

1. Introduction: Reinventing the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is seeking to reinvent itself.

It is determined to demonstrate that it is modern, relevant and looking firmly to the future as it meets for the final time this century. This report looks at how the Commonwealth can turn that promise into a reality. It sets out the reform agenda which can make the Commonwealth an internationally-recognised standard for good governance and growth. It shows how the Commonwealth can help its members secure investment and be heard in the international system – by being clear about its values and helping its members to realise them.

The stage-management for Durban could not be better. The Commonwealth leaves the twentieth century in a flurry of rich symbolism. Its Heads of Government Meeting – or ‘CHOGM’ – takes place in what we still call the new South Africa, so powerful were those images of democratic change five years ago. President Thabo Mbeki will lead the Commonwealth's attempts to grapple with globalisation and to discover the formula for people-centred development. Nigeria's return to the