

STATEMENT BY THE RT. HON. JOE CLARK
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

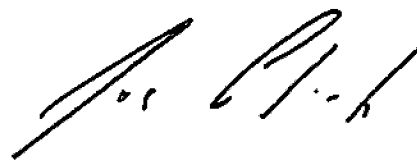
For many years, the Commonwealth Games have symbolized the bond of friendship that joins the peoples of the Commonwealth. We believe that symbol is now in jeopardy. All member countries do not share equally in the benefits and competition of the Games. Only a few member countries possess the resources needed to stage the Games. Indeed, some find it difficult even to finance the sending of a team. If we are to keep the ideal of the Games alive, then full participation by member nations--as hosts or competitors--must become a reality.

I believe that it is incumbent upon the Commonwealth to take effective action quickly to clearly demonstrate our collective will to support and strengthen this vital institution. We must join with the governing authorities of the Commonwealth Games to achieve the success their founders envisaged some 50 years ago.

Last month, I made a series of proposals aimed at strengthening the Commonwealth Games and intensifying sporting contacts among the members of the Commonwealth. These proposals were welcomed at the Canberra meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa.

I am grateful that representatives of Commonwealth countries, the Commonwealth Games Federation and the Commonwealth Secretariat have agreed to assemble in London to seek a comprehensive set of proposals by which the Games may achieve a firmer footing for the future. We intend that, through the ideas and suggestions of the officials in London as well as in Commonwealth capitals, the proposal can be improved and presented to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in October. The follow-up to any consensus reached at Kuala Lumpur would see the proposals presented to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth Games Federation in Auckland in January 1990.

Canada cannot and will not proceed alone. The active participation and guidance of all Commonwealth members and institutions--above all, the Commonwealth Games Federation--is required if our collective endeavour is to be successful. I wish you every success in your deliberations.



September 1989