



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

PRESS RELEASE: Youth advocates and experts meet in Malta today for the first pre-CHOGM forum.

The 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta, which begins officially next Friday, opened today with the first pre-CHOGM event - the Commonwealth Youth Forum.

The Commonwealth Youth Forum is being held in Malta between the 21st-25th November and will be attended by over 200 young people from across the Commonwealth. The theme of this year's CHOGM is 'The Commonwealth: Adding Global Value'. The Youth Forum is the first of four pre-CHOGM meetings which will include a People's Forum, Business Forum and the first-ever Women's Forum.

The Youth forum was opened by the Prime Minister of Malta, Joseph Muscat. Other speakers included Victor Ochen, Founder of the 'African Youth Initiative Network' and Gulalai Ismail co-Chair of the launch of the Royal Commonwealth Society's youth network, the Commonwealth Youth Gender Equality Network, Gulalai Ismail.

With 60% of the Commonwealth's population of 2.3 billion under the age of 30, youth is a major focus of this CHOGM as a major force for change. Key themes for this summit will include security in light of recent terrorist attacks, climate change, and gender equality. The Commonwealth Youth Gender Equality Network (CYGEN) will have a significant presence at the forum, as will The Queen's Young Leaders, a programme run by The Royal Commonwealth Society, The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust and Comic Relief.

BROADCASTERS, AGENCIES AND ONLINE VIDEO SITES - A free-to-use Video News Release is available for download below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B99sotFuWzoWYVQ5ZEZmNXIyV00/view?usp=sharing>

Video format: Quicktime H.264 1080i HD.

Contents:

- GVs of Maltese folk band, opening ceremony
- GVs of youth delegates watching speakers
- GVs of youth delegate group photograph

Speeches:

- Gulalai Ismail, Founder 'Aware Girls'
- Victor Ochen, Founder 'African Youth Initiative Network'
- Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta

Notes to editors:

The Commonwealth People's Forum is being held at the Corinthia Hotel, St Julian's Bay, Malta between the 23rd-26th November and will host civil society representatives from across the Commonwealth to discuss 'What Makes Societies Resilient?'

The first ever Commonwealth Women's Forum is being held at the Intercontinental Hotel, St Julian's, Malta between the 22nd-24th November. Approximately 350 delegates will discuss the theme 'Women Ahead Be all that You Can Be'.

The Commonwealth Business Forum is being held at the Hilton Hotel, St Julians, Malta between the 24th-26th November. More than a thousand delegates will use the space for high level dialogue between business and Government leaders from the Commonwealth and beyond.

The Commonwealth Youth Gender and Equality Network (CYGEN) is a youth-led advocacy group that works towards policy change that improves the lives of young people and promotes gender equality. First convened by the Royal Commonwealth Society it is now the premier group of young experts on gender equality issues in the Commonwealth.

The Royal Commonwealth Society is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. Founded in 1868, the Society is constituted by Royal Charter (amended 2013) and is a charity in England and Wales (226748). The Society engages with its youth, civil society, business and governmental networks to address issues that matter to the citizens of the Commonwealth. Its primary focus is the promotion of young people throughout the Commonwealth. www.thercs.org

Media Enquiries:

Carolyn Jack, Chief Operating Officer, The Royal Commonwealth Society
T: +44 (0)7718 476 233 | E: carolyn.jack@thercs.org

Broadcast Enquiries:

Ben Lewis, Broadcast Journalist
T: +44 (0)7527 411 856 | E: benlewismedia@gmail.com