

international community to curb and prevent illicit production and trafficking. They urged member countries to support and encourage the initiatives underway globally and regionally, and particularly in the United Nations on this complex problem, including the international conference scheduled to be held in 2001.

### **Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict**

37. Heads of Government expressed their deep concern at the targeting of civilians, especially women and children, including recent attacks on humanitarian personnel, noting that these acts which violate international law are often undertaken with impunity. Recognising the negative impact this can have on the building of durable peace, reconciliation and sustainable development, they encouraged all Commonwealth countries to promote compliance with international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.

### **Debt**

38. Heads of Government stressed that the Commonwealth should continue to be a driving force in international efforts to secure a lasting exit from debt for the poorest and most indebted countries in the world. They welcomed the enhanced HIPC initiative, agreed at the autumn 1999 meetings of the Interim and Development Committees. They reiterated the Commonwealth commitment to support the swift implementation of the recent agreements to provide deeper, wider and faster debt relief, with the overarching aim of reducing poverty in HIPC countries. It is important that the procedures relating to the poverty reduction strategies should not delay access to timely debt relief.
39. To this end, they called for the enhanced HIPC framework to be financed in a way that provided additional resources and also avoided adverse effects on other poor developing countries. They emphasised the need for adequate debt relief and technical assistance from the international community to reinforce poverty reduction strategies in debtor countries and help them achieve internationally agreed poverty reduction and development targets by 2015.
40. They also requested that consideration be given to strengthening of the focus on the fiscal burden of debt in assessing sustainability and the shortening of the required track record of reform of up to six years.

### **Good Governance and the Elimination of Corruption**

41. Heads of Government emphasized that corruption has become global in reach and that it must be tackled comprehensively through action at both national and international levels. They welcomed the report of the Commonwealth Expert Group on Good Governance, and endorsed the Framework for Principles for Promoting Good Governance and Combating Corruption, proposed by the Group, as the basis for pursuing concerted strategies based on zero tolerance for all types of corruption at national and global levels. They underscored that the Commonwealth commitment and work in promoting good governance and preventing corruption must be credible, tangible and visible. They instructed the Secretary-General to formulate strategies to facilitate the implementation of the Framework and for reviews of its progress to be reported at regular intervals.