealth between professional organizations, giving the organization as a whole a greater ability to operationalize the founding principles of spreading democracy and co-

operation. Hence, these two additions helped the Commonwealth address the above noted challenges regarding its purpose.

The second challenge that the Commonwealth faced leading up to 1965 was with regards to the structure and capacity of the Commonwealth's infrastructure or lack thereof. While the Commonwealth had attempted to separate itself from British foreign policy, there were many ties and traditions still in existence that hindered the appearance of independence and equality. For example, Heads of government meetings continued to be held in Britain, though ancillary meetings were being held in other Commonwealth countries by this time. Also, the headquarters of the Commonwealth was in London and still a part of the British Foreign Service under the rubric of the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO). The CRO was created in 1947 by the merging of the Dominions Office and the India Office. Even though the Commonwealth had established itself as a legal entity with the London Declaration of 1949, the Commonwealth structurally remained within the British government. Considering the tensions noted earlier, and the increasing pride associated with nationhood, it was likely past time for the Commonwealth to make a clear separation from the British foreign office.

Furthermore, the Commonwealth lacked the infrastructure to efficiently and professionally organize and plan for Heads of Government meetings in addition to the CRO's other tasks. This problem was exacerbated by rapid decolonization and the flood of new Commonwealth members. The Commonwealth had gone from eight members in 1949 to twenty-three in 1965, with more on the way. The CRO, already burdened, was not in a position to take on the additional work and organization that this influx of new members required. The CRO was also divided amongst planning Heads of Government Meetings, providing Commonwealth members information and representing British

interests to the members of the Commonwealth (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90 1991*, 48). As such Commonwealth diplomats were unable to collaborate to the extent that they wished making one of the primary strengths of the Commonwealth, exchange between diverse nations, moot. The Commonwealth's lack of organizational capacity was likely made worse in the shadow of such institutions as the United Nations which boasted a larger budget and complex organizing system. There was, therefore, a clear need and desire to "have 'a central clearing house' to serve the Commonwealth as a whole, to plan for trade, aid and development and to circulate information" (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90 1991*, 49). The political will and requisite needed to create a new structural body that could service the growing needs of the Commonwealth was clearly present.

These two challenges, disillusionment with the Commonwealth leading to the questioning of the organization's purpose, and the structural challenges that the ballooning institution faced, led to significant change and action. The most significant of these changes and actions was the creation of the Secretariat along with the instituting of a Secretary General. This action not only allowed the Commonwealth to function, it also re-established the Commonwealth as a purposeful organization.

The idea of a Secretariat-like body had been mooted since 1897 but never received much support until much later when, to the surprise of many of the old members, the new Commonwealth members like Obote of Uganda began to call for such a structure (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90 1991*, 46). Discussions about the creation of a Secretariat arose during the 1964 PMM and further solidified in 1965 when the secretariat was made official by the Agreed Memorandum on the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The Secretariat solved many of the criticisms and concerns noted above. First, the Secretariat became a legal personality according to the agreement and was thus separated from the CRO and positioned in a separate building, Marlborough House, where it remains today. This appeased in some ways the criticisms concerning the Commonwealth's lack of independence from Britain. The separation from the CRO also helped establish in the minds of all, the distinction between the British Commonwealth and the Commonwealth. Second, the creation of the Secretariat coupled with the move to Marlborough house allowed the Commonwealth to have a greater capacity to serve the Commonwealth and its members both physically and structurally. The Commonwealth now had a Secretary General who was responsible for, amongst other things, liaising with Commonwealth countries, fostering relations between the Commonwealth and inter-governmental agencies, producing papers of interest to be circulated amongst Commonwealth members and chairing various Commonwealth meetings, the most significant being the PMM's (The Commonwealth 1965). There was now a Commonwealth body responsible for the functions of international and economic affairs as well as the general administration of the Commonwealth. The creation of the Secretariat enhanced the capacity of the Commonwealth to achieve its professed goals, organize itself in a functional and efficient manner and assist members in inter-Commonwealth exchanges - economic, cultural and political.

The expansion of the Commonwealth through the Secretariat acted as a confirmation of the organization's core values such as consultation, sovereign independence, economic, cultural and political cooperation, inter-Commonwealth linkages and development. This affirmation coupled with the physical action of the Secretariat's creation helped to address the challenges over the Commonwealth's purpose

and make clear that it was indeed a family of nations which, with some exceptions, strived to cooperate or at least consult members regarding political and economic matters, even if some members had failed to do so in the past.

Entering the 1960s, the Commonwealth was again faced with a crisis and growing disillusionment. The effects of the Suez crisis compounded by the high tensions of the Cold War, new British restrictions on immigration from the 'coloured' Commonwealth and Britain's decision to apply for EEC membership made the 1960s a tremulous time for Commonwealth relations. These events left many Commonwealth members and followers of the Commonwealth wondering what the purpose of the organization was, if its members did not consult and assist each other as it was reputed to do by King George VI's famous notion of a Commonwealth brotherhood (Marshall 2009, 535). Additionally, with the wave of new membership associated with large scale decolonization, it was evident that the CRO did not have the capacity or effectiveness to carry out the main goals of the Commonwealth. As a solution to these challenges, the Commonwealth created the Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation which effectively answered questions about the purpose of the organization while increasing its capacity and effectiveness. The Commonwealth was, therefore able to transform the crisis of the 1960s into a turning point in the history of the organization making it purposeful and relevant once again.

CRISIS OF THE 1970S AND 80S: THE CHALLENGE OF RHODESIA AND APARTHEID

From the mid-1960s through the 1970s and the 1980s, the Commonwealth faced, arguably, its biggest test, over the issue of Rhodesia and Apartheid in South Africa. Furthermore, a number of other challenging situations were occurring across the

Commonwealth such as: the Biafra war in Nigeria from 1967 to 1970, the coup in Uganda instating the dictatorship of Idi Amin, the India-Pakistan war of 1971 and Pakistan's subsequent withdraw from the Commonwealth. Meanwhile, the Cold War continued to carry on as did the turbulence associated with decolonization. For the purpose of this paper, the crisis of the 1970s and throughout the 80s will focus on the Rhodesian issue and the Apartheid regime in South Africa, as it was the most significant challenge to confront the Commonwealth during this time, and is representative of the crises that the Commonwealth went through. This crisis point is unique in that it spans over twenty years, however, it still meets the requirements for a crisis period and like the other cases, adds to the knowledge and insights about the Commonwealth. While Rhodesia and Apartheid were both significant challenges that the Commonwealth faced, the challenges were similar as were the Commonwealths tactics. These two major events will therefore, be categorized under one crisis point.

The 1970s and 80s can be categorized as a crisis because it challenged the boundaries and limits of the Commonwealth. In one respect the Commonwealth stands for the sovereign equality of all members, non-interference and non-judgement, while simultaneously standing for the principles of democracy, non-discrimination, good government, human rights, the rule of law, and so forth. Both the Rhodesian issue and Apartheid placed the Commonwealth in a position where those values clashed; non-interference may mean the allowance of tyranny and the abuse of the rule of law; non-judgement may mean the abuse of non-discrimination and human rights and so on. These issues therefore presented a challenge to the Commonwealth in terms of its organizational beliefs, but also created a wide divergence of opinion among Commonwealth members over how those beliefs should be applied and how these two issues were to be addressed.

Rhodesia⁷ left the Commonwealth in 1961 and in 1965 Ian Smith illegally declared Rhodesia independent and acted as Prime Minister, heading white minority rule under the Rhodesian Front Government. The international community became active in opposing Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), denying the legitimacy of Smith's claim to independence and imposing sanctions. This measure, though diplomatically significant, was not as successful as initially hoped as neighbouring countries such as then, Portuguese Mozambique and sympathetic South Africa continued trading relations with the rogue territory. At the time Britain's position on the regime was unclear; Britain held administrative authority over Rhodesia and therefore its UDI was illegal, making the issue a domestic affair-not an international affair. Yet, Britain had no real control over the country. However, in the minds of the international community and the Commonwealth, Britain had the most legal authority and responsibility towards her rogue former dependent. The Commonwealth, therefore, spent much energy trying to convince and persuade Britain to take some form of action against Ian Smith, either through force, which Britain always refused or through sanctions. However, Britain's indecision and lack of action caused, in particular, African members to harbour resentment.

For many members of the Commonwealth, opposition to white minority rule had begun in the early sixties. In this way, the creation of the Secretariat in 1965 finally freed the Commonwealth from British perspectives and gave the organization a forum and greater capacity to express the collective views of its membership with regards to both Rhodesia and South Africa. During this time, strong resentment towards Britain was felt

⁷ Rhodesia used to be made up of two states, Northern Rhodesia what is now known as Zambia and Southern Rhodesia, today Zimbabwe. A year before Rhodesia declared its illegal independence, Zambia became independent and Southern Rhodesia simply became Rhodesia.

especially by African members, some of whom broke all connections with Britain. The Commonwealth was therefore challenged with taking a position on the Smith regime while maintaining, at some level, relations between Commonwealth members so as to harness the potential of the diverse group but also to keep the Commonwealth from disbanding.

The Commonwealth under the leadership of Secretary General Arnold Smith, held the first Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting outside of London at the request of Nigerian Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa in 1966 where these tensions were evident. While there were political tensions surrounding this meeting, the result was first, that Britain agreed to impose sanctions on Rhodesia; second, that the Commonwealth set up a Sanctions Committee which was comprised of a representative from each member country, that met with the Secretary General regularly and monitored existing sanctions and made suggestions on the Rhodesian situation; third, the CHOGM set up a Special Commonwealth Programme of Assistance which was tasked with training future Zimbabweans for public service (Smith 1981, 57). While the British, to the annoyance of many, remained indecisive in their actions against the Smith regime, applying sanctions “like a course of inoculations...[;] after further prodding by our[the Commonwealth’s] Sanctions Committee...Britain proposed...mandatory and comprehensive sanctions, a total ban on trade with Rhodesia” (Smith 1981, 59).

Britain was not inactive during this time but less aggressive than the Commonwealth had hoped and perhaps undecided on its stance. However, Britain attempted to negotiate with the Smith government through a set of conditions for independence which then Prime Minister Wilson laid out. These five points were likely Smiths best option as they approached majority rule in a gradual manner and were

criticized by Wilson's opponents for the same reason. To this end McIntyre writes that "it was argued at the time that Wilson's stand was a weak one, in that the five principles did not require immediate majority rule as an essential condition" for independence (McIntyre 1998, 61). Smith rejected Wilson's proposal and Britain's subsequent attempts at negotiating in 1966 on the HMS *Tiger* and in 1968 on the HMS *Fearless*. However, advancement had been made in terms of the 1968 negotiation in that, Britain appeased the Commonwealth by demanding 'No Independence Before Majority African Rule' (NIBMAR) as opposed to the gradual approach taken earlier (McIntyre 1998, 61). In 1969 the Commonwealth met again in London and produced a thorough Communiqué on a number of world issues including what to do about Rhodesia. In particular, the Commonwealth agreed to the parameters of the situation: Britain possessed the legal authority and responsibility over Rhodesia and that the sanctions imposed upon it threatened surrounding Commonwealth countries' ability to develop, maintain political, racial and economic stability and solidarity with the views of the Commonwealth because of strong trade ties with Rhodesia (The Commonwealth 1969, 7-9).

The Commonwealth hosted another CHOGM in 1971 in Singapore which set out the Commonwealth's principles under fourteen points. Among these points, the Commonwealth notably took a strong position on racial discrimination by noting in its seventh point that: "we recognise racial prejudice as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society" (The Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles 1971). The declaration went on to note that it opposed colonialism and racial oppression and that the Commonwealth "will therefore use all our efforts to foster human equality and dignity everywhere, and to further the principles of self-determination and non-racialism" (The

Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles 1971) For the full text of the Singapore Declaration see Appendix C. Rarely do international organizations use the strong and graphic language which was used in the Singapore Declaration of 1971- demonstrating not only a commitment to the principle of non-discrimination, but likely frustration that Britain had not yet resolved the situation or at least taken a stronger position.

Britain attempted to negotiate again in 1971 and while it was able to bring Smith to the negotiating table, the majority of Rhodesians were not satisfied with the terms. It was not until South Africa and Zambia, who were being affected by Rhodesia's rebellion through the effects of sanctions, the guerrilla warfare and political refugees, applied pressure on Rhodesia that an agreement was met. In 1977 Smith accepted an earlier proposal by Bishop Abel Muzorewa, leader of the African National Council. This proposal called for a multi-racial polity which would hold seventy-two Africans and twenty-eight Europeans and an equally balanced ministerial council (McIntyre 1998, 75). Elections were held in 1979 and Muzorewa took office as Prime Minister, however, not all Rhodesians were satisfied with the agreement and many of the African opposition refused to participate, most notably Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). Further, this new government was not recognized internationally and most sanctions continued as did the guerrilla insurgency. Britain attempted negotiations again in 1979 bringing the major parties to London to reach a conclusion. This was obtained under the *Lancaster House Agreement* which returned Rhodesia to the status of a British colony until internationally supervised elections were undertaken in 1980 and Rhodesia officially became the independent Republic of Zimbabwe.

The Commonwealth's role during this time was twofold. First, the Commonwealth under the Secretariat and as individual members applied pressure on Britain to act on the Rhodesian issue and demand NIBMAR. Second, the Commonwealth led the movement for sanctions, most notably within the United Nations where they were formalized. The Commonwealth officially acted in its first role through its declarations on racial prejudice and policies as outlined in the Singapore Declaration and more significantly in the 1979 Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice (see appendix D for full declaration). The language of the declaration is not typical of international declarations and is riddled with passionate language which called, for example, all policies designed to perpetuate racial segregation inhuman and intolerable (Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice 1979). The Commonwealth also declared that "we accept the solemn duty of working together to eliminate racism and racial prejudice. This duty involves the acceptance of the principle that positive measures may be required to advance the elimination of racism, including assistance to those struggling to rid themselves and their environment of the practice" (Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice 1979). The Commonwealth took on this duty by actively promoting the dismissal of Muzorewa's government and Rhodesia's independence calling instead for NIBMAR (McIntyre 1998, 76). Commonwealth members also played a role in ending the conflict through pressuring guerrilla groups to attend the negotiating sessions in London.

The second role that the Commonwealth played during this time was the promotion of sanctions. While the United Nations played a role in the opposition to minority rule, the Commonwealth "because of its closer-knit and informal links and because of its more sustained concern" was more effective and in fact, "prompted all the

sanctions initiatives at the United Nations, and it stiffened the stand at the UN of countries such as Canada and New Zealand, which served on the Security Council during that time period; and this in turn added to the bilateral pressures on Britain” (Smith 1981, 53). This twofold approach helped pressure Britain and the international community to action and acknowledge the Rhodesian situation.

The Commonwealth’s approach towards the Apartheid regime in South Africa was similar to the Rhodesian issue and thus, some overlap in movements, dates and declarations will be found. Since the history of Apartheid in South Africa and its effects are well known, it will not be recounted here except for a few details. South Africa left the Commonwealth in 1961 and isolated itself through its white supremacist regime and support for Rhodesia. As a non-member, the Commonwealth did not have the same communication and influence over South Africa as it had with Rhodesia. Further, South Africa had been self-governing since 1910 and according to Britain independent in 1931 as per the Statute of Westminster. Unlike the Rhodesian situation, Britain had no administrative power over South Africa and therefore, it was not appropriate for the Commonwealth or the international community to pressure Britain to act alone on the issue. Apartheid became a more global movement than Rhodesia in this sense. However, Britain, under Margret Thatcher, did receive some negative attention regarding this issue, because of its apparent breach of sanctions (South Africa was one of Britain’s largest trading partners), and also because it was reluctant to take strong action against Rhodesia for fear of compromising relations with South Africa (Smith 1981, 53).

