

5. In all these areas there are opportunities for expansion and co-operative development which urgently need to be taken. The Conference was aware that there is inadequate information available about NGOs and their activities and that in some important fields there is limited activity by NGOs.

6. In the view of the Conference, the work of NGOs is both economical and cost-effective. It is:

- fundamental to the further utilisation of professional resources;
- relevant to local needs in the development field; and
- of great importance to the public understanding of the nature and work of the Commonwealth.

7. The creative, flexible and responsive capacity of NGOs needs to be more positively recognised by Commonwealth Governments.

8. Further steps should be taken, by the official Commonwealth, to stimulate and sustain the growth of NGOs, and to strengthen co-operation between them, in relevant fields of activity. These objectives can be achieved by the use of existing Commonwealth machinery subject to appropriate direction from Heads of Government. As an autonomous Commonwealth organisation, the Commonwealth Foundation has shown its ability to promote NGOs in the professional field and manifestly could be equally successful and economical in a wider sphere. For the Commonwealth Secretariat, the development of closer collaboration and consultation with NGOs would be a growth in the relations already begun by its various departments.

9. The official and the unofficial Commonwealth need to give more attention to the importance of communication and education in maintaining public appreciation of the relevance of the Commonwealth. The NGOs - assisted and strengthened by the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Foundation - should be encouraged and equipped to embark on programmes of education and information.

10. Noting that the strength and cohesion of the Commonwealth Association itself - and of Commonwealth organisations both official and unofficial - depend on the extent to which they are constructively used, and recalling that at their meeting in Ottawa in 1973 Commonwealth Heads of Government declared their intention to make