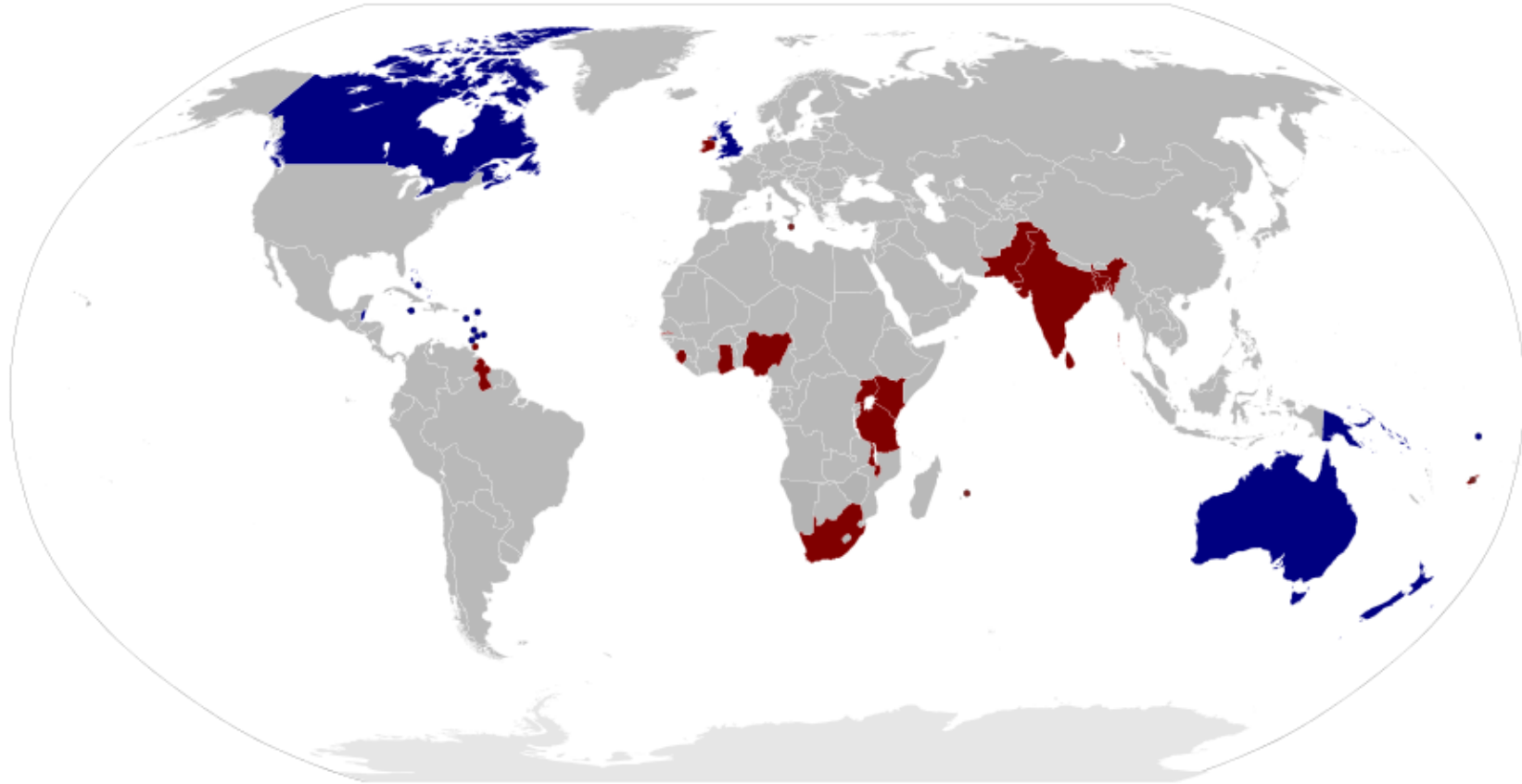


# An Inclusive Commonwealth: The Role of Trinidad and Tobago



# The Commonwealth: An Overview



Click Video Link

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Commonwealthtube>

# What is Inclusion?

- Implies an act or a state of being engaged or incorporated into a group or a structure
- An inclusive commonwealth must be seen as grouping based on togetherness and a shared vision
- A family of nations sharing common experiences and challenges which create pathways to development and embrace all citizens

# About the Commonwealth

- A voluntary association of 53 independent, sovereign states
- Links together countries formally part of the British Empire
- The Commonwealth was founded in its present form in 1949 as a group of states co-operating for mutual advantage and united by common ideals
- Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth. Its Heads of Government attends a summit every two years and Commonwealth friendship is celebrated every four years in the Commonwealth Games