With regards to Commonwealth action, the Commonwealth fought strongly against racism and discrimination and even denounced the Apartheid regime outright in a number of its declarations. Amongst these statements, the 1971 Singapore Declaration,

the Gleneagles Declaration of 1977 (which called on all Commonwealth members to cease sporting relations with South Africa), the 1979 Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice and the Commonwealth Accord on Southern Africa of 1985 are worth noting. The last of these declarations is of particular relevance to the Commonwealths actions against Apartheid as it specifically calls on the South African government to take action. The declaration also outlines a number of steps which Commonwealth members had reached consensus on, mainly sanctions on weapons trade, oil exports and financial services such as loans, and a set of future steps to be taken if the government did not comply with the Commonwealths demands (Secretariat 1986, 142-5). This bold declaration firmly cemented the Commonwealths position on the regime and highlighted the consensus reached within its membership. In this way, the Commonwealth was able to propose collective action against South Africa through its membership. The Commonwealth also affirmed the United Nations movements and continued to use its close knit ties to garner support for its movements such as the Security Council Resolution 418 and 558 arms embargo (Secretariat 1986, 143). Another significant move came in 1985 with the creation of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group which led the dismantling of Apartheid. After P. W. Botha left office in 1989, Apartheid began to unravel and the Commonwealth continued to play a significant role in this transition period. The Commonwealth finally welcomed South African back in 1994, after the Commonwealth monitored elections and the final sanctions were lifted.

While both accounts have left out many nuances and details, the objective of outlining these two events is to demonstrate why the 1970s and 80s are considered a crisis for the Commonwealth, what its challenges, changes and actions were and how it overcame these. During the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s and 80s, the

Commonwealth faced many challenges associated with white minority regime. Of these challenges, the reconciliation in the divergence of Commonwealth values and applying actions in relation to minority rule that would satisfy all Commonwealth members and uphold the values of the organization was the most significant. This challenge not only tested the Commonwealth's core values, it also tested its ability to find consensus within such a diverse group of nations while committing to actions that gave the organization a sense of value and purpose.

In the early 1960s the Commonwealth was still evolving and had not yet been faced with a real test of its values and capacity. Thus, the Rhodesia and Apartheid issues were the modern Commonwealth's first major test. While some of the Commonwealth's roles and values had been established in earlier documents and through the creation of the Secretariat, no clear declaration of Commonwealth principles had been articulated until the Singapore Declaration of 1971. The Commonwealth, therefore, had a set of beliefs and values prior to 1971 but they had not been fully spelled out or tested. These issues were to be the first real test of these values and another chance to test the Commonwealth's ability to collaborate and negotiate through difference. This was also a test of the organization's purpose and value to the international community and the principles that it professed to promote and defend. If the Commonwealth had failed to impact the international community and take a clear stance on white minority rule, then the Commonwealth's use would undoubtedly have been questioned.

However, amongst the Commonwealth's core beliefs there seemed to be conflicts. While the Commonwealth firmly supported the sovereign right and equality of each nation and the principle of non-interference, there was consensus that rule by a racial minority group, as in Rhodesia and South Africa, was intolerable. What then should be

done about these regimes if not to intervene? Some Commonwealth members, including the Secretary General, called for Britain to use military force against Rhodesia, clearly violating the principle of non-interference (Smith 1981, 57-8). While Britain continually refused such action, sanctions were imposed on both Rhodesia and South Africa.

Economic sanctions, especially when enforced by military might as Britain attempted to do by blocking oil tankers trying to reach South Africa, could also be considered interference (Smith 1981, 60). Yet, inaction would equally violate the Commonwealth's values of equality, non-discrimination, democracy, the rule of law and so forth. The Commonwealth was, therefore, forced to reconcile which of these values was more important.

The Commonwealth attempted to do this in the Singapore Declaration of 1971 where it clearly outlined, for the first time in the modern Commonwealth's history, the guiding principles of the organization. As noted above, the Commonwealth took a robust stand on racial discrimination and noted that each Commonwealth member had the duty to combat racial discrimination within their own country and specifically, the responsibility not to assist nations which employ racist policies (The Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles 1971). In this way, the Commonwealth was able to maintain respect for the sovereignty of a nation and the principle of non-interference, while upholding the other principles of the Commonwealth such as non-discrimination and racial equality. Hence, a Commonwealth member could oppose a rebellious nation through the actions of its own country, sanctions for example, and avoid direct interference in the rebellious country. The Commonwealth also employed pressure tactics and shame against Rhodesia, South Africa and Britain, in order to achieve its goal of ending minority rule. The Commonwealth also made clear the hierarchy of its values in

the Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice as is demonstrated in this statement: “while everyone is free to retain diversity in his or her culture and lifestyle, this diversity does not justify the perpetuation of racial prejudice or racially discriminatory practices” (Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice 1979).

The Commonwealth was therefore able to reconcile the supposed conflicts of values while maintaining a strong purpose and action oriented focus on the two regimes. In fact, the Commonwealth is often reputed to have been a main force in the ending of Apartheid, applying consistent pressure on the government, leading discussions and ideas within the United Nations and acting as a facilitator for international discussion on the regime. The methods that the Commonwealth used during this crisis have and continue to be used as the Commonwealth’s system for engaging nations that violate its core principles. In this way these two crises set a precedent for Commonwealth action.

After Ian Smith unilaterally declared Rhodesia independent in 1965, over the next twenty-plus years, the Commonwealth was faced with the challenge of maintaining relations between Commonwealth members who held varying opinions on the Rhodesian and, subsequently, South African situation. The Commonwealth was able to act as a facilitator during this time, applying pressure on Rhodesia, Britain and South Africa, and leading the movement for sanctions on the delinquent country, while maintaining the sometimes contrary principles of the Commonwealth. In this way, the Commonwealth was able to uphold its principle of non-interference while simultaneously advocating for non-discrimination and through the actions of member nations foreign policy, was able to apply indirect pressure on the Smith and Apartheid regime through economic and military sanctions. During this tumultuous time the Commonwealth was able to demonstrate that, even though there are divergent opinions within the Commonwealth, the organization is

able to bring its members together to discuss and find consensus on world issues and impact in a significant way opinions and strategies in the wider international community. During this crisis, the Commonwealth also developed its declaration of core principles in the Singapore Declaration of 1971 and its methodology for international action-evolving from an organization whose main purpose was facilitating decolonization to becoming an organization with international impact on world issues.

The success of the Commonwealth during the 1970 and 80s is often heralded as the organization's golden years. From 1965 until 1990 the Commonwealth occupied itself mainly with the fight against white supremacy and minority rule and was publicised mostly for this work. The Commonwealth's identity, therefore, for the last twenty-plus years revolved around the campaign to end these regimes and mediate other conflicts within the Commonwealth. It is not surprising, therefore, that when white supremacy ended in Rhodesia and South Africa the Commonwealth went through a crisis of identity. While the Commonwealth should be commended for its ability to respond to its toughest test with its biggest success, its ability to do this so well seemingly left the organization without a purpose. This anti-climactic time made it necessary for the Commonwealth to re-articulate its guiding principles, which it did in 1991 under the Harare Declaration.

CRISIS OF 1991: THE HARARE DECLARATION AND BEYOND

An in depth review of the historical context for this crisis point is not needed as the previous section outlined the events leading up to 1991. The Commonwealth summarized the historical context and its challenge particularly well by noting that:

Internationally, the world is no longer locked in the iron grip of the Cold War.

Totalitarianism is giving way to democracy and justice in many parts of the world.

Decolonisation is largely complete. Significant changes are at last under way in

South Africa. These changes, so desirable and heartening in themselves, present the world and the Commonwealth with new tasks and challenges (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991).

The crisis of the 1990s is most similar to the crisis of 1949, because it entered crisis not as a result of Commonwealth actions, or member actions, but because the Commonwealth had reached a new phase in its evolution and needed re-thinking. Just as the Commonwealth had to re-define itself in 1949 as it took on a more global role with the inclusion of India, Ceylon and Pakistan as member nations, the Commonwealth in the 1990s needed to re-define itself after the many incidents of the 1970s and 1980s, and in particular the Rhodesian issues and the ending of Apartheid. Now that world events were more stable, the Commonwealth was needed less for its role as an arbitrator and applier of international shame and strategy, it was left to fall back on its ancillary roles.

The Commonwealth in the 1990s, therefore, faced the challenge of staying relevant after the crises of the 1970s and 1980s. By the time the Commonwealth met in 1991, the world was much different than it was in the 1980s. World issues shifted from security, conflict and dictatorships, to developmental issues such as the increasing gap between the rich and the poor-something ever present within the Commonwealth, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, women's rights, environmental sustainability and economic reform. In 1991 David W. McIntyre suggested that the Commonwealth might examine seven areas which could be addressed for the betterment of the Commonwealth: membership growth, CHOGM reformulation, easier and better access for the media, Secretariat restructuring, balancing the official and unofficial Commonwealth roles, harmonizing the Commonwealth's global actions and developing closer relations with major powers such as the United States and Japan, concentrate Commonwealth actions on its specializations

and engage the awareness and participation of the general population (McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth, 1965-90* 1991, 262-9). Some of these considerations were taken into account in the 1991 Harare Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, while others remain a struggle within the Commonwealth such as focusing on issue areas where the Commonwealth has distinct strength, improving media contact and increasing awareness within the general population of Commonwealth countries. However, some of McIntyre's ideas for improving the Commonwealth in the 1990s appeared in the documents arising from the Harare CHOGM, such as highlighting the Commonwealth's unique strengths and the call for developing closer relationships between the unofficial and official Commonwealths.

McIntyre was not the only individual thinking of the Commonwealth's future; with the help of a specially formulated group of ten countries called the High Level Appraisal Group, the Commonwealth began to rethink its role in the 1990s. The conclusions of this working group as well as the input from the Commonwealth Heads of Government were articulated in the Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991 (See Appendix E for the full declaration). This declaration, perhaps more than any other, is seen as the Commonwealth's constitution of core values, roles and responsibilities of its members.

In this way, the Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991 provided the catalyst for the next phase in the evolution of the Commonwealth. While most of the values and responsibilities of member nations had been previously articulated, the 1991 declaration puts them forth in a clearer and more constitutional manner. While the 1991 declaration affirms the 1971 declaration and its principles, the 1991 declaration highlights some important points. First, it notes the 'special strength' that the Commonwealth has in its

membership by virtue of the diversity, shared language, culture and rule of law of its members, and its ability to seek consensus and bridge the diversity within the Commonwealth through friendship and cooperation (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991). This, as noted earlier, is one of the features that makes the Commonwealth unique and also provides it with a niche. Second, it declares faith in market economics as a method of development. Third, it recognizes the need for “public and private resources from the developed to the developing world, and domestic and international regimes conducive to the realisation of these goals” (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991). Fourth, a pledge to uphold the Commonwealth’s principles with ‘renewed vigour’. These principles were articulated in greater detail than previously and given some prescriptive direction; for example the promotion of sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty could be operationalized by a “stable international economic framework within which growth can be achieved; sound economic management recognising the central role of the market economy; effective population policies and programmes; sound management of technological change” (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991). The fifth component of the declaration which was unique to 1991 and significant was the call for a strengthening of the Commonwealth’s capacity and invitation to the intergovernmental organizations within the Commonwealth to assist in fulfilling its principles. Finally, the closing point of the declaration notes that the Heads of Government are “determin[ed] to renew and enhance the value and importance of the Commonwealth as an institution which can and should strengthen and enrich the lives not only of its own members and their peoples but also of the wider community of peoples of which they are a part” (The Harare Commonwealth

Declaration 1991). These five points in the 1991 declaration demonstrate frankness, ambition, commitment and forward thinking, arguably not seen in past Communiqués.

The language of the 1991 declaration coupled with the methodology for operationalizing its principles helped to re-frame and reinforce the Commonwealth's value and role entering the 1990s. The declaration helped the Commonwealth in its effort to transform from primarily being a conflict manager/broker/negotiator/strategist to a development organization. The 1991 declaration mentions the major world issues, most of which have a developmental focus-universal access to education, sustainable development, multilateral trade with few barriers, raising living standards through cooperation, environmental sustainability, assisting small and island states and combating drug trafficking and the spread of disease (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991).

The Commonwealth, therefore, answered the challenges of purpose and identity following the anti-climactic nature of the ending of the turbulent 1970s and 80s, by reformulating itself as a predominantly development focused organization. This shift in focus was set in the contexts of the Commonwealth's core strengths, particularly its diverse membership and ability to bring them together to find consensus, the shared foundations such as the commitment to market economics and the structures which facilitate this and its shared values and principles. Though the goals of the declaration were at times in areas outside the Commonwealth expertise, such as combating drug trafficking and disease-something which may be better left to the United Nations, it did focus on some areas where the Commonwealth has and could demonstrated strength. However, the Commonwealth entered the 1990s with a renewed sense of purpose emanating from the reformation of its common values and fundamental principles. This

shift in focus re-energized the Commonwealth; however, the Harare principles and actions are still in many ways illusive as the next crisis will make clear.

CONCLUSION

Since 1949 the Commonwealth has continually been in and out of crisis-reinventing itself at each point. When examining the Commonwealth's history there seems to be a large number of turning points in the organization's history; yet, the diversity of the group and the age of the institution make the number of crises logical and the ability of the Commonwealth to maintain itself remarkable.

The four major crises of the Commonwealth occurred in 1949, 1965, the 1970s and 1980s and 1991. 1949 marked the beginning of the modern Commonwealth-a time when the Commonwealth's purpose and objectives were unclear. The Commonwealth had the task of separating itself from British foreign policy and establishing itself as an international institution. It was able to achieve this through the joining of India, Ceylon and Pakistan- ending the British stock elite club, that the Commonwealth once was and creating the unique diversity of the Commonwealth 'brotherhood'. About fifteen years later, the Commonwealth found itself in crisis again because of the divergent views on British membership in the EEC and the cut back on large scale migration to the United Kingdom from the 'coloured' Commonwealth, and because of the lack of capacity of the CRO to fulfil the growing Commonwealth's needs. In answer to the problem of capacity and purpose, the Commonwealth created the Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation. The Secretariat separated itself, for good, from British foreign policy, gave the Commonwealth the much needed space and capacity to carry out its work and instituted the office of the Secretary General. This move infused the Commonwealth with purpose and re-established its foundational beliefs and objectives.

The Commonwealth was not able to settle into its new phase as crisis arrived again in the 1970s with the onslaught of the controversy concerning minority rule in Rhodesia and South Africa. This time period challenged the Commonwealth's newly stated goals and values because they were seemingly conflicting and also because most Commonwealth members were unhappy with the lack of British action against the illegal independence of Rhodesia and its white minority rule, and with Apartheid in South Africa. Furthermore, the Commonwealth had to carve out its agenda during this time, which it successfully did as a facilitator for international negotiation and consensus and as an agitator for ending racialist rule, mainly through pressuring Britain and promoting the use of sanctions. The Commonwealth was, therefore, able to turn the crisis of the 1970s and 80s into, arguably, its biggest success. However, at the end of this highlight for the Commonwealth was another low point, where the Commonwealth needed to find new purpose in the changed world of the 1990s. The Commonwealth was able to achieve this new sense of purpose through the CHOGM of 1991 in Harare when the Declaration of Commonwealth principles was formed. This declaration articulated in a clear manner the Commonwealth's fundamental beliefs and commitments as well as its objectives for the 1990s, giving the organization a renewed sense of purpose.

Throughout these four transformations the organization has maintained its core values and fundamental principles, while shifting its focus and approach to service the needs of its members and the world. The flexible and adaptive nature of the Commonwealth has allowed it to survive through the crises of 1949, 1965, the 1970s and 1991 while evolving in a positive direction.

