

1973 successfully restored any flexibility and informality that might have been lost.

This meeting was unique in one respect: it was the first time the Queen, as the symbol and head of the Commonwealth, had attended a Heads of Government Meeting outside Britain. Her presence did much to focus Canadian and international attention on the meeting and on her role in the decentralized Commonwealth.

As a follow-up to the work of heads of government, senior officials (usually cabinet secretaries or the equivalent) meet in the intervening years to consider proposals referred to them and to plan for the next Heads of Government Meeting. At the first senior officials meeting, held in Ottawa in 1972, delegates drafted a report to governments on procedures and agenda for Heads of Government Meetings and had a first "run" at a new item suggested by the Prime Minister of Canada — comparative techniques of government, a topic that engaged the attention of government leaders in their 1973 and 1975 consultations. The most recent meeting of senior officials took place in Canberra, Australia, between 26 and 28 May, 1976. At this meeting senior officials discussed the establishment of a Commonwealth group of specialists on industrial co-operation. It was the opinion of the meeting that such a group should have a practical orientation, and the senior officials believed that the establishment of this group could nudge forward a program of importance to the international community as a whole. Heads of government also frequently refer projects to more specialized Commonwealth meetings. At their 1975 meeting, the heads of government invited a small group of experts from member countries, chaired by Alistair McIntyre, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, to propose practical measures for closing the gap between rich and poor countries. This group presented its interim report, entitled *Towards a New International Economic Order*, to the meeting of Commonwealth finance ministers in Georgetown, Guyana, in August 1975, and a second report was circulated before UNCTAD IV met at Nairobi in May 1976. The establishment of the group of specialists in industrial co-operation is a result of the recommendations of the McIntyre group. Both groups are examples of the way the new, outward-looking Commonwealth is acting in areas of concern to the entire international community.