# Members

| Africa   | Asia  | Caribbean and Americas   | Europe                            | Pacific   |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Botswana<br>Cameroon<br>Ghana<br>Kenya<br>Lesotho<br>Malawi<br>Mauritius<br>Mozambique<br>Namibia<br>Nigeria<br>Rwanda<br>Seychelles<br>Sierra Leone<br>South Africa<br>Swaziland<br>Uganda<br>United Republic of Tanzania<br>Zambia | Bangladesh<br>Brunei<br>Darussalam<br>India<br>Malaysia<br>Maldives<br>Pakistan<br>Singapore<br>Sri Lanka | Antigua and Barbuda<br>Bahamas, The<br>Barbados<br>Belize<br>Canada<br>Dominica<br>Grenada<br>Guyana<br>Jamaica<br>Saint Lucia<br>St Kitts and Nevis<br>St Vincent and The Grenadines<br>Trinidad and Tobago | Cyprus<br>Malta<br>United Kingdom | Australia<br>Fiji<br>Kiribati<br>Nauru<br>New Zealand<br>Papua New Guinea<br>Samoa<br>Solomon Islands<br>Tonga<br>Tuvalu<br>Vanuatu |

# Positive Attributes of the Commonwealth

- Transformative Role
- Fosters Diversity
- Important Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation
- Useful platform for small states in multilateralism
- Technical assistance

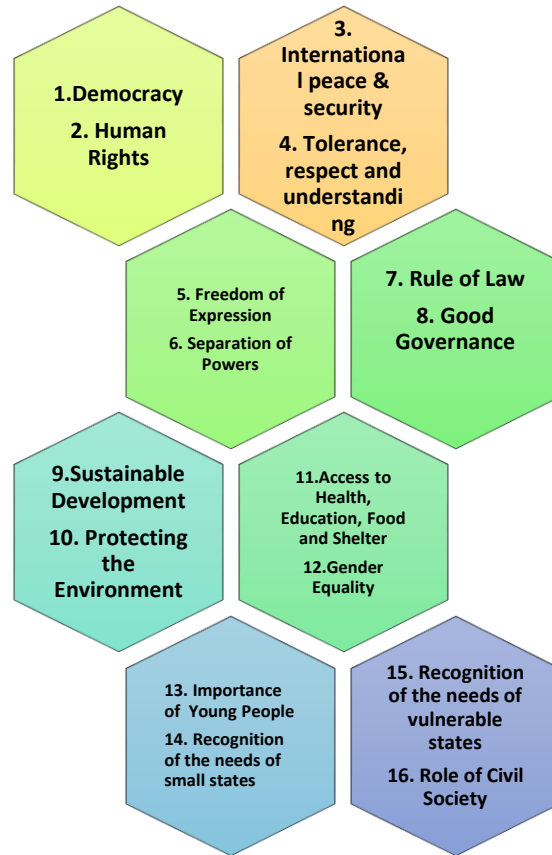
# Charter



CHARTER  
*of the*  
COMMONWEALTH

A stylized signature of Queen Elizabeth II in blue ink, positioned over a faint version of the globe logo.

Signed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth,  
Commonwealth Day 2013



1. Democracy
2. Human rights
3. International peace and security
4. Tolerance, respect and understanding
5. Freedom of Expression
6. Separation of Powers
7. Rule of Law
8. Good Governance
9. Sustainable Development
10. Protecting the Environment
11. Access to Health, Education, Food and Shelter
12. Gender Equality
13. Importance of Young People in the Commonwealth
14. Recognition of the Needs of Small States
15. Recognition of the Needs of Vulnerable States
16. The Role of Civil Society

# Democracy

- Democracy- A form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system
- Key aim of the Commonwealth: Building, supporting and strengthening legal systems - promoting regular elections and strengthening election bodies, institutions and processes
- Commonwealth Elections Observer Missions deployed



# Economic Development

- The Commonwealth aims to:

- Assist in the development of economies

- Improve management of economies

- Work closely with country partners, including member governments, international organisations, businesses and academics

- Advocate for international policies, related to small states' resilience

- Advance Commonwealth principles and values in major global forums such as the United Nations, World Bank, IMF, G20, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and others, supporting more inclusive economic growth and sustainable development

- Values and principles applied as contribution to UNPost-2015 Sustainable Development Goals

# Governance

- Good governance, strong democracy, rule of law, protection of human rights and respect for diversity are Commonwealth values
- The Commonwealth works with member countries to resolve conflicts or tensions. It helps consolidate and strengthen confidence in government institutions
- It works with governments and national authorities to help them root out systemic corruption and uphold transparency and accountability