CHAPTER 3 CURRENT CRISIS

After sixty years as the modern Commonwealth and having survived the crises of 1949, 1965, the 1970s and 1991, is the Commonwealth in crisis again? This section will examine whether the Commonwealth is in crisis today or if these claims are overstated. Perspectives on the Commonwealth are divergent, ranging from overly optimistic, to excessively critical. Some, such as Banerji, envision a strong Commonwealth and argue that even though many have forecasted its decline repeatedly throughout its history, “the Commonwealth is still not just surviving, but thriving. And countries are still seeking to join” (Banerji 2008,814). Yet others, such as former Secretariat employee Stephen Chan, argue for the insignificance of the organization by noting that: “if the Commonwealth didn't exist, no one would invent it. Because it does exist, the member states turn up to the biennial summits out of sentiment and habit, and fund a small Commonwealth secretariat on a drip-feed basis so it can do nothing major. Even then, the little it does manage is flabby and last-generation” (Chan 2009). On a more moderate tone, Secretary General Kamallesh Sharma, in his closing remarks at the 2009 CHOGM stated with regards to the Commonwealth that, “it is great, but it can be greater: we know there is much that we can do better, and more that we can do. But it is great, and it is global, and it is good. Long may it remain so” (Sharma 2009). Taking a broader scope, beyond the official Commonwealth, Timothy Shaw notes the health of the Commonwealth because of its extensive civil society network, professional associations and private cooperation’s which “punch above their weight”, show signs of growth and give the Commonwealth greater scope and relevance (Shaw 2008,86,104-5). Evidently there are vociferous and divergent opinions about the Commonwealth’s purpose and future, some of these views will be discussed below. However, it is not the intention of this paper to discuss them all, but to

establish if the Commonwealth could be considered to be in crisis today so as to compare this point to the historical cases.

In order to achieve discussion, this section will examine the 2009 CHOGM in Trinidad and Tobago as a case point, using the same format as employed in chapter two. The historical context will be examined along with the challenges of this time period, and whether they are significant enough to be considered a crisis. Since the situation is arguably not over, the changes and actions of the Commonwealth are yet to be determined. It is likely that no clear winner will emerge from this debate and only hindsight will reveal a clearer picture of the truth concerning the extent to which the organization is in crisis. Yet, a compelling argument for a current Commonwealth crisis can be made and it shall therefore be compared against the cases noted in chapter two for the purpose of understanding the Commonwealth's evolution and noting any trends that may provide insight into avoiding or managing future crisis.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After the Harare Declaration of Commonwealth Principles in 1991, the Commonwealth began to establish its goals for the 1990s. The Commonwealth envisioned for itself a role of promoting sustainable development and promoting democracy and good governance, particularly amongst its membership. After the conflicts of the 1970s and 80s, and the non-compliance of some countries to the Commonwealth's principles, the Commonwealth met in New Zealand for a 1995 CHOGM to formulate a way for the Commonwealth to better implement the Harare Declaration. The Commonwealth's solution was the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme (MCAP – see Appendix F). MCAP's purpose was to advance the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth and to promote sustainable development and to facilitate consensus

building (Millbrook Commonwealth Action Plan on the Harare Declaration 1995). Within the first role, advancing fundamental political values, there were three subsections: measures in support of processes and institutions for the practice of the Harare principles, measures in response to violations of the Harare principles, and mechanisms for implementation of measures (Millbrook Commonwealth Action Plan on the Harare Declaration 1995). The last of these subsections mandated the creation of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG).

CMAG was set up to “deal with serious or persistent violations of the principles” in the Harare Declaration of Commonwealth principles and to “assess the nature of the infringement and recommend measures for collective Commonwealth action aimed at the speedy restoration of democracy and constitutional rule”. Structurally, this body has eight to ten representatives, initially from CHOGM hosting countries and is chaired by the Secretary General. Most significantly, CMAG has taken on the role of considering and potentially recommending the suspension of member states that have not adhered to the Commonwealth’s principles. The first such case was Nigeria during the same meeting in 1995 (McIntyre, *A Guide to the Contemporary Commonwealth* 2001, 91). The tactic of suspension follows closely with the Commonwealth methodology of shaming and embarrassing a country into revision. McIntyre writes that “the C-Mag was a demonstration that the Commonwealth aspires to have some teeth” and that along with the other facets of the Millbrook plan, the Commonwealth demonstrated that it was an “association with standards it was determined to maintain” (McIntyre, *A Guide to the Contemporary Commonwealth* 2001, 91). A high level review conducted on CMAG and presented to Heads of Government in 2002 noted that “in the 12 years since it was established CMAG has remained a unique body. Its authority to suspend or even

recommend to Heads of Government that a member country be expelled is unparalleled by other international organisations” (Baird 2008). It was also noted that CMAG “remains the most tangible expression of the Commonwealth’s commitment to the fundamental political values to which all Commonwealth members subscribe” (Baird 2008). CMAG was thus a significant advancement for the Commonwealth and its ability to achieve its goals.

Another significant amendment to the Commonwealth that was being made throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s was to the bases for Commonwealth membership. Historically Commonwealth members have been former colonies of Britain, yet in 1991 the Commonwealth began to formulate a list of criteria for membership. The membership criteria have undergone a number of revisions, including at the 1995 Auckland CHOGM where Mozambique became the first member without any colonial ties to Britain, again at the Edinburgh CHOGM of 1997, at the Kampala CHOGM in 2007 and finally at the Port of Spain CHOGM in 2009 where the Commonwealth welcomed Rwanda as its newest member. Basic membership criteria require the country in question to have some tie to either Britain or a current Commonwealth member, have domestic support for joining the Commonwealth, adhere to, and have a demonstrable commitment to the Commonwealth’s principles as set out in 1971 and beyond, and accept Commonwealth norms such as the use of English and the upholding of the Queen as the Head of the Commonwealth. For a full list of membership criteria as set out at the 2007 Kampala CHOGM, see Appendix G.

Membership expansion has sparked much discussion amongst Commonwealth members as it relates to the identity of the organization. Traditionally, Commonwealth members have all had colonial ties to Britain and as such, share a common history and,

set of values and systems such as the judiciary and governance systems, something that the Commonwealth is founded upon. If members without the historical links that the existing membership possesses are admitted, would this compromise the supposed family ties and informal nature of the Commonwealth that is associated with it? While this discussion continues today, it has generally been accepted that a new phase of Commonwealth membership has begun.

For the remainder of the 1990s and leading up to the 2009 CHOGM in Trinidad and Tobago, the Commonwealth carried out its existing missions while simultaneously expanding the scope of its projects and methods of achieving these missions. The largest growth has come from what is often referred to as the Commonwealth's extended family; a group of over eighty non-governmental associations which have their foundation in the Commonwealth, such as: the Association of Commonwealth Universities, The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship (Shaw 2008, xi).

In addition to this group of non-governmental associations, the Commonwealth has also taken a strong focus on development and co-operation through a number of intra-Commonwealth organizations. The following is only a basic description of a few of these organizations and is outlined here to give an indication of the Commonwealth's more recent developmental initiatives rather than to provide a comprehensive list.

The Commonwealth has mainly led its development work and assistance to member nations in the area of globalization through the work of the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth Foundation for Technical Co-operation (CFTC). The Commonwealth Foundation was originally created in 1965 for the purpose of strengthening civil society within the Commonwealth in an effort to promote democracy,

sustainable development and cultural understanding. Today the Commonwealth Foundation focuses on four main areas: Culture, Governance and Democracy; Human Development; and Communities and Livelihoods. Another important organization is the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) developed in 1971 to assist member nations with technical support and training in matters that relate to economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development. The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), created in 1973, is another initiative of the Commonwealth which seeks to help youth become active in decision making within the Commonwealth and abroad and to become active in social development. The Commonwealth has also expanded its efforts through the creation of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), which was established in 1989 for the purpose of assisting developing nations in sharing and accessing education and training largely through online and distance education and technical programs. These four intra-Commonwealth organizations demonstrate some of the core organizations of the Commonwealth which help it achieve its goals and promote its principles. Again, this is by no means a comprehensive list, but gives an indication of the work that the Commonwealth began to focus on in particular, after the 1990s.

Since 1991 the Commonwealth has expanded through the 1995 Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme, its creation of CMAG, its various programs and missions and through its membership. This time period also saw CMAG and the Commonwealth's principles being put to the test repeatedly beginning with Nigeria in 1995. Its responses at times met with success and at others with disappointment. The Commonwealth's major efforts during this time period focused on development as evidenced through its expansion of programs and organizations. With decolonization and white minority rule over, the Commonwealth seemed to be less focused and began to

develop a lower profile, especially after its charismatic leader, Sir Shridath Ramphal, left office in 1990, and the Commonwealth began to diversify its focus giving the media fewer major stories to cover.

Though the 1990s and 2000s have seemed to be quiet, over the last ten years or more, the Commonwealth has undergone a number of challenges. The first is related to the creation of CMAG and its ability to influence ‘misbehaving’ member states and fulfil the Commonwealth’s role as a protector of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The second challenge that the Commonwealth faces is criticisms regarding its lack of focus. The third challenge is related to the low profile and lack of interest that the Commonwealth seems to hold. These three challenges are often noted as the Commonwealth’s most significant obstacles entering the twenty-first century.

CHALLENGE OF INFLUENCING AND ACTING

The Millbrook Programme helped to operationalize the Harare declaration in a concrete and forceful way. This gave the Commonwealth a renewed sense of purpose following 1995 and “undoubtedly raised the profile of the Commonwealth” (Commonwealth in Crisis? 2003, 186). While CMAG was successful in suspending a number of offending countries and drawing negative political attention to them, the Commonwealth lacked the power to go beyond this symbolic political pressure and influence. CMAG was therefore criticized for not really being a protector of human rights and democracy so much as it was a protector of the Commonwealth image (McIntyre, A Guide to the Contemporary Commonwealth 2001, 91). In this regard, the Commonwealth looked to be defending its principles and taking action against delinquent states, yet it had no real power to achieve these goals if embarrassment and diplomatic pressure did not

work. Therefore, the enthusiasm regarding CMAG at its initial creation and effectiveness was offset by its inability to concretely protect Commonwealth principles.

In particular, two Commonwealth cases demonstrate that CMAG was not effective enough to bring non-complying states back into alignment with the Commonwealth's principles: Fiji and Zimbabwe. While Fiji has a history of suspensions and re-admittances in the Commonwealth and, at least, gives the appearance that it considers the Commonwealth and its actions seriously, Zimbabwe, under the leadership of Robert Mugabe, projects total indifference. In fact, Zimbabwe withdrew its membership in 2003 pre-emptively, knowing that the Commonwealth would renew its suspension. It is expected that a member nation may violate the Commonwealth's principles at one time, as did Nigeria, Pakistan and Fiji; what is problematic in these two cases is the persistence of their violations, Fiji being suspended in 1960, 2000, 2006, and 2009. The Commonwealth has therefore, tried, and failed, repeatedly to encourage and facilitate Fiji's adherence to the principles of the Commonwealth. While the Commonwealth has had some success with Fiji, though not recently as it has disregarded its call for democratic elections by 2010, there has been little encouragement, until recently, that Zimbabwe has any intention of reforming its behaviour or even listening to what the Commonwealth has to say.

The Commonwealth's inability to bring these two countries to the negotiating table and pressure them to re-instate democracy, human rights and the rule of law reflects poorly on the organization, the strength of its connections and influence, and upon its ability to achieve its professed goals. If the Commonwealth cannot achieve democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights in all of its member states; if members who have drafted these principles on their own soil refuse to conform and will not listen

to the Commonwealth, what power and value does the organization have? If the Commonwealth cannot influence its own members, can it be the bridge of cultures which helps the world expand zones of peace? Hence, the Commonwealth's failure to influence Fiji and Zimbabwe has generated some serious questions regarding the usefulness of the Commonwealth in this area.

This disenchantment, coupled with the growth of other international bodies which specialise or have weightier mechanisms to deal with rogue states, such as the United Nations Security Council and regional bodies like the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the Pacific Islands Forum, have left the Commonwealth's role in this area compromised. Yet, criticisms must be brought into context, as no international organization can claim to have absolute power over its sovereign members, which allow it to control their behaviour. However, this criticism is poignant because this is a task which the Commonwealth has mandated for itself. Like many other international organizations, the Commonwealth has experienced some success in influencing its members and in other cases been unable to do so. However, the strength of the Commonwealth lies in its diverse membership and its ability to bring Heads of government from every continent together to discuss world issues, achieve consensus and develop partnerships and initiatives with broad international benefits. In the highly competitive world of international relations and development, if the Commonwealth is no longer able to achieve what is often considered to be its greatest strength, what value does this sixty plus year old organization have? This is a challenge that the Commonwealth has had to address in recent years and is directly related to its purpose and value.

In addition to the criticisms about the Commonwealth's ineffectiveness in bringing rogue states to the negotiating table and back into alignment with

Commonwealth principles, the Commonwealth has also been criticized for not taking enough action, or any action at all, against some member states that have violated the same principles. Zoe Ware writes on this point that “CMAG has been depressingly timid on areas where a strict reading of the Harare principles surely raises some eyebrows” (Ware 2009). For example, the Commonwealth, arguably, could have been more aggressive in its disapproval of Mugabe’s government in Zimbabwe and applied pressure on South Africa to take action against its neighbour in a similar manner that the Commonwealth applied pressure on Britain to act against Ian Smith during UDI. In connection, an article published in 2003 entitled *Commonwealth in Crisis?* noted that “How this CHOGM [in Nigeria] handles the vexed issue of Mugabe’s regime in Zimbabwe, will seriously influence the Commonwealth’s immediate future” (Commonwealth in Crisis? 2003, 187). Yet, the Commonwealth took a much less aggressive strategy than was seen during the 70s and 80s and has arguably suffered for it.

Similarly, the Commonwealth has been criticized for its limited recent role in the conflict in Sri Lanka. Conflict has been ongoing in Sri Lanka since the early 1980s between the government and a separatist group called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, more often referred to as the Tamil Tigers. Since the erosion of a 2002 cease fire agreement in 2005, the conflict intensified especially particularly in 2008 and 2009 when the government launched large scale attacks on the Tamil Tigers until their surrender in May of 2009. The war saw large scale casualties on both sides and horrific human rights violations that likely constituted war crimes. There is, therefore, no question as to the seriousness of the war and its violation of Commonwealth principles (Bouckaert 2010). At a time when the majority of international organizations and humanitarian groups, including the United Nations and Human Rights Watch were either banned or being

accused of bias, the Commonwealth, as one of the only organizations still to be considered impartial, had the opportunity to play an active role as long as it was permitted, and demonstrate one of its core strengths - bringing diverse nations to the negotiating table - yet, it failed to act (Bouckaert 2010), (Page 2010).

In a 2009 report entitled *Sri Lanka: Commonwealth Should Act on Crisis*, Human Rights Watch and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) urged CMAG to take action to protect the Commonwealth's core principles as outlined in the Harare declaration (Human Rights Watch 2009). The report noted that "CMAG needs to assert itself to protect the civilians trapped in the fighting in a member country[;] abuses by the Tamil Tigers should not deter it from pressing the Sri Lankan government to uphold the Commonwealth's fundamental principles" (Human Rights Watch 2009). CMAG has been put in a difficult position during this crisis because Sri Lanka was a member of the rotating committee until 2009. However, Sri Lanka's membership on

CMAG should only have increased the pressure on Sri Lanka to conform to the Commonwealth's principles. In fact, this politically sensitive situation could have provided the Commonwealth with the opportunity to demonstrate its deep commitment to its principles regardless of political sensitivities. Instead, the Commonwealth left the international condemnation and pressure to other international organizations and member nations such as Britain (Page 2010). However, the Commonwealth has taken one important step in the aftermath of the Sri Lankan war. It sent a team of five observers to oversee the recent presidential elections. The full results are yet to be publicized. While this is an important role, the lack of action and involvement earlier on in the war is regrettable. As Human Rights Watch notes the, "Commonwealth harms itself when it stays silent during a crisis in a member state" (Human Rights Watch 2009).

Moreover, leading up to the 2009 CHOGM two particular cases arguably required Commonwealth action: the Gambian President Yahya Jammeh's threat to kill human rights activists and the Uganda human rights violations against homosexuals as well as a highly discriminatory bill against homosexuals. The Commonwealth failed to act on either account, though the Secretary General noted that the Commonwealth was engaging the Gambian President, who chose not to attend the CHOGM (Cobb 2009).

