

11 July 2011

Dear Friends,

I take pleasure in informing you of the arrangements for the forthcoming 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Plans are now well in hand for the meeting which will be held in Perth, Western Australia from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 October 2011.

The theme for the Meeting is expected to be announced very shortly. We do know, of course, that Heads will deliberate on the recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group, amongst other issues.

Please find here below an outline of the CHOGM accreditation procedures and background information on some of the major events planned.

### **2011 CHOGM Accreditation Arrangements.**

As you are aware, **duly accredited** Commonwealth organisations are eligible to attend certain events at CHOGM. The CHOGM 2011 Taskforce (the Taskforce) is currently finalising the accreditation system for Commonwealth Organisations and expect it to be completed by the end of July 2011. Once the system is complete, we will have the ability to send an email with a link that will enable you to input your registration details directly into the online delegate portal.

As such, if your organisation wishes to be accredited to CHOGM 2011, we would be grateful if you could please contact the Civil Society Liaison Manager, David Kalete (or his colleague Nicholas Broadbridge) at [csaaccreditation@commonwealth.int](mailto:csaaccreditation@commonwealth.int) with the names of the proposed representatives from your organisation. Once you have done so, we will (once the system is up and running) send you the necessary link to the online form that each representative will be required to complete in order to be accredited for CHOGM. Commonwealth accredited organisations are each entitled to accredit up to three (3) representatives. Each representative must complete and submit a separate version of the online form as soon as possible, and in any case prior to the accreditation deadline of 31 August 2011. Wherever possible, it would be desirable to have the composition of delegations reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth. Participants will be accredited as soon as possible after the completed forms are submitted.

Please note that this accreditation process will enable you (and up to three representatives of your organisation) to attend the various open events (set out in this note) that are open (space permitting) to representatives of accredited Commonwealth organisations, and access the lounge. I would wish to emphasise that this process is separate from that of applying for accreditation to the Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF), which many of you may have already registered for. Whilst registering for the CPF will allow you to attend the People's Forum, it will not, in itself, enable you to attend the various events set out in this note, which are open to representatives of accredited Commonwealth organisations only.

Please note that there will be no visa exemptions for CHOGM 2011 and it is your responsibility to ensure that you apply for and obtain a visa before travel to Australia. Further information on Australian visa requirements can be found in Annex 1, or by visiting the CHOGM website, [www.CHOGM2011.org](http://www.CHOGM2011.org) and following the relevant links.

Upon successful submission of your application, you will receive an Accreditation Certificate which will need to be included with your visa application. The Accreditation Certificate should also be shown upon arrival into Perth Airport in order to access the dedicated Immigration lane and CHOGM transport. Further details on arrangements in Perth can be found in Annex 1.

We will promptly advise you if we note any areas in the form that require your further attention. However, should you encounter any difficulty in completing and submitting the form, or in any other related process, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Secretariat for assistance.

### **The Civil Society Statement to CHOGM, the Committee of the Whole and civil society written submissions.**

As you may be aware, it is proposed that for CHOGM 2011, the Civil Society Statement be prepared well in advance and presented to Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers for consideration, at their annual meeting which takes place this year on 22 September 2011 in New York. In this regard, the Commonwealth Foundation has convened regional consultations which took place from May – June. There is an opportunity for Commonwealth accredited organisations to make submissions to this process. If your organisation would like to make a submission please send these to Mr. Vijay Krishnarayan on [v.krishnarayan@commonwealth.int](mailto:v.krishnarayan@commonwealth.int) by 20 July. The Foundation will host a drafting group in August to consolidate views and develop a coherent and concerted civil society statement. This statement will be available on the Foundation website before it is finalised. For further information on this process and the timetable, please contact Mr Krishnarayan.

### **Committee of the Whole**

It has been agreed that the Committee of the Whole (COW), comprising senior officials of member governments, will on this occasion meet in Perth on Monday 24 and Tuesday 25 October 2011, to consider the draft CHOGM Communiqué. Considering that civil society would have had the opportunity to present their statement to Foreign Affairs Ministers in September 2011, it is not intended this time around, for civil society to have a special dialogue with COW officials, as has traditionally been the case.

Nevertheless, accredited Commonwealth organisations may still submit written reports for the information of member governments, as has been past practice. These papers will be shared firstly with the civil society statement drafting group in London for possible consideration as they prepare the statement. In line with tradition, these documents will additionally be made available to CHOGM delegations in Perth. As is normal practice, these written submissions should be sent to the office of the Civil Society Liaison Manager no later than 20 July 2011, with a copy to Vijay Krishnarayan, Deputy Director of the Commonwealth Foundation, who is convening the civil society statement drafting group.