# Rule of Law

- Heads of Governments and Law Ministers set mandates to strengthen rule of law, effective administration of justice and best practice in the Commonwealth
- A variety of technical assistance programmes help to strengthen justice institutions, develop laws, enhance the capacity of officials and achieve the independence of judiciaries
- Assistance is provided in many ways, including:
- Capacity building and provision of short and long term experts to aid in the development and drafting of national laws;
- Developing and promoting best practice on various thematic areas of law in the form of toolkits, guidelines, manuals and model laws;
- Supporting law reform, enhancing the capacity of law enforcement and other justice agencies on various thematic areas of justice such as national, transnational and international crimes
- Coordinate the Commonwealth Cybercrime Initiative a Commonwealth programme. Working with a range of committed national, regional and international partners, it provides coherent, comprehensive and sustainable assistance to member states, builds capacity to combat cybercrime and develop appropriate legal frameworks, and investigative, technical, enforcement and criminal justice capabilities.

# Supporting institutions and mechanisms to promote and protect human rights

- Supported the establishment of an NHRI in Jamaica and the strengthening of NHRIs in Sri Lanka, Seychelles and Swaziland
- Developed and delivered a human rights leadership programme for Permanent Secretaries in Barbados
- Establishing and strengthening National Human Rights Institutions
- The Commonwealth Secretariat provided technical assistance to the Government of Jamaica for the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI).

# Small States

- Definition: Small states are sovereign countries with a population of 1.5 million people or fewer. There are 31 small states in the Commonwealth.
- As members of the Commonwealth, small states have an equal voice. It enables them to take part in international decision-making on issues that affect them, such as climate change.

# Resources

With limited resources, small states face many challenges, including:

- dependence on a narrow range of exports
- high transportation costs due to insularity and remoteness
- dependence on strategic imports such as food and fuel
- susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental change
- decline in global trade and investment
- lack of readily available information for investors and trading partners
- limited capacity to harness growth opportunities.
- Some larger countries - Botswana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia and Papua New Guinea - are classified as small states as they share similar characteristics

# Youth

- The Commonwealth's 53 member countries have a combined population of more than 2 billion, of which more than **60% are under 30 years of age.**
- The Commonwealth Secretariat sees young people aged 15-29 years-old as assets to a country's development who should be empowered to realise their potential.
- Young people have a proven capability to lead change, and are a vital and valuable investment for now and the future.

# CHOGM

- The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM), held every two years since 1971, are the association's ultimate policy-and decision-making forum.



Commonwealth leaders at the 2009 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.



# CHOGM

The Commonwealth summits have three broad objectives.

- First, they allow Commonwealth leaders to review international political and economic developments, to decide, where appropriate, what action the association will take, and then to issue a communiqué stating the Commonwealth position.
- Second, leaders examine avenues for Commonwealth co-operation for development, considering both the work done over the previous two years, and agreeing priorities and programmes for the future.
- Third, and this is implicit in all the deliberations, leaders see these summits as an opportunity to strengthen the sense of the Commonwealth itself, as an association which has characteristics of friendship, business partnership and stabilising ballast in a world of change and turmoil

# Trinidad and Tobago and CHOGM

- 2009 was the twenty-first Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Nations held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, between 27 and 29 November 2009, and was hosted by that country's then Prime Minister, Patrick Manning.
- The Commonwealth Chair-in-Office (CIO) is the Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth of Nations, and is one of the main leadership positions in the Commonwealth. It is held by the host chairperson of the previous Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, was the first female to chair the Commonwealth.

# CHOGM 2015

- Theme: “Adding Global Value – Creating a more prosperous Commonwealth” CHOGM was represented in 2015 by Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister.
- Trinidad and Tobago is committed to playing a responsible role in the development of global policies and strategies to meaningfully address many of the complexed issues that threaten and often constrain development and stability, not only in the Caribbean region, but also in the wider international arena.
- Key issues: Terrorism, corruption, transparency, small state development, energy security and climate change

# Perspectives on Trinidad and Tobago's Role in the Commonwealth

- As a model for inclusive education (GATE)
- Developing new learning spaces through ICTs for the creation of programmes to enhance dissemination and impact of knowledge and skills
- Ensuring access for all (ethnicity, religion, socio-econ status, gender, disabled, etc.)
- Social inclusion for all – citizen security, enhanced citizen participation (economy and entrepreneurship)
- Demonstrate small state resilience through economic diversity (manufacturing beyond oil and natural gas)
- Dedication to health for citizens (CDAP) -Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting in 2015 in Geneva was 'Universal health coverage, with an emphasis on ageing and good health'.

# Concluding Remarks

- Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to international cooperation and the Charter of the Commonwealth
- The Commonwealth plays an essential role in advancing economic, social and political issues of small states and other members of this esteemed organization
- Sustained focus on Youth and as young students you should thrive for excellence in the pursuit of education

# One Love



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdB-8eLEW8g>

Thank You!!!