Preceding the CHOGM, Uganda began a discriminatory campaign against homosexuals and was considering a bill that would, in essence, criminalize homosexuality, making aggravated homosexual intercourse - when one partner is infected with HIV-punishable by death and, require Ugandans to report any such acts within twenty-four hours (York 2009). Yet, CMAG has taken no action against this member. Furthermore, the Commonwealth as a whole has failed to take a stand on the issue; the new chair of the Commonwealth for the next two years, Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Patrick Manning, said that "Individual countries have their own positions on these matters...but it doesn't form part of our agenda. It need not detain us" (Cobb 2009). Regarding this, executive director of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Maja Daruwala, said that "as the new chairman of the Commonwealth [Manning] has failed an early test. It is not only disappointing but against all Commonwealth principles. He is dismissing the cries of ordinary citizens who are asking their leaders for basic human rights" (Cobb 2009). The disappointing stance taken by Manning was compounded by the complacent position that the Secretary General took when he said that "as far as Uganda is concerned, this is . . . before their parliament and I'm hopeful that the various voices raised when this is debated will bring forward all the issues of discrimination and vulnerability. We must show our faith that this process will deliver the appropriate result"

(Cobb 2009). However, the Ugandan issue was not formally raised and the Communiqué contained no mention of Uganda, Sri Lanka or The Gambia. With regard to these comments, director of the Royal Commonwealth Society and co-author of the RCS report *Common What?* wrote that “the Commonwealth is about shared values and principles everyone has signed on to...so if they can't be discussed here, then where? If a member state falls short you either help them or sanction them in some way. If the Commonwealth stops being about that, we've lost another leg of the Commonwealth stool” (Cobb 2009).

The Commonwealth's inaction was made worse by the fact that the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni chaired the CHOGM in 2009 while the proposed bill was still in parliament (York 2009). Stephen Lewis, former United Nations envoy on AIDS in Africa, who spoke at the Peoples Forum, noted that by chairing the summit without opposing the anti-homosexuality law, the Ugandan President “makes a mockery of Commonwealth principles” and further noted that “the credibility of the Commonwealth is hanging by a spider's thread” (York 2009). While Commonwealth members hold divergent opinions on homosexuality, criminalizing and actively hunting homosexuals is a clear violation of human rights and non-discrimination. The only real action on the issue came from Heads of government who merely noted their disapproval of the policy behind closed doors.

The Commonwealth's lack of action on a clear violation of its principles places it in an even more vulnerable position for criticism. While the Ugandan bill was withdrawn, largely due to international criticism, this victory cannot be attributed to the Commonwealth's strong position and persuasion. The 2009 CHOGM in November was held at the height of the Ugandan controversy over the bill; and the Commonwealth, given a world stage and an abundance of opportunity to publicly denounce and embarrass

the Ugandan delegates for the treatment of homosexuals in the country and the proposed bill, failed to take advantage of the opportunity and defend its core values and denounce discrimination of any kind, including against homosexuals.

Ignoring this opportunity also allowed the chance to set a precedent and example for other Commonwealth countries, which have similarly negative views and treatment of homosexuals, to pass by. This is especially disappointing considering that the Commonwealth reaffirmed its values and principles under the Trinidad and Tobago Affirmation on Commonwealth Values and Principles during this CHOGM and yet took no action against Uganda and other hostile nations toward homosexuals, including the CHOGM's host nation which has its own laws against anal intercourse (Cobb 2009).

With regards to the Commonwealth's inaction Ware writes that the Commonwealth has "the potential to be a true voice of moral authority on the world stage" and that this is the image that the Commonwealth wishes to put forth, yet "every time the association appears to shy away from acting with clear moral conviction, or turns a blind eye to the inconsistencies in its own back yard, it distorts this image" (Ware 2009). This disappointment has not only lessened the Commonwealth's profile internationally, it has demonstrated that other international organizations can do what the Commonwealth, should, but refused to do, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the United Nations, and also, one could argue, that it has stepped back from the role of promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law that it developed during its fight against white supremacy in the 70s and 80s. Thus, concerns over the Commonwealth's relevance and role in the modern world seem to be timely questions.

While some would debate whether the Commonwealth is in crisis today, few would argue that the inaction of the Commonwealth on the above noted cases is

acceptable and does not negatively affect the Commonwealth's reputation. This paper will therefore not engage in a debate over whether this is a relevant challenge that the Commonwealth faces or not.

CHALLENGE OF FOCUS

The Second challenge that the Commonwealth faces is its lack of focus. Since 1949 the Commonwealth has ballooned in terms of its membership, its programs, initiatives and associations. While it is understandable that a sixty year old organization whose membership spans the globe would have a large agenda of missions and programs, in today's highly competitive field of international relations and development, many Commonwealth advocates are calling for the Commonwealth to focus on the areas where it has particular added value and can follow through on these points. This is not to suggest that the Commonwealth induce wide scale program cuts or remove small programs, rather the objective is to eliminate duplication. Since the Commonwealth is not a developmental agency and does not have a large budget or capacity, it should remove agenda items and programs in the areas where other international organization are strong in the area. In other words, if the Commonwealth does not have a comparative advantage or historical legacy in the area and other international organizations are active in that area, it would be imprudent for the Commonwealth to copy. Further, the Commonwealth has an extensive civil society network which is already active in areas that the official Commonwealth is not. The Commonwealth's extended family, as Timothy Shaw has named it, can take on more of these areas as the Commonwealth removes them from its agenda.

There are a number of reasons for this call to focus. The Commonwealth has comparatively a small operating budget and a greater focus on where the Commonwealth can be most effective would give greater value to these finances. As noted in chapter one,

the Commonwealth's operating budget is miniscule in comparison to other international organizations. Moreover, the size of its staff is less than one percent of the United Nations workforce. The Commonwealth, therefore, should not attempt to act in the same capacity as the United Nations (Joanna Bennett 2009, 25). While an expanding organization is typically a sign of growth and a positive feature, if the annual budget and capacity does not grow along with the expansion of the organization, a 'balance of payments' type crisis occurs, only instead of defaulting on its debts the organization fails to be effective.

Also, if the Commonwealth were to concentrate in a fewer areas where it has strength, it would likely make the Commonwealth more effective in these areas and identifiable. Since the Commonwealth attempts to do so many things, it is difficult to define exactly what the Commonwealth does. Furthermore, there are fewer cases today where the Commonwealth has had major successes, as it did, for example, in mediating the end of white minority rule in Rhodesia and its subsequent independence and in helping end Apartheid in South Africa. To use a clichéd phrase: the Commonwealth in modern times is more of a jack of all trades, than a master of any particular thing, making the Commonwealth's work hard to define in a simple manner and less attractive to publicize. The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) report entitled *Common What?* writes that "in the 1980s, through its fight against Apartheid, the Commonwealth was widely known for challenging racism. Today, it is not known for anything in particular. Spreading itself too thinly across too many areas, its identity is fragmented, its meaning vague and its impact weak" (Joanna Bennett 2009, 26).

Additionally, a more focused agenda would help CHOGMs to be more effective and purposeful for member nations and international relations. If the Commonwealth could take a strong and focused position during its Heads of Government meetings, it

would enable better planning, stronger results and more effective publicity. A succinct Communiqué and CHOGM also attracts more media attention and a higher profile, as evidenced through the 2009 CHOGM's concentration on the environment which attracted Denmark's Prime Minister Lars Rasmussen, France's President Nicolas Sarkozy and the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to the meeting. In the RCS report a senior official from the Caribbean noted that "Commonwealth communiqués include everything except the kitchen sink. There is no attempt to focus in on priorities" (Joanna Bennett 2009, 26). This is evidenced in the 2009 Communiqué which was twenty-five pages in length and included everything from the recent financial crisis, to drug trafficking, to border disputes between members and non-members, to migration, to weapons trafficking and so forth. It is also likely that Heads of government would find the Commonwealth more valuable if the CHOGMs were able to focus and spend the time to extract the opinions experiences and beliefs of the diverse Commonwealth membership, rather than rushing through the overcrowded agenda which does not include enough time to fully discuss each issue. This lack of concentration also cuts down on the amount of time that Heads of government are able to spend on any one issue. However, many note that the true value of the CHOGMs are found in the Heads of Government retreats which truly facilitate casual conversation between Presidents and Prime Ministers. Yet, having only three and a half days together, delegates may only touch on an issue before they must move onto the next agenda item. Three options are available: longer CHOGMs, more frequent meetings, or more focused meetings.

Thus, the second challenge that the Commonwealth faces today is the need to focus: its programs and initiatives; its goals and priorities; and its CHOGMS and Communiqués. Unless the Commonwealth expands its budget and physical capacity, it

will continually be asked to focus on the areas where it can be most effective. In this way Ware writes that “it is often said that the beauty of the Commonwealth is that it means so many things to so many different people...[but]for the Commonwealth to survive and flourish through the changes ahead, perhaps it must shy away from being all things to all people, and sharpen its focus on the admirable values that, no matter its history, make it universally inspiring” (Ware 2009, 553-4).

CHALLENGE OF LOW PROFILE AND LACK OF INTEREST

The third challenge that the Commonwealth faces is related to its second challenge: that is, its low profile and lack of publicity. In part because the Commonwealth lacks focus, it has very low publicity and a low profile, even amongst Commonwealth member nations. With regard to the Commonwealth’s profile the RCS report notes that it is of significant concern because “key stakeholders question its continued usefulness; insiders think it isn’t taken seriously enough; and the public question its relevance” (Joanna Bennett 2009, 13). Since the Commonwealth is unfocused, it is difficult for governments and policy makers to associate and use the Commonwealth to help them achieve their goals. The RCS report noted that when policy makers were asked when they would “reach for the Commonwealth in their “policy tool box”-in what situation today does the Commonwealth offer unique value?” no participant could give a satisfactory answer and many could not think of a single case (Joanna Bennett 2009, 13). This not only underscores the point that the Commonwealth lacks focus; it also demonstrates a low profile to the point of indifference. If policy makers cannot find value in the Commonwealth, why should Heads of government?

With the growing number of international organizations, now more than ever, Heads of government are being asked to fly across the world for meetings. What is there

in the Commonwealth to convince Presidents and Prime Ministers to take three and a half days out of their schedule to attend a CHOGM, not taking into account time for preparations and travel? For many developing nations who benefit from the Commonwealth's multiple educational, technical and developmental projects, the answer is not too hard to fathom; however, for developed nations like Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Canada, what value does the Commonwealth hold for them aside from gaining support for initiatives to be pursued in other international organizations (McIntyre, *A Guide to the Contemporary Commonwealth* 2001, 221)? The Commonwealth must therefore be aware of the ever present challenge of keeping developed countries committed to the organization, a task even supporters of the Commonwealth like Banerji note: "another challenge is the constant struggle to keep the organisation relevant to all its members ... there is often a lack of strong political commitment visible in some larger countries" (Banerji 2010). Hence, the Commonwealth is challenged with raising its profile amongst member nations in order to ensure the success and continued interest and support for the Commonwealth.

The challenge of the Commonwealth's low profile also incorporates the task of engaging younger generations who, to a large extent are unaware of, or indifferent to, the Commonwealth. While the Commonwealth has a number of youth related programmes, largely stemming from the Commonwealth Youth Programme as mentioned above, these programs typically capture already engaged youth. On the occasion of the Commonwealth's sixtieth anniversary, the theme of the year was chosen to be 'the Commonwealth @ 60 - serving a new generation'. While the Commonwealth's developed nations have an aging population, more than half of the Commonwealth's total population is considered to be youth - anyone aged between fifteen and thirty - indicating

that their engagement is necessary for the future wellbeing of the Commonwealth (Ware 2009, 548). In a recent article on the organization and the new generation, Zoe Ware writes that “the Commonwealth has struggled with its image for much of the past 60 years. It will continue to struggle until it can be re-defined for the ‘new generation’ through the scale of its achievements and relevance of its current actions, rather than through history books” (Ware 2009, 549). What is even more discouraging for the Commonwealth is that most history books, let alone international relations books, outside the United Kingdom do not mention the Commonwealth at all, leaving even fewer resources for the new generation to learn about the Commonwealth.

However, the Commonwealth has made some improvements in engaging youth through the recent adoption of a Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) held in conjunction with the CHOGM, where youth delegates also create a Communiqué and interact with other young people from across the organization, through the Royal Commonwealth Society programs and predominantly through the Commonwealth Youth Program. The Commonwealth is beginning to engage youth in meaningful ways; however, the problem remains that most of the youth active in these programs are already aware of the Commonwealth. The real challenge is how to engage youth who have no current connection with the Commonwealth. In this area, the Royal Commonwealth Society in London and abroad is working hard to make its programs more accessible and interesting for youth. To the credit of the Commonwealth, it is clear that the desire to engage youth is present, though it remains to be seen whether it can and will follow through and capture the new generation.

Furthermore, the Commonwealth hardly appears in the news, even during CHOGMs, with the exception of the host countries’ media which usually provides good

coverage. An RCS report confirmed this challenge by noting that “there is no doubt that the Commonwealth struggles to get media and popular coverage of its existence, let alone its activities” (Kirby 2010, 26). However, some within the Commonwealth have noted an improvement in both Commonwealth profile and publicity with the recent CHOGM. For example Banerji, director of the Secretariat’s political affairs division, noted that, “if anybody had told me eight months ago that a French President would attend a Commonwealth Summit, I would probably consider the person insane! But he did -- and a great deal more media interest was generated in CHOGM as a result” (Banerji 2010).

However, when the Commonwealth gains media and world attention, it must act upon the opportunities presented to it, or risk lowering its profile through inaction as seen in the first challenge outlined with regard to the Commonwealth’s lack of ambition on a number of contentious cases. The Commonwealth’s focus on climate change has been touted as a significant success for the organization, raising its profile and gaining it some much needed publicity; yet others have, with equal gusto, criticised the Commonwealth’s statements on climate change at the 2009 CHOGM as another missed opportunity for the Commonwealth and an overall failure. The lack of strength in the statement can also be attributed to some of the Commonwealth’s member’s reluctance to peruse commitments on climate change, such as Canada.

Supporters of the Commonwealth’s attention to climate change have noted that the Commonwealth was able to bring world leaders outside the Commonwealth to sit in on its discussions. This assisted the Commonwealth by: demonstrating a level of global support for the Commonwealths initiatives in this area; that the Commonwealth is a valuable organization to the world as a whole, not just to Commonwealth members, and can assist the world in its most severe challenges; and by bringing additional media

attention to the CHOGM. The Commonwealth was also able to publish the Port of Spain Climate Change Consensus: The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration (see Appendix H). This declaration first outlined the challenges that the Commonwealth and the world at large face with regards to climate change and reached consensus on what measures are needed to fight the effects of climate change from Copenhagen and beyond. Within this declaration the Commonwealth affirmed the idea of creating a global fund in the amount of ten billion dollars which would primarily assist poor and small island states in their fight against climate change. The Commonwealth was also able to note the importance of a legally binding agreement at Copenhagen, though it remained unsure as to whether this could be achieved or not. The topic of climate change also appeared in the CHOGM's Communiqué. Furthermore, Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Kamallesh Sharma, noted at the closing ceremony of the 2009 CHOGM, "I am delighted that in addition to our existing Secretary-General's Good Offices for Peace, we will now have the Secretary-General's Good Offices for the Environment" (Sharma 2009).

In terms of the Commonwealth's success at the 2009 CHOGM on climate change, supporters have noted five main strengths: increased media and world attention, a strong document declaring the position of the Commonwealth on climate change, the introduction of the Secretariat's Good Offices for the Environment, the agreement to create an assistance fund to help nations cope with the effects of climate change, and the Commonwealth's ability to bring world leaders together on this issue to reach consensus and prepare for the Copenhagen discussion.

However, not all see these five points as a real success. Critics of the Commonwealth's achievement on climate change at the 2009 CHOGM note that, of the twenty-five page Communiqué there were only three points on climate change covering

barely a page. As the primary document of a CHOGM, the Communiqué should have provided more detail on the Commonwealth's position. However, the lack of attention to the environment in the Communiqué was amended through a special session on climate change which resulted in the production of the Port of Spain Climate Change Consensus: The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration. While this declaration reached consensus on the general steps that must be taken to combat climate change, it put forth no programs or initiatives of its own, leaving such work to the Copenhagen session. The declaration also, according to a global student newspaper, "shows the same slippery legalese that has turned international law from an idea to unite mankind under one supra-national legal umbrella to a cynical self-serving satire" (Maguire 2010). The article noted the careful language of the declaration while summarizing by noting that "while it's great that there does seem a concerted wave of action on climate change and a strong move to support developing nations- the freedom to renege on agreements is a temptation that will probably prove too strong for the powerful" (Maguire 2010).

