

## **The Durban Communiqué**

1. Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Durban from 12 to 15 November 1999. Of the 52 countries which attended the Meeting, 47 were represented by Heads of State or Prime Ministers. The Meeting was chaired by His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa.
2. The Opening Session of the Meeting included an address by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth.
3. Heads of Government believed that their Meeting was highly symbolic, being their first meeting on the soil of a democratic South Africa, and recalling in this context the leading role which the Commonwealth had played in the global campaign to eradicate apartheid. They deemed it particularly appropriate that their meeting in South Africa should also mark the 50th Anniversary of the modern Commonwealth. They recognised the significance of the Meeting as one which would launch the Commonwealth into the next millennium.
4. They extended a warm welcome to President Olusegun Obasanjo as the democratically elected leader of Nigeria and expressed satisfaction at the full return of the country to the Commonwealth fold. They also welcomed Nauru's participation in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting for the first time following its accession to full Commonwealth membership.
5. Heads of Government conveyed their appreciation for the excellent arrangements for their Meeting and the warm hospitality extended by the Government and people of South Africa, as well as for the Chairman's admirable stewardship.
6. Heads of Government adopted the Fancourt Declaration on Globalisation and People-Centred Development.

### **Review of the Role of the Commonwealth**

7. Heads of Government decided that a High-Level Group should be established to review the role of the Commonwealth and advise on how best it could respond to the challenges of the new century. The group would be chaired by the President of South Africa and include the Heads of Government of Australia, Fiji, India, Malta, Singapore, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom and Zimbabwe. It would report to the next CHOGM in Australia in 2001.

### **Chairperson-in-Office**

8. Heads of Government believed that the Chairperson of each CHOGM should be able to play a representational role, especially in other intergovernmental organisations in the period between Heads of Government Meetings.