

and other specialized fields. Its first Secretary-General, Canadian diplomat Arnold Smith (1965-75), oriented the Secretariat toward practical achievement and policy leadership, an approach followed by his successor Shridath Ramphal, a former foreign minister of Guyana. The current Secretary-General is Chief Emeka Anyaoku of Nigeria, who acceded to the post in 1990. At the 1993 meeting in Cyprus, Chief Anyaoku was offered a further five-year term of office, beginning July 1, 1995. The Secretary-General is responsible to Heads of Government collectively. The Secretariat is financed by governments under a system of assessed contributions.

Today, the Secretariat, located in London, is staffed by 350 people from 30 countries. They manage a number of voluntarily funded programs, including the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, the Commonwealth Youth Program, the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, the Commonwealth Science Council and the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Technology Management.

Commonwealth of Learning

This most recent addition to the Commonwealth family of organizations was a Canadian initiative, proposed at the 1987 CHOGM in Vancouver. The Commonwealth of Learning aims to increase access by all member countries to knowledge, training and data through the use of new information technologies. The distance-learning organization is based in Vancouver and is the first Commonwealth organization based outside Britain.

With adequate support from Commonwealth countries, it is expected that the Commonwealth of Learning can become a major instrument of social, technical and economic development in future years. The use of modern communication technologies makes it a very efficient and effective instrument for transferring appropriate knowledge and technologies where needed.

The Commonwealth of Peoples

Beyond the official organization is the very active "unofficial" Commonwealth of non-governmental organizations. It links societies and thousands of individuals in a vast international network of professional, service, cultural and sports organizations. These form the real lifeblood of the Commonwealth and give it the grassroots base that helps to ensure its continuing vitality.

There are some 200 NGOs associated with the Commonwealth. These include the Commonwealth Association of Architects, of Museums, of Statisticians, of Journalists; the Commonwealth Engineers Council, the Commonwealth Legal Bureau, covering virtually every field of human endeavour.