While the creation of the Secretary General's Good Offices for the Environment is a positive initiative, much stronger action on climate change is needed than the quiet diplomacy which these offices operate in. It remains to be seen how effective this new initiative will be in affecting member nations' policies on climate change. Furthermore, while the Commonwealth was able to build consensus during the CHOGM and build momentum leading to the meeting in Copenhagen, for all the attention and momentum, very little was achieved and one of the Commonwealth's largest members, Canada, proved to be the largest obstacle to success. Thus, critics argue that upon close inspection, the Commonwealth discussions on climate change produced very little new material or

benefit for the world, aside from the agreement on the assistance fund and the Commonwealth Good Offices for the Environment.

How should the Commonwealth be evaluated on its actions on climate change during the 2009 CHOGM? On the one hand it brought together world leaders to discuss climate change and outlined the boundaries of this issue and the necessary steps to combat it. On the other hand, it achieved very little in terms of actual commitments for combating climate change-much talk and little action. However, it was not really the intention of the Commonwealth to mandate its members into action and thus, the Commonwealth should not be criticised for what it did not intend to accomplish. The Commonwealth had not intended to outshine the United Nations meeting in Copenhagen; rather it proposed to help leaders prepare for the meeting and ideally make the negotiations more effective, since fifty-four-plus leaders had already reached consensus on a number of points to be brought up in Copenhagen.

Arguably, this should be the measurement of the Commonwealth's success. While the Commonwealth achieved consensus and produced a detailed document on climate change and even provided momentum for the Copenhagen discussions, the consensus which the fifty-four-plus nations reached in Port of Spain did not make the negotiations any more fruitful or efficient. In fact, the most publicized Head of government hindering the discussion, Stephen Harper, is a Commonwealth member who was in attendance at the CHOGM in November. In this way diplomatic correspondent James Robbins noted that the Commonwealth negotiations and carefully worded declaration "doesn't mean the Commonwealth has failed. The wording looks cautious but realistic. It is the breakdown in global negotiations which threatens to sink a strong deal" (Robbins 2009).

While the Commonwealth cannot be blamed for Canada's position, it does lose when one of its members disregards the spirit of the agreement made at the CHOGM. This brings into question the strength of Commonwealth declarations and the process of consensus as well as the Commonwealth's ability to bring Heads of government together in order to agree on a consensual position. In sum, the success of the Commonwealth at the 2009 CHOGM on climate change is mixed; it achieved some good, but nowhere near the impact which it, and the world, had anticipated. If the Commonwealth intends to raise its profile and assert that it is a valuable organization, it must be more effective. A better perspective of the Commonwealth's success in 2009 will be evident at the next CHOGM in terms of the amount of publicity that it can draw and if the attendance of non-members continues.

While there is little debate over whether the Commonwealth does in fact have a low profile and slim media coverage, there is discussion over the importance of this fact. While the Commonwealth may not appear in the media frequently, this lack of publicity does not necessarily affect the value of its work. In other words, perhaps the Commonwealth does not need to be reported on in order to be a valuable and useful organization as is demonstrated in the Secretariat publication on the sixty ways the Commonwealth makes a difference⁸. On this point Peter Marshall writes that "it would seem to be the rule in today's mass media that good news is no news" (Marshall 2009, 542).

While it is true that the Commonwealth can and does carry on its programmes with or without publicity, the lack of media attention weakens its profile and consequently the value that people and governments place in it. The media is also a great

⁸ See link for full publication: <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/215762/FileName/60Ways.pdf>

educational tool which could help raise awareness about the Commonwealth and the work that it does, because as an RCS report noted, “sadly, citizens are dependent on international news media for much of their information” (Kirby 2010, 28). This is a fact that the Commonwealth noted in 1979 when it affirmed the importance of the media by stating that: “we are particularly conscious of the importance of the contribution the media can make to human rights and the eradication of racism and racial prejudice by helping to eliminate ignorance and misunderstanding between people and by drawing attention to the evils which afflict humanity” (Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice 1979). Since ignorance about the Commonwealth is high, any education on what the organization is and achieves would be beneficial. Since the Commonwealth rarely appears in textbooks and can arguably no longer be pinned to a specific movement or action, there is very little information on the Commonwealth unless one specifically looks for it, which is impossible to do if one is oblivious to its existence, as the RCS report made clear many Commonwealth citizens are (Joanna Bennett 2009). With regards to spreading information on what the Commonwealth does as well as engaging youth, the Honourable Michael Kirby’s lecture in 2010 notes that a “more effective engagement with all forms of media is obviously an essential part of the solution to this problem” (Kirby 2010, 28). Therefore, media coverage may not be necessary to the operations of the Commonwealth, but it could assist in building knowledge and interest.

An additional challenge to 2009 being considered a crisis point is that the Commonwealth has the largest and arguably the most vibrant civil-society network of all the international organizations and can therefore, not be in crisis, but the reverse⁹. While

⁹ See Shaw, Timothy M. *Commonwealth Inter- and Non-State Contributions to Global Governance*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2008 for more details on the Commonwealths non-governmental associations.

the Commonwealth's network is a distinguishing feature and a significant supplement to the Commonwealth, this network is included in the unofficial Commonwealth which is not what is being discussed in this paper. Further, this network has criticized the official Commonwealth, quite harshly, as seen in the earlier comments made by the CHRI and the RCS report *Common What?*. This gives credence to the argument that the unofficial and official Commonwealth should be treated separately and that the Commonwealth is in fact in crisis or at least has a number of challenges to be concerned about.

CONCLUSION

These three challenges-the Commonwealth's seeming inability to uphold its principles and bring its members to the negotiating table through CMAG as well as its lack of action or commitment to its own principles, the lack of focus, lowering its value, profile and efficiency, and the Commonwealth's low profile globally and amongst members as well as minimal media coverage - demonstrate that the Commonwealth faces some significant challenges in the twenty-first century. Are these three challenges enough to constitute a crisis point? Many seem to think so, as the RCS report *Common What?* made clear. Similarly, an article written in 2003 notes with clarity, "the Commonwealth at large is currently in crisis, as indeed is the Commonwealth Secretariat" (Commonwealth in Crisis? 2003).

Measured against the crisis points of 1949, 1965, the 1970s and 80s, and 1991 the CHOGM in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009 could qualify as a crisis point. As in the other crisis points, the Commonwealth is being asked serious questions of relevance and purpose and is undergoing a series of threatening challenges. However, unlike the previous crises discussed, it is unlikely that 2009 is the end of the crisis, as no significant action has yet been taken that speaks to resolving the challenges discussed above. While

the Commonwealth re-affirmed its principles at the 2009 CHOGM, as mentioned earlier, it does not seem to be implementing these principles in a strong manner as demonstrated in the cases of Zimbabwe, Fiji, Sri Lanka and Gambia and Uganda. The Commonwealth has also made little or no effort to focus its goals, programs or CHOGMs, creating confusion, lowering the organization's profile, and making it inefficient in its time and finances. Similarly the Commonwealth has not exerted the effort necessary to engage the media, demonstrate its cohesion and ability to influence global issues, and is only beginning to engage youth in meaningful ways. Therefore, an argument can be made that the Commonwealth is in crisis, though this crisis seems far from over.

CHAPTER 4 COMPARISON OF CRISIS POINTS

While each crisis point has unique attributes, there are a number of similarities that, when compared, provide insight into some of the ongoing challenges that the Commonwealth faces. This section will attempt to bring these similarities to the fore so that insights and suggestions can be made for the Commonwealth today. There are three broad points of comparison observed in the crises of 1949, 1965, the 1970s and 80s, 1991 and 2009. As initially outlined, each crisis had to present the Commonwealth with a challenge, a change and an action. The three broad points of comparison fit within this structure. First, all five crisis points represented a transition point for the Commonwealth, typically precipitated through the changing nature of global events, the inter-Commonwealth relationship between members and at times a disenchantment with the Commonwealth itself. Second, questions regarding the Commonwealth's role, relevance, and value are present in all five crisis points. Third, all five points saw the Commonwealth re-evaluating its goals and priorities, changing its focus and its structures to define itself in the new phase of its evolution.

As noted earlier, the Commonwealth has a history of being able to evolve in order to stay relevant in the time period within which it is operating. This was first evidenced in 1949 when the British Commonwealth transitioned from a colonial organization into the Commonwealth of Nations—a diplomatic brotherhood of equal members. This transition was precipitated by ‘the winds of change’ when Britain realized that it was necessary to begin granting independence to its colonies who were poised for nationhood. This transition began a new relationship between former colonies who now stood on equal diplomatic ground with Britain and other Commonwealth members. Since 1949 marked the beginning of the modern Commonwealth there could not be disillusionment with the

organization; however, there was disenchantment with the British Commonwealth, indicating a need for independence and hence, the transition into the Commonwealth of Nations.

After the independence of the majority of British colonies in the early 1960s, the Commonwealth evolved again to meet the new and growing demands of the organization. Leading up to 1965, inter-Commonwealth relations were tense due to the politicization and securitization of the Cold War, Britain's bid to enter the European Economic Community and Britain's restrictions on immigration. The combination of world events and the friction between member nations resulted in a time of disenchantment with the Commonwealth in addition to the need for structural change.

With the crisis of white minority rule in Rhodesia and South Africa, the Commonwealth was able to transition once again from an organization predominantly focused on assisting nations with their transition into independence, to a body advocating for a set of principles including good governance, democracy, human rights, non-discrimination and non-racialism. The Rhodesian issue and the Apartheid regime were, for the Commonwealth the most significant events in world affairs during this time, though opinions on how the Commonwealth and its members, in particular Britain, should react caused tensions within the Commonwealth membership. While this time period, in retrospect, is often heralded as the Commonwealth's golden age, at the time it represented a time of disillusionment because of the tensions within the Commonwealth membership, as well as its inability to effect change until much later on.

Following Rhodesia's independence and the end of Apartheid, the Commonwealth was able to re-evaluate its goals and purpose to stay relevant in the 1990s by focusing on developmental projects and further establishing itself as a body responsible for upholding

democracy and human rights, as evidenced through the creation of CMAG. After the height of Commonwealth diplomacy during the Apartheid era, the Commonwealth did not have crisis of similar magnitude to focus on causing it to re-evaluate its mandate. Inter-Commonwealth relations during this time were less strained, though a number of suspensions, following the creation of CMAG, caused some divisions. The disillusionment with the Commonwealth occurred because of the anti-climax of the ending of Apartheid and the initial questioning of what the Commonwealth's new role would be.

While the crisis of 2009 is not yet over, it still represents a transition point because the Commonwealth is again re-evaluating its purpose and goals as evidenced through the Trinidad and Tobago Affirmation of Commonwealth Values and Principles and through its attempt to focus on issues such as climate change, the global economy and youth. The major world events of this time period have not necessarily caused the Commonwealth to be in crisis as in some of the above cases, though they have in some instances given the Commonwealth a renewed sense of purpose, as in the Commonwealth's fight against climate change, or equally caused a greater disenchantment, as in the case of the Commonwealth's lack of action in Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, The Gambia and Uganda. Inter-Commonwealth relations are not necessarily tense, but they are not overly warm. The brotherhood of 1949 seems to be much less obvious in the twenty-first century than in the past, likely because of the growing complacency and disenchantment with the Commonwealth. Today, the Commonwealth's purpose, priorities and goals are so broad that it is not known for anything in particular, making it difficult for members to rally together.

Therefore, all five cases demonstrate that the Commonwealth is affected by world events, either positively or negatively, giving the organization a greater sense of purpose or causing disappointment through the missed opportunity for action. The Commonwealth, therefore, is a reactive organization that is influenced by world events and thus, when major world events occur or change, the Commonwealth goes through a transition or a crisis. This is not necessarily a negative point, as it demonstrates that the Commonwealth is in sync with the world - it is a living organization affected by and hopefully affecting the world. This adaptability to the world environment is heralded as a strength in organizational theory, as “those organizations employing nonadaptive decision-making rules will fail, leaving only those that use appropriate rules and structures” in this way “an evolutionary model of organizational ecology would suggest that, in the long run, rules that are not suited to the environmental requirements will cause organizations to go out of business or else new rules will be learned” (Pfeffer 1978, 134). Hence, the Commonwealth’s adaptability to changing world events and trends has allowed the Commonwealth to ‘stay in business’ and remain relevant. However, this success requires that the Commonwealth continue to adapt to changing world events, or risk disenchantment and criticism, as it has historically when it fails to react.

Additionally, the Commonwealth is affected by the relations amongst its members. Since one of the main strengths and unique features of the Commonwealth is its membership, when tensions are high, the Commonwealth goes through tumultuous times. On this point, Marshall expresses that “the key to the smooth functioning of the Commonwealth is the relationship between the Heads of Government, individually and collectively, and the Secretary-General” (Marshall 2009, 538). The Commonwealth as an organization must foster good relations between its members or, at minimum, agree to

disagree, while continuing to negotiate. For example, the crisis of 1965 and the 1970s and 80s saw major differences between Commonwealth members, but because members were willing to discuss and work together for a solution, the Commonwealth was able to function and play the important role which it was created for. Commonwealth membership and the relations between these members is therefore, directly related to the strength of the Commonwealth as a whole.

The five crisis points also highlight that disenchantment leading to reinvention is present in these crises. This disenchantment is typically related to the actions or inactions of the Commonwealth, as related to what the organization has mandated itself to do. Hence, when the Commonwealth goes through a transition, out of disenchantment, as a first step, it typically re-affirms its values and principles, changes its focus and at times creates new structures to help the organization achieve its re-articulated goals. This pattern has been noted by organizational theory as a method for organizations to cope with protest and uncertainty as “organizations can localize the effects of...uncertainty, responding with minor structural adaptations, such as adding a new unit” as the Commonwealth did in 1965 with the introduction of the Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation and again in 1995 with the creation of CMAG, though neither adaptation was minor (Pfeffer 1978, 136). A pattern can thus be detected in how organizations and specifically the Commonwealth deal with crisis. This pattern can grant insight into how the Commonwealth operates and what some of its struggles are as an organization.

These three points, changing world events, membership relations and disenchantment have, in all five cases, led to or precipitated a transition point for the Commonwealth. These points can therefore be used as a future measurement for the

health of the Commonwealth in so far as it relates to crisis points. In other words, one could look at these points as an indicator - for example, if the Commonwealth is not reacting or influencing world events, this could be an indicator that the Commonwealth needs to re-adjust its programs and focus. Similarly, if relations between members and the Commonwealth are tense and members are failing to comply with the Commonwealth's principles, crisis may be eminent. Concomitantly, if the Commonwealth fails to act on its principles and its membership demonstrates a similar disregard, the Commonwealth's profile may be lowered and disenchantment high, indicating again, that crisis is likely. Hence, if all three points indicate irregularities, it is likely that the Commonwealth is approaching a transition period.

The second similarity that all five crisis points share is that questions regarding the Commonwealth's role, relevance, and value were being asked. In 1949 the Commonwealth, as a new organization, was being questioned for its relevance-how was it distinct from the British Commonwealth which it grew out of, was it merely a tool to assist Britain and former colonies in the transition associated with decolonization and what role did this new organization have that was distinct from British foreign policy and of value. The crisis of 1965 was precipitated by questions of the Commonwealth's role and value now that the majority of Britain's former colonies were independent. 1965 represented a major growth and transition period for the Commonwealth in terms of its membership and structures. It was therefore, asked to redefine itself in terms of these new changes. The 1970s and especially the 1980s raised questions of relevance and tested the Commonwealth's values as it sought to uphold its core principles in dealing with undemocratic and racist regimes. Similarly, the Commonwealth was tested again after the crisis years of the 1970s and 80s as it shifted focus from fighting for democracy, non-

discrimination and human rights to a more developmental role in the 1990s. The Commonwealth was asked what its value in the 90s and 2000s would be now that much of the conflicts in the Commonwealth seemed to be resolved. In 2009, the Commonwealth still struggles with questions of purpose and relevance as it appears to be too widely spread rendering itself less effective and focused, it lacks media and international political attention, and has in the view of some failed to act on a number of significant events.

