

Many Commonwealth countries have not developed the conditions for prosperity:

Because corruption and poor accountability continue to cripple growth and social development

Investors expected Nigeria to have similar or better growth prospects than South Korea in 1965. But in the last 25 years, \$225 billion of oil revenues were wasted to no developmental effect – and petrol only returned to Nigerian pumps in September 1999. A disastrous crisis of governance has seen many of the poorest countries go backwards in each successive decade, particularly in Africa – by 1990, 39 per cent of African private wealth was held outside the continent, which seemed to face marginalisation in the global economy.¹¹ The Commonwealth-wide shift to democracy in the 1990s is an essential first step – the OAU's decision to exclude military leaders from meetings and push hard for democracy also shows the strength of the new consensus that growth requires democracy. But rooting out endemic corruption will take longer. Commonwealth Business Council surveys show that corruption remains the central concern for investors from both developed and developing countries – especially when, for example, paying a series of small bribes to get telephone lines causes thousands of pounds worth of delays.¹² Commonwealth countries say that they are committed to tackling this corruption – but there will need to be widespread reform of attitudes and practices.

Because countries have not had ownership of their own development plans

Failed development has had numerous external causes