

and sustainability; capacity development for sustainable development; urban environments; industrial eco-efficiency; and the unique problems of small states and islands.

42. The Commonwealth should stimulate the considerable political will and a resource commitment needed to address issues such as illiteracy, the role of women and poverty alleviation, and to examine the links between reducing population growth in the developing countries of the Commonwealth with reduced consumption in the organization's richer countries.

43. The Commonwealth must build the capacity for sustainable development among the cadres of political, NGO, economic, religious and social leaders of its societies and, within the very organization of the Commonwealth, itself by developing appropriate information bases and tools, and by integrating environment and sustainable development into more traditional functions and issues such as economic development, human resources development and functional cooperation.

44. We believe the Commonwealth can provide greater functional cooperation on urban planning by helping to develop databases and information linking poor urban areas; promoting appropriate technology transfer to reduce transportation-based air pollution; and providing better tools and management know-how for the protection of natural habitats. It should help governments to develop environmental laws and regulations which set a minimum common denominator for industrial pollution and promote the concept of eco-efficiency through the transfer of know-how and management tools.

45. The Commonwealth has a critical responsibility for small and island states which are particularly vulnerable because of their size, limited multilateral political influence and geography. They are susceptible to cross-boundary pollution, the effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels, and population growth, usually within a small land mass. The Commonwealth can be a voice in international negotiations for small developing states.

46. The Commonwealth is in a position to facilitate "bench-marking", to identify appropriate technology and information and to facilitate technical cooperation through the CFTC and the Commonwealth Foundation. It can act as a bridge in global climate-change discussions between industrial and developing nations. And it can help to focus discussions more on the environmental issues of the grass-roots poor, for example in African countries, and guard against the tendency to place the priorities of industrial society priorities at the top of the environmental agenda.

### Population and Health

47. Enormous population growth has been the phenomenon of the past 200 years and is expected to continue for the next century and a half, then fall off as growth rates continue to decline sharply. Nevertheless, it is a serious prospect to contemplate a world with some 50% more people within the next thirty years. Add to this fact that the highest growth rates are found in areas of extreme poverty and the greatest health problems.