Hence, questions about the Commonwealth's purpose and value were present in all five cases. This is significant because it demonstrates that the Commonwealth has not fully solidified for itself and for the world what its enduring value and purpose is. In other words, if the Commonwealth is questioned during each transition point and feels the need to re-articulate its values, then the Commonwealth is, or is viewed to be, defined by its specific programs and actions, and not so much on what its foundations as an organization are. Perhaps the media is ignorant about the Commonwealth or the Commonwealth has not been clear enough in defining itself. Regardless, the organization may seek to address either its misrepresentation in the media, or its lack of clarity in its value and purpose.

The third major area that all crisis points have in common is the pattern of the Commonwealth re-evaluating itself, shifting its focus and at times adding additional structures to assist it in achieving its shifting priorities. In 1949 the Commonwealth established itself as a legal entity and shifted its focus from the old elite club of members into a multi-racial brotherhood of nations. Structurally, it opened its membership to include Ceylon, India and Pakistan and poised itself to accept the rest of Britain's former colonies once they became independent. In 1965, the Commonwealth re-evaluated itself

after the influx of new members and the CRO's declining capacity to manage the affairs of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth therefore, instituted the new structure of the Secretariat along with the office of the Secretary General, and accepted newly independent members. In the 1970s and 1980s the organization was forced to evaluate its fundamental values and principles and reconcile or explain what looked to be discrepancies, in order to transition into its role as protector of democracy, human rights and especially non-racialism during the Rhodesian issue and the Apartheid era. The Commonwealth, in part, articulated these values in the Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles of 1971. 1991 saw yet another re-focusing of the Commonwealth as it tried to transition into a more routine role of mediation, assisted through the creation of CMAG, and into a developmental role as articulated in the 1991 Harare Declaration of Commonwealth Principles and operationalized through the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme. With the occasion of the modern Commonwealth's sixtieth anniversary, significant reflection and evaluation has been going on throughout the Commonwealth and some shifts are beginning to appear, such as the move to re-establish the Commonwealth's fundamental values and principles at the 2009 CHOGM. Though a debate about what these values mean in the modern world has not been undertaken by Heads of government and thus, consensus has been reached but on what specifically is not clear. In other words, all Commonwealth members are unified in upholding the Harare declaration and yet, they hold varying opinions on what, for example, human rights and democracy mean.

Therefore, in all five cases, it is clear that the Commonwealth felt it necessary to re-evaluate itself, at times re-define what its core goals were and what the meaning of these values were, shift focus and create new structures or declarations to help it achieve

its principles. This pattern of evaluation and shifting focus demonstrates that the Commonwealth is reactive to world events and its membership and dynamic. While this is a positive feature, there are some areas that reactive organizations are vulnerable to as is noted by organizational theorists “problems can develop as a consequence of pursuing responsiveness in one area at the expense of other areas” (Robert Quinn 2000, 259). For the Commonwealth, historically, this problem has been the tendency to lose focus.

However, if the Commonwealth feels that it needs to continually re-articulate its values and principles, there may be another issue present. It could be that its values and principles can at times be contradictory, as seen during the 70s and 80s, in which case clarification is necessary. The Commonwealth may also need to discuss the meaning of its values and principles so that when members agree upon them, there is a solid foundation of what exactly, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and so forth, actually means in a modern context, realizing that these definitions have changed over time. This issue was present in 2009 with the variance of opinions on homosexuality within the Commonwealth and the extent to which sexual orientation is a human right. The Commonwealth may also need to continually re-articulate its values because it formulated its programs too broadly and the connection between the programs or actions of the Commonwealth and its core values and principles is hazy. It could be argued that this was the case with the 2009 crisis where the Commonwealth’s involvement in a plethora of issues such as combating drug trafficking, climate change and the current economic crisis, has taken the Commonwealth too far from its core principles, making its purpose and contribution in these areas questionable. Arguably, because the Commonwealth is a living organization, affected by world events, it tries institutionally to affect these events and at times loses focus on what it was created to do as outlined in the

Harare declaration: the promotion of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and non-discrimination through the Commonwealths “special strength[:]. . . the combination of the diversity of its members with their shared inheritance in language, culture and the rule of law[and]. . . consensus [seeking] through consultation and the sharing of experience [which places the Commonwealth as]. . . model and as a catalyst for new forms of friendship and co-operation to all in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations” (The Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991). The Commonwealth’s niche was also articulated earlier in term of the seven features that make the Commonwealth unique. A re-articulation of the Commonwealth’s core values then, re-focuses the Commonwealth on what it originally set out to accomplish and assist the world in. It is therefore, necessary for the Commonwealth to maintain a clear view of what its goals, purposes and values are and take actions to support them.

It is also useful to note this pattern in Commonwealth behaviour, so that the Commonwealth can account for its tendency to lose focus and apply itself in many areas which are at times outside its core values and niche, which requires a crisis to re-focus. Two things can be extracted from this: first, the Commonwealth may want to closely focus its programs and actions around its core values and principles so that it would not continually lose its focus requiring re-articulation and prune its duplicate programs of other international organizations; and second, if the Commonwealth’s current and future programs and actions do not fit within these principles, it may seek to make an addition to its declarations. In other words, the Commonwealth enters into crisis in part when it does not follow through on what it claims is its mandate or when it acts on what is not within its mandate. Thus, the Commonwealth should strive to ensure that its programs, actions

and goals are always in alignment with its declaration of fundamental values and principles.

Overall, crisis in the Commonwealth has for the most part, been beneficial to the organization, as it has given the Commonwealth a renewed sense of purpose, re-focused the organization and helped it stay relevant. Thus, a crisis point is not necessarily related to the health of the Commonwealth in terms of its continuing role in global affairs. A crisis is significant, but does not necessarily mean that the Commonwealth is in danger of collapse. The examination of the five crisis points and their similarities has demonstrated that this pattern of crisis may be part of the Commonwealth's make-up and is not necessarily a negative feature. In this way, Banerji notes that the Commonwealth is an "organisation that considers identity a dynamic concept, not a static one, one that retains its intrinsic attributes but also moves with the times. It does so precisely in order to maintain relevance and credibility" (Billah 2009).

Since the Commonwealth has experienced so many evolutions and yet remained true to its core values, it has been able to embed a flexibility in its structure that allows the organization to be self-reflective and continually improving. Unlike many other international organizations whose structures have remained the same since their creation, and cannot be reformed without causing major conflict, the Commonwealth can, with some degree of expectancy and tradition, reformulate itself without serious trauma. In this way, Peter Marshall writes that "it is organic, rather than juridical or administrative, to a degree that does not obtain in the case of any other major international entity" (Marshall 2009). How many other international organizations undergo such regular and routine re-examinations and revisions? For example, the United Nations has expanded to meet the needs of the world, but does not have the same institutional flexibility as the

Commonwealth, making changes more difficult. This has been demonstrated recently when it has come under serious criticism for its out datedness, in particular, the membership of the Security Council. Yet, proposals for a reformulation of the Security Council has already sparked major debate and could cause a major conflict. If the United Nations had a culture of revision like the Commonwealth, such a transition might be easier. Thus, because of the Commonwealths tradition of reflection, it is foreseeable that the Commonwealth has and will continue to reinvent itself in order to remain relevant in the world that it exists in.

Perhaps the focus should not be on figuring out what the Commonwealth has been doing incorrectly and amend these weaknesses. Rather, a better method may be to realise that the Commonwealth is and will remain regularly subject to crises. This realization will not only make the crisis points less dramatic, it will also allow the Commonwealth to see these points as an opportunity to renew and strengthen itself. Realizing that continual revision is a tradition in the Commonwealth and perhaps necessary, the Commonwealth may seek to institute a more formalized mechanism for evaluating the Commonwealth's structures, operations and principles and goals, so as to avoid the high intensity associated with crisis. This process may very well eliminate or at least reduce the concentration of crisis points because the Commonwealth would be more focused on staying relevant rather than playing catch up as it has in the past.

This can in part be achieved through “developing more accurate forecasting capabilities and by increasing surveillance of the environment to be better informed” (Pfeffer 1978, 135). Predicting crisis, organizational theory asserts, can lessen the impact of uncertainty and help organizations adapt to these changes (Pfeffer 1978, 135). While this would be a positive step, avoiding crisis is not so much the point, as realizing and

adopting a culture and methodology of constant revision. In fact, organizational theory has noted that flexible or agile organizations are best suited to deal with change and that “organizations have been spending millions of dollars to improve or change their processes to become more agile in responding to changes brought on by growing global competition” (Robert Quinn 2000, 129). In this way, the Commonwealth is fortunate to have unintentionally developed an agility that allows it to transition with relative ease. Further, “agile organizations are able to institutionalize the ability to purposefully change themselves or their processes as a whole or in part across multiple dimensions based on their perceived strengths, weaknesses, threats, or opportunities” (Robert Quinn 2000, 130). While the Commonwealth has been able to achieve this to an extent, as noted above, the Commonwealth could be more effective in forecasting crisis by using world events, membership relations and disenchantment as an indicator for the need to re-evaluate and focus and therefore, become more agile. In this way, the Commonwealth should embrace its fluid nature because it is affected by world events and should continue to revise itself so that it may equally affect the world.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

On the occasion of the Commonwealth's sixtieth anniversary, many reviews and reflections on the Commonwealth's long history have been recounted. This was not the intention of this paper. The objective of this paper was to use the Commonwealth's history as a lens through which the future Commonwealth can look -putting its past in focus and evaluating its future. This paper has therefore, taken a historical comparative approach on the challenges facing the modern Commonwealth by examining its historical crisis points of 1949, 1965, the 1970s through the 80s, 1991 and comparing them to the current crisis of 2009. This comparison has revealed a pattern of how the Commonwealth deals with crisis as well as a deeper understanding of the nature of the Commonwealth and its challenges. This comparison has produced a number of suggestions for the Commonwealth which include: the embracing of a culture of revision, a greater commitment to maintaining relations between members and their commitment to the Commonwealth's principles, and a narrowing of focus, in terms of concentrating the Commonwealth's official agenda and programs in the areas where it holds either a historical or comparative advantage. This paper has also broadened its significance through the comparison of like organizations which can gain from the examination of the Commonwealth's history of crisis and challenges.

LESSONS FOR THE OIF, THE CPLP AND THE OEI

As the world's oldest international organization, the Commonwealth has provided an example for a number of international organizations and can continue to do so. The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the Comunidade dos Pais de Lingua Portuguesa and the Organizacion de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educacion, la

ciencia y la cultura are all modeled in some ways after the Commonwealth and thus share a number of organizational similarities but also some challenges. Throughout the sixty years of the modern Commonwealth's history, it has undergone four historical crisis points and likely finds itself in crisis again today. After the examination of the Commonwealth's historical and current challenges, it is evident that there are some general insights that can be extrapolated for these three organizations. In particular the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI can learn from the Commonwealth the importance of membership: relations between members and between the organization as well as the impact that non-complying members have on the organization. These organizations, due to their strength and value in having a diverse membership which they can influence, are particularly vulnerable when tensions arise between members or when members violate their core values. These three organizations can learn from the Commonwealth the importance of member relations, the need to foster strong relations even through disagreements, and the need to ensure that all members conform to its core values or risk suspension.

The OIF, the CPLP and the OEI can also learn from the Commonwealth that within the highly competitive world of development, institutions need to focus in the areas where they have particular strength and uniqueness. Channelling an organization's energies and finances into the areas where they have the most strength allows them to be more effective and efficient. This focus also helps the organization to better use its funds, gain a higher profile through major successes and become more identifiable to the public, its members and policy makers. Just as the Commonwealth is being called on to become a master and not a jack-of-all-trades, the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI could benefit from the Commonwealth's continual re-focusing throughout its crisis points and the current call for

it to focus once again. Thus, these three organizations should continue to imitate the adaptive Commonwealth and learn from its mistakes and successes. The wisdom gained from studying the Commonwealth's history and experience is not limited to the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI; many other international organizations can draw insights as well.

In chapter four this paper highlighted that the actions and strength of the Commonwealth is in part reliant upon the good relations between members, between members and the organization, and the dedication of members to the Commonwealth's principles. It was demonstrated that when member relations are tense, as in 1965, the Commonwealth suffers. However, the Commonwealth remains valuable when its members continue to negotiate, even when tensions and disagreements are irreconcilable.

The Commonwealth is also negatively affected when member nations fail to uphold Commonwealth principles and declarations, as demonstrated in the case of Zimbabwe and Fiji and Stephen Harper's apparent disregard for the Port of Spain Climate Change Consensus: The Commonwealth Climate Change Declaration. Yet, when the Commonwealth and its members are willing to collaborate to uphold the fundamental values of the Commonwealth, as they did during the 70s and 80s, the Commonwealth is equally strengthened. In this way, the actions of Commonwealth members impact the strength and profile of the Commonwealth.

While it is unfair to hold the Commonwealth to such a standard, because it notes that bringing diverse nations together to reach consensus on global issues is its special strength and also, because each member nation has affirmed the core values of the Commonwealth, this is in a way, a standard which the Commonwealth has set for itself to be measured upon. The Commonwealth is perhaps more vulnerable to this criticism and challenge because it has a strict requirement for membership and has the connotation of

being a family. While the United Nations also holds similar values, its membership is much larger and monitoring compliance to its principles is much less practical or historically something that it has championed. The Commonwealth, however, has a history of ensuring compliance amongst member states and has instituted mechanisms such as CMAG in order to add teeth to this claim. Thus, the Commonwealth is particularly vulnerable to non-complying members because of its criteria for membership and its history and actions in enforcing compliance.

As organizations that are based upon diverse membership and a commitment to a core set of values and principles, the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI share the same vulnerability towards their membership, either positive or negative, like the Commonwealth. The OIF boasts a commitment to the principles of peace, democracy and human rights, yet, a number of the OIF's members do not demonstrate a real commitment to these values. The Democratic Republic of the Congo immediately comes to mind as perhaps the worst offender as does Niger's Presidents recent move to amend the constitution in an effort to hold on to power and Eretria's recent military aggression against Djibouti which the OIF has yet to act on. However, the OIF has suspended delinquent members, though this seems to be a more recent trend than a historical one. In this way, Timothy Shaw notes that "La francophonie has taken a leaf out of the anglophone Commonwealth's book by beginning to suspend members who violate even minimalist notions of democracy" (T. Shaw 2010, 340). The OIF suspended Mauritania after a coup in 2008, recently suspended Madagascar after it broke with its constitutional order and the principle of democracy in early 2009 and has suspended Guinea after a series of instances of state led violence following a political protest in late 2009 (La Francophonie Suspended Madagascar 2009) (Canada Takes Measures Against Guinean

Regime 2009). The OIF is therefore, challenged with keeping its membership in alignment with its core principles and taking action against members when they fail to do so.

The OIF has been subject to negative remarks concerning the actions of its members and therefore, the strength of their commitment to the OIF and its principles; the OIF's inability to bring members to the negotiating table and influence its misguided members to conform to the principles of democracy and human rights; and the OIF's inconsistency in applying suspensions. Like the Commonwealth, the OIF is reliant on its membership to function smoothly, be effective in achieving its principles and to maintain a strong profile that establishes the organization as a valuable actor in international relations.

In the same manner, the CPLP and the OEI are reliant on their membership to maintain the reputation of the organization through their commitment to the organizations principles, continued willingness to negotiate and attend important meetings and cooperate with each other. The CPLP has faced similar challenges of non-conforming members such as Angola and its thirty-one yearlong conflict and suppression of freedom of speech. The OEI has also faced the challenge of maintaining relevance to its membership. This challenge was made clear at the XIX General Assembly meeting where seven Heads of government failed to attend what is arguably the organizations most important meetings (Ortega propone transformar la Cumbre Iberoamericana en el sustituto de la OEA 2007).

