

APPENDIX

COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE

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MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH PRIME
MINISTERS—LONDON 1969

Communiqué

Commonwealth Heads of Government met in London from 7-15 January. Botswana, Cyprus, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia were represented by their Presidents. Australia, Barbados, Britain, Canada, Ceylon, The Gambia, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, New Zealand, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Swaziland and Trinidad and Tobago were represented by their Prime Ministers. Ghana was represented by the Deputy Chairman of the National Liberation Council; Kenya by its Minister of Finance; Nigeria by the Vice Chairman of the Federal Executive Council; and Pakistan by its Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Prime Minister of Britain was in the Chair.

2. This was the largest meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government and one of the biggest consultative gatherings of Heads of Government from all parts of the world since the signature of the United Nations Charter. Heads of Government warmly greeted the President of Botswana, and the Prime Ministers of Barbados, Lesotho, Mauritius and Swaziland, whose countries had become new members of the Commonwealth since the previous meeting.

3. The Republic of Nauru has become the Commonwealth's first "special member", with the right to participate in all functional meetings and activities, and to be eligible for Commonwealth technical assistance. The Associated States of the West Indies, having reached a full measure of self-government although not fully independent, also take part in Commonwealth meetings and activities in fields within their constitutional competence. Heads of Government welcomed these arrangements which had been agreed since their last Meeting to enable very small States to participate in the work of the Commonwealth.

International Affairs

4. Heads of Government were aware that they were meeting at a time of some misgivings about the effectiveness of international organizations and associations. They were unanimous that effective international co-operation was more than ever important. Any weaknesses and failures of international machinery were a reason to improve that machinery, not to despair of it. They expressed their continued support for the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and their wish to contribute to efforts to strengthen the institutions and work of the United Nations, particularly its role in maintaining and promoting peace.

5. They noted with pleasure the part played by Commonwealth countries in the development of regional co-operation. At the same time they recognized that exchanges of view and consultation within a wider association such as the Commonwealth offered one means by which its members could form a better understanding of one another's problems and attitudes and of their growing interdependence.

6. With these considerations in mind, they reviewed some of the major issues and trends in the world political situation.

7. They were in agreement that the principles of non-interference by one State in the internal affairs of another and of scrupulous respect for the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and political independence of all States are the very cornerstone of the structure of world peace.

8. Heads of Government also felt that events in Czechoslovakia in violation of these principles and of the United Nations Charter tended to undermine respect for the territorial integrity and sovereign independence of all States, particularly small States.

9. They considered that events in the Middle East in violation of the United Nations Charter and the Security Council resolutions emphasised the need for the establishment of a durable peace in the area as a matter of urgency. This could be achieved in accordance with the Security Council's Resolution of