## **Pre-CHOGM Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting in Perth 26-27 October 2011.**

The Pre-CHOGM Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting will be held in Perth on Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 October 2011. At their meeting, Foreign Ministers are expected to consider a draft CHOGM communiqué on political, economic and other issues, which will subsequently be submitted for approval by Heads of Government. During their meeting, Foreign Ministers will receive reports from the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning. They will also receive reports, in the established manner, from the three CHOGM associated forums i.e. Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF), Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) and Commonwealth Peoples' Forum (CPF); the CPF will be represented by members of the Commonwealth Foundation Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAC), and the presentation will be followed by an opportunity for discussion and dialogue.

As has become a tradition, civil society will further interact with Foreign Ministers in a 'Roundtable Dialogue' at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre (PCEC). The actual date and time of the dialogue will be confirmed shortly; we expect that it will, on this occasion be either on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> or Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October. Commonwealth organisations are welcome to avail themselves of this opportunity to discuss with Foreign Ministers possible partnerships with regard to CHOGM mandates and other Commonwealth priorities. This dialogue is jointly organised with the Commonwealth Foundation and further information will be circulated nearer the time.

## **The CHOGM Opening Ceremony and Secretary General's reception.**

The CHOGM Official Opening Ceremony will be held at the Riverside Theatre of the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre (PCEC) on Friday 28 October 2011. The PCEC is located in the Perth Central Business District and will also be the primary venue for CHOGM 2011.

The customary reception hosted by the Commonwealth Secretary-General will be held on the same day and will present the opportunity for Heads of Government to informally meet with representatives of accredited Commonwealth Organisations and other invited guests.

As is normal practice, attendance at the Opening Ceremony and the Secretary-General's reception will be by invitation only. In keeping with CHOGM tradition, the Host Government will issue an invitation card to the Head of each accredited Commonwealth organisation. Space permitting, invitations may be extended to an additional representative. Invitation cards and the Opening Ceremony programme will be issued at the Commonwealth Organisations Lounge in Perth.

## **Commonwealth People's Forum**

As usual, there will be a Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF) in Perth, organised by the Commonwealth Foundation in collaboration with the Western Australian Council of Social Service, with the support of the Australian Government and the Western Australian Government. The CPF is scheduled to take place on **25 to 27 October 2011** at the Hilton Parmelia Hotel in Perth, which is located in very close proximity to the PCEC. This has always been a lively forum for Commonwealth

organisations and indeed is already shaping up to be an exciting event. For more details, please visit the Foundation website [www.commonwealthfoundation.com](http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com)

As indicated previously, the process for registering for the CPF is handled by the Commonwealth Foundation, and is different from the process of registering for accreditation to CHOGM 2011 itself. Therefore if you wish to participate in the CPF, you will need to fill in and submit the Foundation's on-line registration form found at: [www.cpf2011.org](http://www.cpf2011.org)

### **The Commonwealth Organisations' Lounge and Media Centre**

The Government of Australia has provided a Commonwealth Organisations (CO) Lounge (formerly CSO Lounge), with office equipment including a photocopier, PCs with internet and email access, a printer, and 'pigeon holes' for each organisation to disseminate and receive documents. In addition, there are sofas, chairs and a table for small meetings. The CO Lounge will be opened on Wednesday 26 October 2011.

As is normal practice, The CO Lounge is located in the vicinity of the Media Centre and arrangements have been made for accredited organisations to book rooms in the Media Centre for media briefings and to observe other official media briefings. The CHOGM 2011 Media Centre should provide excellent opportunities for civil society to interact with the media.

Working with the Commonwealth Foundation, we have also planned a series of activities to be held in the confines of the lounge, over the period. This will include activities such as informal discussions with various government officials on subjects of mutual interest. Details of these events will be sent to you in due course.

I trust that these arrangements will provide adequate opportunities for civil society to present their priority issues and recommendations into the CHOGM process. We will keep you posted of any further developments in due course.

In the meantime, in light of the fast approaching deadline, if you wish to register for CHOGM 2011, please do contact me or Nicholas Broadbridge as soon as possible (at [csoaccreditation@commonwealth.int](mailto:csoaccreditation@commonwealth.int)) with the names of the proposed representatives: we will then contact you with regard to the form for registering these representatives. We also look forward to receiving any written submissions for consideration by the Civil Society Statement drafting group and for the information of CHOGM delegations. I would be grateful if you gave this letter your early and urgent attention.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,



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