Therefore, the OIF, the CPLP, the OEI and the Commonwealth all share the challenge of being vulnerable to their membership. These four organizations are influenced and impacted by their membership either positively or negatively. This

challenge is likely found in most organizations which profess to maintain a set of values and principles; however, for these four organizations, the challenge is greater because one of their core strengths and points of value comes from their ability to bring diverse memberships together under their shared values. These organizations may also want to discuss the meaning of their core values in the modern context so that these principles are clear and meaningful. Yet, if these organizations are unable to achieve this, an amount of credibility and value is lost. Hence, just as the Commonwealth needs to maintain strong relations with and between its members and ensure that its membership conforms to the organization's fundamental principles and values, the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI may want to learn from the Commonwealth and focus on this challenge as well. However, the Commonwealth, as noted earlier, may be more vulnerable to this challenge because of its strict membership requirements, historical commitment or standard in ensuring member compliance, especially in light of CMAG which was created to help the Commonwealth achieve this goal.

The second point that the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI may want to extract from the Commonwealth's experience concerns the challenge and pressure to focus. As highlighted in chapter three the Commonwealth has been asked to focus its goals and programs so that it can be more cost effective, more efficient and raise its profile by championing a number of key issues which it holds a particular strength in, such as obtaining consensus on an issue from a diverse group of nations, promoting democracy and good governance and non-discrimination, as opposed to competing in the competitive arena of development. While the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI all have larger budgets than the Commonwealth, they are also not set up to be development agencies and should therefore, not attempt to fill that role. Instead, like the Commonwealth, these

organizations may seek to focus on the areas where they can add value, such as their specialization in the promotion and protection of language, specific cultural and linguistic programs and exchanges between member nations such as cultural, technical, educational and the like. Moreover, like the Commonwealth, these three organizations should strive to limit duplication of programs and issue areas where other international organizations hold an advantage and success.

Focus is a particular area of struggle for the OEI which has been criticized by its own members for its lack of focus and action. This is a poignant challenge in light of the Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) which holds greater weight within its membership and internationally as it boasts Canada, the United States and the Caribbean among its members. The OEA is also an older organization and fulfils many of the same tasks as the OEI. As noted in chapter one, the primary difference between the organizations is that the OEI has a historical connection with Spain and Portugal and holds as a foundational principle the promotion and protection of the Spanish and Portuguese language. Thus, the calls for the OEI to focus are highly relevant and critical.

The OIF and the CPLP are not exempt from the call to focus either, and may, therefore, find the experience of the Commonwealth as depicted throughout this paper useful. Just as these three organizations were initially modeled after the Commonwealth, they may seek to imitate and learn from the Commonwealth's process of resilience and adaptation. Since the OIF, the CPLP and the OEI share many characteristics and challenges with the Commonwealth, the latter, as the world's oldest international organization, can provide an example to these younger organizations and they can learn from its successes and challenges.

LESSONS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

Former Secretary General, Shridath Ramphal, noted on the Commonwealth's sixth anniversary that "I believe now—as I did nearly 60 years ago with the abounding faith of youth—that the reality of change and the symbolism of continuity wisely conjoined and caringly sustained has preserved the Commonwealth beyond expectations to the point where, today, it has both a functional and an ethical role to play in our many-layered world—a Commonwealth vitalized eternally by glimpses of its ineffable worth" (Ramphal 2009,77). If the Commonwealth is to live up to Ramphal's high complement and standard for the Commonwealth, it must not only provide an example to like organizations, but also, learn from its past. Historically, the Commonwealth has been able to use crisis as an opportunity to re-evaluate and re-focus its values and principles, its programmes, structures and agenda, and to improve the Commonwealth until its next evolution. Throughout the many transitions, the Commonwealth has been able to maintain its core values and principles, by re-articulating them and evaluating how to better achieve them in the changing world. In this way, the Commonwealth has built into its organizational identity a flexibility that is affected and affecting the world. From this perspective crisis is more an opportunity than a weakness. This is not to dismiss the seriousness of these crisis points where real tensions and challenges could have called the Commonwealth into serious question and perhaps even led to the dismantling of the organization. However, because of the Commonwealth's continued ability to survive crisis and improve itself while maintaining true to its original principles, based on this record, it is clear that the Commonwealth is fluid and adaptive enough to survive tumultuous times. Also, the Commonwealth's membership is dedicated enough to the organization and its principles that they continue to interact with the Commonwealth and

its members even when in crisis and tensions are high, thus demonstrating strength and value in the organization.

Thus, the current crisis, so long as the Commonwealth continues to abide by its pattern of reflection, revision and re-focusing/ pruning, should not alarm or threaten the organization. The shock that the Commonwealth and the public feel when discussing the Commonwealth in crisis, this paper has argued, is more because this pattern of crisis has not been clearly identified and the fluid nature of the Commonwealth not understood. If the Commonwealth were to accept a culture of constant revision and remain focused on its core principles and their implementation, crisis would not appear as threatening and may not even occur. Banerji noted earlier this year that “the Commonwealth has defied the prophets of doom and survived many obituaries” (Banerji 2010). In order to continue this pattern and remain relevant, the Commonwealth must take crisis seriously by adopting a culture of revision and focus, but as the Secretariat noted on its sixtieth anniversary, it is up to the new generation.

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APPENDIX A LONDON DECLARATION

The Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, whose countries are united as Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and owe a common allegiance to the Crown, which is also the symbol of their free association, have considered the impending constitutional changes in India.

The Government of India have informed the other Governments of the Commonwealth of the intention of the Indian people that under the new constitution which is about to be adopted India shall become a sovereign independent republic. The Government of India have however declared and affirmed India's desire to continue her full membership of the Commonwealth of Nations and her acceptance of The King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and as such the Head of the Commonwealth.

The Governments of the other countries of the Commonwealth, the basis of whose membership of the Commonwealth is not hereby changed, accept and recognise India's continuing membership in accordance with the terms of this declaration.

Accordingly the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon hereby declare that they remain united as free and equal members of the Commonwealth of Nations, freely co-operating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress.

26 April 1949

APPENDIX B BUDGET OF THE OEI

Resumen presupuestario Objetivo estratégico	Presupuesto bienio 2007-2008 (US\$)
1. Colaborar en la gobernabilidad de las instituciones públicas, en las reformas educativas de los países y en la mejora de la calidad de la educación	12.900.000
1.1. Apoyo a la gestión de las reformas educativas y a la consecución de acuerdos sociales y políticos para mejorar la calidad de la educación	10.500.000
1.2. Elaboración de indicadores y de modelos de evaluación del sistema educativo y de las escuelas	2.400.000
2. Promover políticas educativas que incrementen las oportunidades de educación para todos y mejoren la equidad educativa	26.800.000
2.1. Apoyo a la educación infantil, defensa de los derechos de la infancia y participación de las familias en la acción educadora	[1.300.000] ¹
2.2. Plan Iberoamericano de Alfabetización y Educación de personas jóvenes y adultos	21.700.000
2.3. Desarrollo y modernización de la formación técnico-profesional	1.900.000
2.4. Atención a la diversidad del alumnado, apoyo a las minorías étnicas e integración escolar de los alumnos con necesidades educativas especiales	1.400.000
2.5. Asesoramiento y apoyo a los alumnos y a las familias inmigrantes	1.800.000
3. Contribuir al fortalecimiento de una cultura cívica, democrática, igualitaria y solidaria a través de la educación en valores	1.500.000
3.1. Educación en valores y fortalecimiento de una cultura cívica, democrática y solidaria	1.300.000
3.2. Apoyo a la concienciación de la igualdad de derechos y oportunidades de las mujeres a través de la educación	200.000

APPENDIX C SINGAPORE OF COMMONWEALTH DECLARATION

1. The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of independent sovereign states, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace.
2. Members of the Commonwealth come from territories in the six continents and five oceans, include peoples of different races, languages and religions, and display every stage of economic development from poor developing nations to wealthy industrialised nations. They encompass a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.
3. Membership of the Commonwealth is compatible with the freedom of member governments to be non-aligned or to belong to any other grouping, association or alliance.
4. Within this diversity, all members of the Commonwealth hold certain principles in common. It is by pursuing these principles that the Commonwealth can continue to influence international society for the benefit of mankind.
5. We believe that international peace and order are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind; we therefore support the United Nations and seek to strengthen its influence for peace in the world, and its efforts to remove the causes of tension between nations.
6. We believe in the liberty of the individual, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, and in their inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which they live. We therefore strive to promote in each of our countries those representative institutions and guarantees for personal freedom under the law that are our common heritage.
7. We recognise racial prejudice as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society. Each of us will vigorously combat this evil within our own nation. No country will afford to regimes which practice racial discrimination assistance which in its own judgment directly contributes to the pursuit or consolidation of this evil policy.
8. We oppose all forms of colonial domination and racial oppression and are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality. We will therefore use all our efforts to foster human equality and dignity everywhere, and to further the principles of self-determination and non-racialism.
9. We believe that the wide disparities in wealth now existing between different sections of mankind are too great to be tolerated. They also create world tensions. Our aim is their progressive removal. We therefore seek to use our efforts to overcome poverty, ignorance and disease, in raising standards of life and achieving a more equitable international society.
10. To this end, our aim is to achieve the freest possible flow of international trade on terms fair and equitable to all, taking into account the special requirements of the

developing countries, and to encourage the flow of adequate resources, including governmental and private resources, to the developing countries, bearing in mind the importance of doing this in a true spirit of partnership and of establishing for this purpose in the developing countries conditions which are conducive to sustained investment and growth.

11. We believe that international co-operation is essential to remove the causes of war, promote tolerance, combat injustice, and secure development among the peoples of the world. We are convinced that the Commonwealth is one of the most fruitful associations for these purposes.

12. In pursuing these principles the members of the Commonwealth believe that they can provide a constructive example of the multi-national approach which is vital to peace and progress in the modern world. The association is based on consultation, discussion and co-operation.

13. In rejecting coercion as an instrument of policy they recognise that the security of each member state from external aggression is a matter of concern to all members. It provides many channels for continuing exchanges of knowledge and views on professional, cultural, economic, legal and political issues among the member states.

14. These relationships we intend to foster and extend, for we believe that our multi-national association can expand human understanding and understanding among nations, assist in the elimination of discrimination based on differences of race, colour or creed, maintain and strengthen personal liberty, contribute to the enrichment of life for all, and provide a powerful influence for peace among nations.

APPENDIX D DECLARATION ON RACISM AND RACIAL PREJUDICE

We, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, recalling the Declaration of Commonwealth Principles made at Singapore on 22 January 1971 and the statement on Apartheid in Sport, issued in London on 15 June 1977, have decided to proclaim our desire to work jointly as well as severally for the eradication of all forms of racism and racial prejudice. The Commonwealth is an institution devoted to the promotion of international understanding and world peace, and to the achievement of equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, sex, creed or political belief, and is committed to the eradication of the dangerous evils of racism and racial prejudice. We now, therefore, proclaim this Lusaka Declaration of the Commonwealth on Racism and Racial Prejudice. United in our desire to rid the world of the evils of racism and racial prejudice, we proclaim our faith in the inherent dignity and worth of the human person and declare that:

1. the peoples of the Commonwealth have the right to live freely in dignity and equality, without any distinction or exclusion based on race, colour, sex, descent, or national or ethnic origin;
2. while everyone is free to retain diversity in his or her culture and lifestyle, this diversity does not justify the perpetuation of racial prejudice or racially discriminatory practices;
3. everyone has the right to equality before the law and equal justice under the law;
4. everyone has the right to effective remedies and protection against any form of discrimination based on the grounds of race, colour, sex, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

We reject as inhuman and intolerable all policies designed to perpetuate apartheid, racial segregation or other policies based on theories that racial groups are or may be inherently superior or inferior.

We reaffirm that it is the duty of all the peoples of the Commonwealth to work together for the total eradication of the infamous policy of apartheid which is internationally recognised as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind and the very existence of which is an affront to humanity.

We agree that everyone has the right to protection against acts of incitement to racial hatred and discrimination, whether committed by individuals, groups or other organisations.

We affirm that there should be no discrimination based on race, colour, sex, descent or national or ethnic origin in the acquisition or exercise of the right to vote; in the field of civil rights or access to citizenship; or in the economic, social or cultural fields, particularly education, health, employment, occupation, housing, social security and cultural life.

We attach particular importance to ensuring that children shall be protected from practices which may foster racism or racial prejudice. Children have the right to be

brought up and educated in a spirit of tolerance and understanding so as to be able to contribute fully to the building of future societies based on justice and friendship.

We believe that those groups in societies who may be especially disadvantaged because of residual racist attitudes are entitled to the fullest protection of the law.

We recognise that the history of the Commonwealth and its diversity require that special attention should be paid to the problems of indigenous minorities. We recognise that the same special attention should be paid to the problems of immigrants, immigrant workers and refugees.

We agree that special measures may in particular circumstances be required to advance the development of disadvantaged groups in society. We recognise that the effects of colonialism or racism in the past may make desirable special provisions for the social and economic enhancement of indigenous populations.

Inspired by the principles of freedom and equality which characterise our association, we accept the solemn duty of working together to eliminate racism and racial prejudice. This duty involves the acceptance of the principle that positive measures may be required to advance the elimination of racism, including assistance to those

struggling to rid themselves and their environment of the practice.

Being aware that legislation alone cannot eliminate racism and racial prejudice, we endorse the need to initiate public information and education policies designed to promote understanding, tolerance, respect and friendship among peoples and racial groups.

We are particularly conscious of the importance of the contribution the media can make to human rights and the eradication of racism and racial prejudice by helping to eliminate ignorance and misunderstanding between people and by drawing attention to the evils which afflict humanity. We affirm the importance of truthful presentation of facts in order to ensure that the public are fully informed of the dangers presented by racism and racial prejudice.

In accordance with established principles of International Law and, in particular, the provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, we affirm that everyone is, at all times and in all places, entitled to be protected in the enjoyment of the right to be free of racism and racial prejudice.

We believe that the existence in the world of apartheid and racial discrimination is a matter of concern to all human beings. We recognise that we share an international responsibility to work together for the total eradication of apartheid and racial discrimination.

We note that racism and racial prejudice, wherever they occur, are significant factors contributing to tension between nations and thus inhibit peaceful progress and development. We believe that the goal of the eradication of racism stands as a critical priority for governments of the Commonwealth, committed as they are to the

promotion of the ideals of peaceful and happy lives for their people.

We intend that the Commonwealth, as an international organisation with a fundamental and deep-rooted attachment to principles of freedom and equality, should co-operate with other organisations in the fulfilment of these principles. In particular the Commonwealth should seek to enhance the co-ordination of its activities with those of other organisations similarly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

APPENDIX E HARARE COMMONWEALTH DECLARATION

1. The Heads of Government of the countries of the Commonwealth, meeting in Harare, reaffirm their confidence in the Commonwealth as a voluntary association of sovereign independent states, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace.

2. Members of the Commonwealth include people of many different races and origins, encompass every state of economic development, and comprise a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.

3. The special strength of the Commonwealth lies in the combination of the diversity of its members with their shared inheritance in language, culture and the rule of law. The Commonwealth way is to seek consensus through consultation and the sharing of experience. It is uniquely placed to serve as a model and as a catalyst for new forms of friendship and co-operation to all in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

4. Its members also share a commitment to certain fundamental principles. These were set out in a Declaration of Commonwealth Principles agreed by our predecessors at their Meeting in Singapore in 1971. Those principles have stood the test of time, and we reaffirm our full and continuing commitment to them today. In particular, no less today than 20 years ago:

- we believe that international peace and order, global economic development and the rule of international law are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind;

- we believe in the liberty of the individual under the law, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief, and in the individual's inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which he or she lives;

- we recognise racial prejudice and intolerance as a dangerous sickness and a threat to healthy development, and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil;

- we oppose all forms of racial oppression, and we are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality;

- we recognise the importance and urgency of economic and social development to satisfy the basic needs and aspirations of the vast majority of the peoples of the world, and seek the progressive removal of the wide disparities in living standards amongst our members.

