



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

Press Release: Business Forum aims to promote Commonwealth trade and investment

The Business Forum, one of four pre-CHOGM events, aims to promote trade and investment and provide high level dialogue between government and business. The forum in Malta has been attended by over 1000 delegates from 80 countries and some 20 Heads of Government.

Oliver Everett, Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council, one of the organisers of the forum, said; "Business does not function in a vacuum," and the issues which engage the Commonwealth business community are in fact manifold.

Maltese Prime Minister, Dr Joseph Muscat made clear that there remains untapped potential within the Commonwealth and while the forum "is a place where new partnerships are being made and deals being done" he warned that "the Commonwealth needs to be sharper and more purposeful."

The Prime Minister asked the forum to imagine what the Commonwealth could do if it unleashes its full synergy and potential, which critically includes an important role for women.

The Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham, the UK's Minister of State for Trade and Investment spoke about rule of law, fair taxation, transparency and a stable regulatory environment as essential conditions for investment.

Lord Maude told the forum that business and consumers should demand that their politicians "get moving" in order to open up trade opportunities in the Commonwealth and thereby help to counter the global trend of slow-down of trade.

Good infra-structure, managing climate change, and a healthy blue economy are all needed for a stable business environment. The Hon Nickolas Steele, Grenada's Minister of Health, highlighted the role of blue economy, saying if a complete base-line for all countries is not achieved then our individual efforts will not succeed as the sea does not recognise borders.

Participants of the forum noted that the terrain in which business thrives is one in which governance and rule of law are strong, women are equal participants in the business world, climate change is kept in check and the blue economy is managed sustainably.

The forum noted that the Commonwealth should pull together on all these fronts in order to maximise the potential for business and ultimately the prosperity of all its citizens.

--ENDS--

Notes to editors:

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

The Commonwealth Heads of Government of Meeting (CHOGM) will be hosted in Valetta, Malta from the 27th-29th November. It will see Prime Ministers and Presidents from across the Commonwealth meet to discuss global issues under the theme of 'Adding Global Value' and elect a new Commonwealth Secretary-General. Executive sessions will also be attended by HRH the Prince of Wales and President François Hollande.

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 a high level dialogue between business and Government leaders from the Commonwealth and beyond.

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

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B99sotFuWzoWdFJSVmVreUxIU1k/view?usp=sharing>

Video format: Quicktime H.264 1080i HD.

Contents:

-GVs of Business Forum session

Interviews/Grabs:

-Oliver Everett, CEO Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council

-Nickolas Steele, Minister for Health, Granada

-The Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham, UK Minister of State for Trade and Investment

TOMORROW: A free to use VNR on the "Out of the Blue" photography competition. HRH Prince Charles will be in attendance.

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