

DRAFT

INFORMAL FORUM OF COMMONWEALTH ORGANISATIONS (www.ifco.online)

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IFCO AND THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT'S STRATEGIC PLAN, 2020-21

What follows are preliminary thoughts about how to foster better cooperation between Commonwealth Organisations (COs) and the Commonwealth Secretariat in future work aimed at delivering the goals and objectives outlined in the Secretariat's Strategic Plan, through 2020-21:

- It would be helpful to let COs know, for sure, who they should deal with at the Commonwealth Secretariat to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan and to maximize the contributions COs can make to the realization of those goals.
- There is a recognized need to develop a long-term strategy for funding joint projects between COs and the intergovernmental Commonwealth.
- It would be helpful to have a report from the Commonwealth Secretariat on the fulfilment of its previous commitments to improving partnership support for COs, and how these commitments can be the basis for future cooperation, including proper staffing by the Secretariat of its partnership office.
- We need a report on recent efforts to improve communications between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation, specifically as they have affected financial support for the ongoing work of COs.
- Analysis of how COs are positioned to support joint endeavours that contribute to realization of the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives needs a modest level of funding.
- There needs to be closer engagement by COs with the work of the Accreditation Committee.
- Outline steps to be taken to improve access for COs to all Commonwealth ministerial meetings.
- Pursue consultations with COs to make better choices for training sessions supported by the Secretariat, especially to ensure continuity in the provision of training sessions.

On a different but still important level:

- Reorganise the Accredited Organisations section of Huddle, which is currently impenetrable
- Produce an annual schedule of meetings between IFCO and the SG/members of the Secretariat
- Produce an annual schedule, regularly updated, of Commonwealth meetings in areas of substantive concern to COs, following the example of the CCfE calendar for education meetings.
- Continue administrative support for IFCO meetings (mailings, attendance sheets, room bookings, setup of communications).

- Provide continued access for IFCO to meeting rooms at Marlborough House.
- Provide facilities for COs visiting from outside London, such as hot-desking in Marlborough House or Commonwealth House.
- Improve access to wifi and skype for visitors to Marlborough House.

These suggestions are made based on IFCO's experience over the last two years, or so. After further discussion by IFCO and a wider constituency of COs they may be amended.

Nicholas Watts, 30 November 2017.

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