5. In Harare, our purpose has been to apply those principles in the contemporary situation as the Commonwealth prepares to face the challenges of the 1990s and beyond.

6. Internationally, the world is no longer locked in the iron grip of the Cold War. Totalitarianism is giving way to democracy and justice in many parts of the world. Decolonisation is largely complete. Significant changes are at last under way in South

Africa. These changes, so desirable and heartening in themselves, present the world and the Commonwealth with new tasks and challenges.

7. In the last twenty years, several Commonwealth countries have made significant progress in economic and social development. There is increasing recognition that commitment to market principles and openness to international trade and investment can promote economic progress and improve living standards. Many Commonwealth countries are poor and face acute problems, including excessive population growth, crushing poverty, debt burdens and environmental degradation. More than half our member states are particularly vulnerable because of their very small societies.

8. Only sound and sustainable development can offer these millions the prospect of betterment. Achieving this will require a flow of public and private resources from the developed to the developing world, and domestic and international regimes conducive to the realisation of these goals. Development facilitates the task of tackling a range of problems which affect the whole global community such as environmental degradation, the problems of migration and refugees, the fight against communicable diseases, and drug production and trafficking.

9. Having reaffirmed the principles to which the Commonwealth is committed, and reviewed the problems and challenges which the world, and the Commonwealth as part of it, face, we pledge the Commonwealth and our countries to work with renewed vigour, concentrating especially in the following areas:

- the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth:
- democracy, democratic processes and institutions which reflect national circumstances, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, just and honest government;
- fundamental human rights, including equal rights and opportunities for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief;
- equality for women, so that they may exercise their full and equal rights;
- provision of universal access to education for the population of our countries;
- continuing action to bring about the end of apartheid and the establishment of a free, democratic, non-racial and prosperous South Africa;
- the promotion of sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty in the countries of the Commonwealth through:
 - a stable international economic framework within which growth can be achieved;
 - sound economic management recognising the central role of the market economy;
 - effective population policies and programmes;
 - sound management of technological change;

- the freest possible flow of multilateral trade on terms fair and equitable to all, taking account of the special requirements of developing countries;
- an adequate flow of resources from the developed to developing countries, and action to alleviate the debt burdens of developing countries most in need;
- the development of human resources, in particular through education, training, health, culture, sport and programmes for strengthening family and community support, paying special attention to the needs of women, youth and children;
- effective and increasing programmes of bilateral and multilateral co-operation aimed at raising living standards;
- extending the benefits of development within a framework of respect for human rights;
- the protection of the environment through respect for the principles of sustainable development which we enunciated at Langkawi;
- action to combat drug trafficking and abuse and communicable diseases;
- help for small Commonwealth states in tackling their particular economic and security problems;
- support of the United Nations and other international institutions in the world's search for peace, disarmament and effective arms control; and in the promotion of international consensus on major global political, economic and social issues.

10. To give weight and effectiveness to our commitments we intend to focus and improve Commonwealth co-operation in these areas. This would include strengthening the capacity of the Commonwealth to respond to requests from members for assistance in entrenching the practices of democracy, accountable administration and the rule of law.

11. We call on all the intergovernmental institutions of the Commonwealth to seize the opportunities presented by these challenges. We pledge ourselves to assist them to develop programmes which harness our shared historical, professional, cultural and linguistic heritage and which complement the work of other international and regional organisations.

12. We invite the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and non-governmental Commonwealth organisations to play their full part in promoting these objectives, in a spirit of co-operation and mutual support.

13. In reaffirming the principles of the Commonwealth and in committing ourselves to pursue them in policy and action in response to the challenges of the 1990s, in areas where we believe that the Commonwealth has a distinctive contribution to offer, we the Heads of Government express our determination to renew and enhance the value and importance of the Commonwealth as an institution which can and should strengthen and enrich the lives not only of its own members and their peoples but also of the wider community of peoples of which they are a part.

APPENDIX F MILLBROOK COMMONWEALTH ACTION

PROGRAMME

1. At Harare in 1991, we pledged to work for the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the association, namely democracy, democratic processes and institutions which reflect national circumstances, fundamental human rights, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, and just and honest government. We agreed at the same time to work for the promotion of socio-economic development, recognising its high priority for most Commonwealth countries. During our Retreat at Millbrook, we decided to adopt a Commonwealth Action Programme to fulfil more effectively the commitments contained in the Harare Commonwealth Declaration. This Programme is in three parts:

1. advancing Commonwealth fundamental political values;
2. promoting sustainable development; and
3. facilitating consensus building.

I. Advancing Commonwealth Fundamental Political Values

A. Measures in Support of Processes and Institutions for the Practice of the Harare Principles

2. The Secretariat should enhance its capacity to provide advice, training and other forms of technical assistance to governments in promoting the Commonwealth's fundamental political values, including:

- assistance in creating and building the capacity of requisite institutions;
- assistance in constitutional and legal matters, including with selecting models and initiating programmes of democratisation;
- assistance in the electoral field, including the establishment or strengthening of independent electoral machinery, civic and voter education, the preparation of Codes of Conduct, and assistance with voter registration;
- observation of elections, including by-elections or local elections where appropriate, at the request of the member governments concerned;
- strengthening the rule of law and promoting the independence of the judiciary through the promotion of exchanges among, and training of, the judiciary;
- support for good government, particularly in the area of public service reform; and
- other activities, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and other bodies, to strengthen the democratic culture and effective parliamentary practices.

B. Measures in Response to Violations of the Harare Principles

3. Where a member country is perceived to be clearly in violation of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, and particularly in the event of an unconstitutional

overthrow of a democratically elected government, appropriate steps should be taken to express the collective concern of Commonwealth countries and to encourage the restoration of democracy within a reasonable time frame. These include:

- i. immediate public expression by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth's collective disapproval of any such infringement of the Harare principles;
- ii. early contact by the Secretary-General with the de facto government, followed by continued good offices and appropriate technical assistance to facilitate an early restoration of democracy;
- iii. encouraging bilateral démarches by member countries, especially those within the region, both to express disapproval and to support early restoration of democracy;
- iv. appointment of an envoy or a group of eminent Commonwealth representatives where, following the Secretary-General's contacts with the authorities concerned, such a mission is deemed beneficial in reinforcing the Commonwealth's good offices role;
- v. stipulation of up to two years as the time frame for the restoration of democracy where the institutions are not in place to permit the holding of elections within, say, a maximum of six months;
- vi. pending restoration of democracy, exclusion of the government concerned from participation at ministerial-level meetings of the Commonwealth, including Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings;
- vii. suspension of participation at all Commonwealth meetings and of Commonwealth technical assistance if acceptable progress is not recorded by the government concerned after a period of two years; and
- viii. consideration of appropriate further bilateral and multilateral measures by all member states (e.g. limitation of government-to-government contacts; people-to-people measures; trade restrictions; and, in exceptional cases, suspension from the association), to reinforce the need for change in the event that the government concerned chooses to leave the Commonwealth and/or persists in violating the principles of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration even after two years.

C. Mechanism for Implementation of Measures

4. We have decided to establish a Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on the Harare Declaration in order to deal with serious or persistent violations of the principles contained in that Declaration. The Group will be convened by the Secretary-General and will comprise the Foreign Ministers of eight countries, supplemented as appropriate by one or two additional ministerial representatives from the region concerned. It will be the Group's task to assess the nature of the infringement and recommend measures for collective Commonwealth action aimed at the speedy restoration of democracy and constitutional rule.

5. The composition, terms of reference and operation of the Group will be reviewed by us every two years.

II. Promoting Sustainable Development

6. We reaffirmed our view that the Commonwealth should continue to be a source of help in promoting development and literacy and in eradicating poverty, particularly as these bear on women and children. With a view to enhancing its capacity in this area, we agreed on the following steps:

- i. to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity for undertaking developmental work through support for its various Funds and especially by restoring the resources of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation to their 1991/92 level in real terms; and to provide adequate resources to the Commonwealth of Learning and to the Commonwealth Foundation;
- ii. to support a greater flow of investment to developing member countries through such schemes as the Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative;
- iii. to work for continued progress in assisting countries with unsustainable debt burdens and to promote enhanced multilateral concessional financial flows to developing countries; in particular, to support new and innovative mechanisms for relief on multilateral debt, such as the one proposed by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer at the 1994 Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in Malta, and reiterated subsequently;
- iv. to support the Secretariat in facilitating the adoption by more Commonwealth countries of successful self-help schemes, with non-governmental agencies and others acting as catalytic agents, for mobilising the energies of people in alleviating poverty;
- v. to support the efforts of small island developing states to mitigate the effects on their development of environmental change, natural disasters and the changing international trading system; and
- vi. to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, which threatens large parts of the younger population of many countries, recognising that the effective exploitation of economic opportunities requires a healthy and educated population; and to provide further resources to renew the core funding of the Southern African Network of AIDS Organisations (SANASO), along with increased funding for UNICEF initiatives in Southern Africa.

III. Facilitating Consensus Building

7. We were convinced that the Commonwealth, with its global reach and unique experience of consensus building, was in a position to assist the wider international community in building bridges across traditional international divides of opinion on particular issues. We therefore agreed that there was scope for the association to play a greater role in the search for consensus on global issues, through:

- i. use of their governments' membership of various regional organisations and attendance at other international gatherings to advance consensual positions agreed within the Commonwealth;

- ii. use, where appropriate, of special missions to advance Commonwealth consensual positions and promote wider consensus on issues of major international concern; and
- iii. use of formal and informal Commonwealth consultations in the wings of meetings of international institutions with a view to achieving consensus on major concerns.

APPENDIX G EXTRACT FROM THE 2007 CHOGM COMMUNIQUÉ ON MEMBERSHIP

87. Heads of Government reviewed the recommendations of the Committee on Commonwealth Membership and agreed on the following core criteria for Membership:

(a) an applicant country should, as a general rule, have had a historic constitutional association with an existing Commonwealth member, save in exceptional circumstances; (b) in exceptional circumstances, applications should be considered on a case-by-case basis; (c) an applicant country should accept and comply with Commonwealth fundamental values, principles, and priorities as set out in the 1971 Declaration of Commonwealth Principles and contained in other subsequent Declarations; (d) an applicant country must demonstrate commitment to: democracy and democratic processes, including free and fair elections and representative legislatures; the rule of law and independence of the judiciary; good governance, including a well-trained public service and transparent public accounts; and protection of human rights, freedom of expression, and equality of opportunity; (e) an applicant country should accept Commonwealth norms and conventions, such as the use of the English language as the medium of inter-Commonwealth relations, and acknowledge Queen Elizabeth II as the Head of the Commonwealth; and (f) new members should be encouraged to join the Commonwealth Foundation, and to promote vigorous civil society and business organisations within their countries, and to foster participatory democracy through regular civil society consultations.

88. Heads of Government also agreed that, where an existing member changes its formal constitutional status, it should not have to reapply for Commonwealth membership provided that it continues to meet all the criteria for membership.

89. Heads endorsed the other recommendations of the Committee, including a four-step process for considering applications for membership; new members being required to augment the existing budget of the Secretariat; and countries in accumulated arrears being renamed 'Members in Arrears'. They also agreed with the Committee's recommendations on Overseas Territories, Special Guests and strategic partnerships.

APPENDIX H PORT OF SPAIN CLIMATE CHANGE CONSENSUS

The Challenge of Our Time

1. Climate change is the predominant global challenge. We convened a Special Session on Climate Change in Port of Spain to discuss our profound concern about the undisputed threat that climate change poses to the security, prosperity, economic and social development of our people. For many it is deepening poverty and affecting the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. For some of us, it is an existential threat.
2. We reaffirm our commitment to the Lake Victoria Commonwealth Climate Change Action Plan and its further implementation, in particular by contributing to the efforts of member states in transforming their economies and strengthening the capacity and voice of vulnerable groups.
3. We recognise the unprecedented opportunity of our meeting just ahead of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen. We approach Copenhagen with ambition, optimism and determination. We welcome the attendance of leaders at the Copenhagen conference. The needs of the most vulnerable must be addressed. Their voice must be heard and capacity to engage strengthened. Many of us from small island states, low-lying coastal states and least developed countries face the greatest challenges, yet have contributed least to the problem of climate change.
4. In keeping with the spirit of the theme of CHOGM 2009, 'Partnering for a more equitable and sustainable future', we warmly welcomed the United Nations Secretary General, the Prime Minister of Denmark and the President of France.
5. We represent a third of the world's population in all continents and oceans, and more than one quarter of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We have the global reach and diversity to help forge the inclusive global solutions needed to combat climate change.
6. Science, and our own experience, tells us that we only have a few short years to address this threat. The average global temperature has risen because of the increase in carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. The latest scientific evidence indicates that in order to avoid dangerous climate change that is likely to have catastrophic impacts we must find solutions using all available avenues. We must act now.
7. We believe an internationally legally binding agreement is essential. We pledge our continued support to the leaders-driven process guided by the Danish Prime Minister and his efforts to deliver a comprehensive, substantial and operationally binding agreement in Copenhagen leading towards a full legally binding outcome no later than 2010. In Copenhagen we commit to focus our efforts on achieving the strongest possible outcome.

Copenhagen and Beyond

8. A global climate change solution is central to the survival of peoples, the promotion of development and facilitation of a global transition to a low emission development path. The agreement in Copenhagen must address the urgent needs of developing countries by providing financing, support for adaptation, technology transfer, capacity building, approaches and incentives for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and for afforestation and sustainable management of forests.

9. In addition, we will strive to significantly increase technological and technology support to developing countries to facilitate the deployment and diffusion of clean technologies through a range of mechanisms. We will work to facilitate and enable the transition to low-emission economies, climate resilience, and in particular, support, including through capacity building, for increasing the climate resilience of vulnerable economies. We will also aim to develop cleaner, more affordable and renewable energy sources. We must explore global mechanisms through which those identified technologies can be disseminated as rapidly as possible.

10. Ensuring the viability of states should underpin a shared vision for long-term cooperative action and a long-term global goal for emission reductions. In building towards an international agreement, all countries will need to play their part, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

11. We need an ambitious mitigation outcome at Copenhagen to reduce the risks of dangerous climate change without compromising the legitimate development aspirations of developing countries. We stress our common conviction that urgent and substantial action to reduce global emissions is needed and have a range of views as to whether average global temperature increase should be constrained to below 1.5 degrees or to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. We also recognise the need for an early peaking year for global emissions. Developed countries should continue to lead on cutting their emissions, and developing countries, in line with their national circumstances, should also take action to achieve a substantial deviation from business-as-usual emissions including with financial and technical support, and also supported by technology and capacity building.

12. Progress towards predictable and adequate finance for adaptation and mitigation measures must be achieved in any new multilateral approach. Public and private financial resources for developing countries will need to be scaled up urgently and substantially by 2020. We recognise that adaptation finance in particular should be targeted towards the poorest and most vulnerable countries. The provision of finance should be additional to existing official development assistance commitments. In this respect, we acknowledge the potential role of the private sector and carbon markets.

13. In addition, we recognise the need for an early start to the provision for financial resources. Fast start funding, constituting grant funding, should provide substantial support for adaptation, REDD plus and clean technology. We welcomed the initiative to establish, as part of a comprehensive agreement, a Copenhagen Launch Fund starting in 2010 and building to a level of resources of \$10 billion annually by 2012.

Fast start funding for adaptation should be focused on the most vulnerable countries. We also welcomed a proposal to provide immediate, fast disbursing assistance with a dedicated stream for small island states, and associated low-lying coastal states of AOSIS of at least 10% of the fund.

We also recognise the need for further, specified and comparable funding streams, to assist the poorest and most vulnerable countries, to cope with, and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. We recognise that funding will be scaled up beyond 2012.

14. We agree that an equitable governance structure to manage the financial and technological support must be put in place. We agree that a future governance structure should provide for states to monitor and comply with arrangements entered under a new Copenhagen agreement.