

that we belong to a practical working community which can contribute to improving the lives of the population of each of its members, that these organizations can mobilize resources from the voluntary and private sectors and with expertise and enthusiasm assist in the economic and social development of member countries.

If any observation can be made of the non-governmental bodies or the non-governmental organizations within the Commonwealth, I believe it lies in the fact that their operations are not yet fully co-ordinated or they are sometimes under-utilized. Obviously there is already co-operation between many organizations such as that between the Royal Commonwealth Society and the professional associations, and between the Secretariat and a wide range of the NGOs. But this is not enough. I know that part of the difficulty lies in the lack of resources and organization. However, the problem remains and must be tackled. And this is the purpose of your Conference.

An examination of how intra-Commonwealth bodies and those national bodies active in national development and in aid and development in an international sense might work more effectively together and with Commonwealth governments and the Secretariat seems particularly opportune. I do not believe that a more formal or institutionalized liaison is necessary; simply a better awareness of what everyone is doing is required to bring about a better co-ordination of effort. What you produce here as a result of your discussions will be useful in the discussions at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting where more attention will undoubtedly be given to what is after all the grass roots of the Commonwealth relationship.