

## Colloquium: The Commonwealth in the 3rd Millennium

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### THE COMMONWEALTH: THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE 3RD MILLENNIUM

Address by The Hon Sir Humphrey Maud KCMG, Commonwealth Deputy  
Secretary-General (Economic and Social Affairs), Friday, 20 February 1998

Mr Chairman, your Excellencies, friends and colleagues. I am delighted to stand before your distinguished Society today. It is always a privilege to contribute to the work of what is the blue ribbon of Commonwealth NGOs; but particularly so when this is in Canada, which is in so many ways the cradle of the modern Commonwealth. I take this opportunity to salute the memory of a great Canadian, Arnold Smith, the Commonwealth's first Secretary-General, who did so much to shape our association.

My Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, would have dearly loved to have been here himself. But he is today on his way back from the South Pacific, and so can only be with us in spirit.

Readers of the works of Ben Okri will know that Nigerian spirits have a tendency to assume a life of their own and wander into unexpected places, so we should not assume that the Chief's physical absence necessarily means we can escape his immanent presence! But the penalty for you is that instead of a rich Nigerian baritone, you have to listen to a high Etonian tenor whose accents today have little place in Tony Blair's "Cool Britannia".

It is always a pleasure to come to Canada, even in the aftermath of an ice storm. When Prime Minister Macmillan came to Ottawa in 1919 he described this as the happiest 10 months of his life. "There was fishing: there was boating: there was swimming: there was flirting: and there was a little serious work". I see that in her fundamentals Canada has not changed much since then!