

- nor have they always shown the political will to fulfill the commitments to action to which they have signed up; and
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- it has failed to get its message across effectively to the intelligent young and to the media.

4. We challenge the Commonwealth to take practical and well-focused measures which will demonstrate in a practical way the core values expressed in its Declarations and Action Programme. It should take the lead in helping make economies socially accountable, societies racially equitable and gender egalitarian, and the human race ecologically responsible.

5. We urge member countries to restore the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) at the very least to its 1991 level, in real terms.

*Economic development, business and trade*

6. The increasingly important role played by regionalism in the development of the global economy has implications for Commonwealth countries, both individually and as a group. Nearly every Commonwealth country is now a member of one or more regional trade groupings, as well as belonging to the World Trade Organization (WTO). How does membership in these bodies affect members' national development strategies, and what implications does this have for their interests in the Commonwealth? Commonwealth countries are generally not important trading partners. Is economic regionalism and the Commonwealth compatible, and if so, how can one be made to strengthen the other?

7. These developments are forcing countries outside the major trading blocs to develop new approaches to trade and development. Small businesses will increasingly have to use synergy to overcome the inhibitions of operating in restricted local markets; the low cost of air freight and fiber optics means that teams of small local firms can market globally. We call on the Commonwealth to help share best practices in local and regional cluster development. We call on member countries to collaborate on policy and sharing experience, though some may be at odds within international forums over issues such as free trade, government setting of economic priorities and government support for local and national industries.

8. Growth is a necessary but not sufficient condition for resolving social development problems. Economic growth can generate the wealth needed to address them, and to share wealth sustainably; and increased trade can maximize these benefits. The Commonwealth has an important role to play transferring assistance, brokering collaboration and sharing of experience and through development and technical aid. In other words, its primary function should be building stronger knowledge networks.

9. Highly interactive, highly wideband communication will stimulate increased international interaction and collaboration, essentially removing all physical boundaries from the workplace.