



Pathfinder Economic Alert

## **CHOGM 2013 Outcomes**

The recently concluded Commonwealth Summit issued four statements reflecting the outcomes of their deliberations: the Colombo Declaration on Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Development; the Kotte Statement on International Trade and Investment; the CHOGM 2013 Communiqué; and the Magampura Commitment to Young People.

### **The Colombo Declaration on Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Development**

Sri Lanka, as the host government, chose sustainable, inclusive and equitable development as the Special Theme for the recently concluded Commonwealth Summit. Following their deliberations, the Heads agreed that achieving growth with equity and inclusivity must be one of the key priorities of the Commonwealth, in keeping with its Charter adopted in December 2012. In this connection, their Statement highlighted, inter alia, the following:

- Their deep concern about the adverse impacts of the world financial and economic crises on developing countries.
- Their affirmation of the importance of reforms of the international trade, monetary and financial institutions in order to ensure fair representation for developing countries.
- Their support for the importance of improving access to productive employment to achieve equitable growth and the need to improve employability through access to quality education, skills development, better health care and equitable access to resources.
- Their reaffirmation of the right to development, including for women, youth and the differently-abled.
- The importance of meaningful social protection for all.
- The sovereign right of nations to manage their own natural resource base in a sustainable manner.
- The priority attached to the successful achievement of the MDGs by 2015, both globally and within the Commonwealth.
- Urgent implementation of the commitments undertaken, particularly on Goal 8 (Global Partnerships).
- **Their pledge to engage collectively and help shape the post -2015 development agenda. In this connection, they agreed to constitute an Open-Ended High Level**

**Working Group of Heads to identify, through a Commonwealth Statement on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, their shared perspectives and recommendations. They agreed to advance these through individual member governments in the consultations at the 69<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly.**

- Their welcome of the various Reports and ongoing processors in relation to shaping the post-2015 development framework and the noting of their contents as inputs into the intergovernmental process.
- Their commitment to explore actively the unrealized potential for collaboration and partnership within the Commonwealth.
- Their recognition of the special role that the Commonwealth can play in exchanging experiences and promoting lessons learnt on key national and international policies and programs in the context of a rapidly – changing global environment.
- Their commitment to work towards appropriate global policies to address poverty, food security, climate change mitigation and adaptation, inequities in trade, predictable and adequate financing, investment, knowledge and technology transfer as well as increasing developing country voices in the global economic, trade and financial order.
- Their reaffirmation of all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.
- **Their request to the Commonwealth Secretariat to draw on inputs from members and expert development practitioners on key economic and other factors affecting member states' ability to meet development goals, including the post – 2015 development agenda. In this process, Heads also called for a focus on identifying areas for potential economic cooperation within the Commonwealth. This work will inform discussions at forthcoming Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meetings and progress will be reviewed at the next CHOGM in 2015.**

### **The Kotte Statement on International Trade and Investment**

In a global landscape characterized by widespread unemployment and economic hardship, which has created growing social unrest in many parts of the world, Heads of Government issued the Kotte Statement on International Trade and Investment which focused, inter alia on the following.

- Their reaffirmation of their commitment to a rules-based, transparent, free and fair multilateral trading system that enhances trade liberalization and development objectives, while taking into account the special needs of small and vulnerable economies and least developed countries (LDCs).
- The need for urgency and flexibility for securing a successful and balanced outcome at the WTO Trade Ministers meeting in Bali, in December 2013, as a means of providing impetus to an early conclusion of the Doha Round.

- The importance of duty free and quota free access for LDCs to developed country markets; progress in agriculture and trade facilitation; and mechanisms designed to promote investment flows and trade development within the Commonwealth.
- Their commitment to work together in promoting greater intra-Commonwealth investment flows and enhanced private sector engagement.
- Their support for regional trading arrangements that complement the multilateral trading system.
- Their reaffirmation of the importance of aid for trade.
- Their support for sustained, regular and uninterrupted flows of trade finance.
- **The recognition of the need to promote practical measures to increase intra-Commonwealth trade and investment. In this respect, the Commonwealth Secretary-General was requested to assess the feasibility of a Commonwealth Trade and Investment Finance Facility for those small and developing Commonwealth states without access to such resources.**

### **The CHOGM 2013 Communiqué**

In addition to the above Statements, the Heads issued their usual Communiqué. It covered a whole range of Commonwealth related development, political and functional cooperation issues. The practical outcomes reflected in the Communiqué included the following.

- Agreement to progress consideration of the Commonwealth Expert Group on Climate Finance's recommendations on the simplified access arrangements for small states and LDCs.
- Welcomed the offer by Mauritius to host a Commonwealth Climate Financing Skills Hub and called for a full proposal for consideration at their next meeting in Malta (2015).
- Welcomed the progress being made in strengthening relations between the G20 and Commonwealth members, including through the establishment of the Annual Commonwealth Dialogue and the regular G20 outreach with the Commonwealth. Australia's forthcoming assumption of the G20 Presidency was also welcomed and it was noted that this offers an important opportunity to reflect Commonwealth priorities in advancing global development policy challenges.
- The Secretary-General was requested to review the Commonwealth Media Development Fund to examine how it can be strengthened to build the capacity of a free and responsible media.
- The membership of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group over the next two years will comprise the following countries: Cyprus, Ghana, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka (ex-officio as Chair – in- Office) and Tanzania.

- Agreement to establish an Open- ended Ministerial Group to progress the proposal to address the priority development issues of Commonwealth Small States.
- Welcomed Malta’s offer to establish a Small State’s Center of Excellence that will provide targeted capacity-building in the areas of both democracy and development.
- Endorsed the recommendation of the Report of the Commonwealth High Level Mission on Debt and Financing Challenges of Small States, including the proposal for debt reduction and the inclusion of a vulnerability criterion in debt alleviation interventions and allocation procedures of international financial institutions.
- Noted the endorsement by senior Commonwealth Law Officials of the Commonwealth Cybercrime initiative and called for the provision of assistance to developing countries on their cybercrime issues.
- Requested the Secretary- General to support conflict-affected states in strengthening their capacity to prevent and respond to sexual violence in armed conflict.
- Requested the Secretary General to establish Working Group of Officials to consider the recommendations of a Report commissioned by him on promoting easier cross-border movement of Commonwealth citizens on bona fide travel.
- Welcomed the initiative by the Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization and International Telecommunications Union to work together in a multi-stakeholder partnership to support the development of National Broad- band Policies and Strategies.

### **The Magampura Commitment to Young People.**

The Heads of Government also issued the Magampura Commitment to Young People to reflect their support for investing in young people and placing them at the center for sustainable and inclusive development. The specific outcomes included the following:

- The establishment of a Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC) and the acceptance of the Government of Sri Lanka’s offer to host the Secretariat of the CYC.
- The hosting of the World Conference on Youth by the Government of Sri Lanka in May 2014.
- Welcoming of the Government of Sri Lanka’s proposal to the UN to declare an “International Skills Day” to promote and recognize youth skills development.

The venues for the next three CHOGMs will be Malta (2015), Vanuatu (2017) and Malaysia (2019).

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