



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Trade Out of Poverty

Parliamentary group calls on Commonwealth leaders to put trade for development at the heart of CHOGM 2018 summit

Expert committee highlights the untapped potential of trade and investment in the bloc for lifting millions of Commonwealth citizens out of poverty

Press Release, London, 3rd April 2018

An Inquiry Committee of distinguished experts has today published its Final Report examining the potential of the Commonwealth family of 53 nations to help its poorest countries and citizens to trade out of poverty, in line with the values of the Commonwealth Charter and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Inquiry Committee — co-chaired by Lord Jeremy Purvis of the UK and Hon. Okechukwu Enelamah, Minister for Industry, Trade and Investment of Nigeria — was established by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Trade Out of Poverty and the UK Overseas Development Institute in September last year.

The central message of the Report is to call on Commonwealth leaders to establish a road-map for a major new Commonwealth work programme on trade and investment for inclusive development at the CHOGM 2018 summit in London later this month. The Report highlights some of the big opportunities for learning and economic co-operation between Commonwealth members, who include some of the world's largest and richest nations as well as some of the smallest and poorest.

The Inquiry Report, *Our Shared Prosperous Future: an agenda for values-led trade, inclusive growth and sustainable jobs for the Commonwealth*, states that:

1. **With 445 million of its citizens living in extreme poverty, there is a compelling case for the Commonwealth to do much more to promote shared prosperity and inclusive economic development.**
 - i. 1 in 5 Commonwealth citizens live on less than \$2 per day, twice the global average
 - ii. 31 of the 53 Commonwealth members are Developing Countries
 - iii. Extreme poverty is most widespread in Commonwealth Africa and South Asia
 - iv. 60% of the Commonwealth population is under 30 years old

2. **The surest, most sustainable way to lift millions of people out of poverty across the Commonwealth is through boosting trade and investment, leveraging the group's natural strengths and assets.**
 - i. Combined Commonwealth GDP will double by 2030 reaching \$20tn
 - ii. Intra-Commonwealth trade could grow from \$525bn in 2015 to \$3.86tn in 2030
 - iii. Developing countries' exports in the Commonwealth have trebled since 2005



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- iv. Trade costs between Commonwealth countries are on average 19% lower
3. **At the CHOGM 2018 Summit, Commonwealth leaders should grasp the opportunity and agree a major new focus on trade and investment for inclusive development**, delivering in five priority areas:
- i. Slashing the costs and risks of trade and investment
 - ii. Boosting trade in services through regulatory co-operation
 - iii. Making trade more inclusive for women, young people and SMEs
 - iv. Addressing the special needs of small and vulnerable states
 - v. Strengthening partnerships: Government, Business, Diaspora and Civil Society

Minister Enelamah of Nigeria, Co-Chair of the Inquiry Committee, says:

“Developing countries and small states look to the Commonwealth as a voice of good conscience in the global trading system. They are struggling to develop, and create the jobs needed for the millions of young people joining the labour market each year. Leveraging the Commonwealth advantage can help them attract more investment and realise their untapped trading potential.”

Lord Jeremy Purvis, Co-Chair of the Inquiry Committee, says:

“Economic development is a core principle in the Commonwealth Charter, but in the developing regions of the Commonwealth this remains a major challenge. Across governments, business and civil society, there is now a real appetite to see prosperity shared more equitably, and the Commonwealth can take the lead in establishing a new trade and investment agenda, based around its shared values.”

James Cleverly MP, Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Trade Out of Poverty, which established the Inquiry Committee, says:

“This Report is incredibly timely. In two weeks time, the UK will play host to the biggest ever gathering of Commonwealth leaders in London, and boosting shared prosperity is one of the priority themes of the summit. As it assumes the Chair-in-Office for the next two years, the UK has a key role to play in helping the Commonwealth family and its partners realise the potential of trade and investment to lift millions of people out of poverty.”

Dr Dirk Willem te Velde, Head of International Economic Development at ODI, says:

“Trade is a crucial component in development strategies, from building resilience to natural disasters in the Caribbean to creating new jobs in larger Commonwealth states like India, Kenya and Nigeria. An increasingly young and entrepreneurial Commonwealth population needs a dynamic trade and investment agenda that they can plug-into.”



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Notes to Editors

- The full report, *Our Shared, Prosperous Future: An agenda for values-led trade, inclusive growth and sustainable jobs for the Commonwealth*, can be found at: <http://tradeoutofpoverty.org>
- The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Trade Out of Poverty and ODI established the Inquiry to seek to answer the following questions:
 - i. What challenges do developing countries (particularly least developed countries and small vulnerable island states) in the Commonwealth face in terms of harnessing trade and investment as tools to meet their development objectives? Please provide examples (personal experience and/or research findings)?
 - ii. What opportunities can be identified within the Commonwealth to foster faster, more transformative economic growth, employment and poverty reduction for developing countries through expanding trade and investment?
 - iii. What programmes and initiatives do Commonwealth institutions and member states currently offer to promote trade and investment for sustainable development? How are these regarded and is there scope to scale-up and achieve more impact? Is the Commonwealth reaching its full potential for co-operation in this area?
 - iv. How can trade and development policies and programmes be best designed to maximise the shared gains from trade and investment and reduce poverty in the Commonwealth? Are there examples of best-practice trade and development policies/initiatives that have either been or could be deployed in developing countries within the Commonwealth?
 - v. What is the Commonwealth best-placed to do to promote prosperity amongst its developing country members compared to other development partners such as the World Bank or United Nations (UN) agencies? What should the priorities be for a new work programme for the Commonwealth on trade and development over the next 20-years?
- The Inquiry Committee consists of:
 - **Lord Jeremy Purvis of Tweed** (Co-Chair)
 - **Hon. Okechukwu Enelamah**, Minister for Trade, Industry and Investment, Government of Nigeria (Co-Chair)



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- **Mr Chi Atanga**, Entrepreneur and CEO, Walls of Benin U.K
 - **Ms Catherine Clark**, Head, International Relations, Prudential plc
 - **Ms Patricia Francis**, former Executive Director, WTO-UNCTAD
International Trade Centre
 - **Ms Trudi Hartzenberg**, Executive Director, Trade Law Centre, Southern Africa (tralac)
 - **Ms Lisa McAuley**, former CEO, Export Council of Australia, and Executive Director, Global Trade Professionals Alliance
 - **Mr Steven Pope**, Vice President, DHL Express Europe plc
 - **Mr Phil Rourke**, Executive Director, Centre for Trade Policy & Law, Carleton University, Ottawa
 - **Mr Harsha Vardhana Singh**, Former Executive Director, Brookings India and former Deputy Director General, WTO
 - **Ms Angela Strachan**, Independent Consultant, Business Environment Reform, Trade Facilitation and Investment Climate
 - **Dr Dirk Willem te Velde**, Head, International Economic Development, ODI
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- The Inquiry Committee received over 50 submissions of written evidence and held public hearings and other consultative events in the UK and in the sidelines of the WTO 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December, engaging over 40 ministers, diplomats, business people and representatives from international organisations, civil society and diaspora groups from across the Commonwealth.
 - The next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) will be held in London during the week commencing 16th April 2018. It is expected to be the largest ever gathering of Commonwealth leaders and one of the largest global summits ever held in the UK.