



# COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

*Office of the President & Chief Executive Officer*

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## Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Valletta, Malta — November 2005

September 2005

In preparation for the 2005 meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government, I am pleased to present this report from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), entitled *Networking Learning Communities for Development* (attached). The report highlights COL's contributions towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Our report also addresses the CHOGM theme of "Networking the Commonwealth for Development", and demonstrates how it is particularly fitting for COL. As the report points out, "Networking is a hallmark of COL's work and an essential ingredient to its success."

COL is the only international intergovernmental agency that focuses exclusively on using technology to expand the scope and scale of human learning. It operates on the premise that knowledge is the key to individual freedom and to cultural, social and economic development.

Also included in the attached booklet is a table showing Member Governments core funding. Heads of Government have previously endorsed CDN\$9 million per annum as the minimum level of core funding needed for the Commonwealth to invest in education and training through COL. This funding level has yet to be attained.

Finally, the report recommends that Member Governments:

- *Affirm* continued support for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth and encourage the governments of larger states to facilitate its work by the transfer of technology and by financial support to programmes that further the achievement of the MDGs.
- *Recommit* to providing COL an annual budget of CDN\$9 million as approved by the 1999 Durban CHOGM; commend Botswana, Canada, Namibia, South Africa and Trinidad and Tobago for recently increasing their contributions, welcome Sierra Leone as a new contributor and encourage all member states to pledge core support for COL when its 2006-09 Plan is presented to the Conference of Commonwealth Ministers of Education in December 2006.
- *Note* Australia's clarification that it wishes to continue to support COL and believes that the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC), to which it has provided an increase, could provide a vehicle for doing so when CFTC priorities can be advanced through COL's work. *Encourage* the CFTC to view COL as an agent of choice when it seeks to support education and training initiatives for which COL has specialised expertise.
- *Utilise* the support that COL can give to the work of a variety of Ministries, not only Education/Higher Education but also Agriculture, Communications, Health, Planning and other departments that engage with the MDGs.

Sir John Daniel  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Commonwealth of Learning