

MALTA

COL activities in 2003-2006

BACKGROUND

The southern Mediterranean Islands of Malta joined the European Union in 2004 but their Commonwealth identity remains strong. Malta has had a close relationship with COL since its inception in 1987. At that time, the Prime Minister of Malta was personally involved in setting up COL and offered Malta as its home, acknowledging the importance of Open and Distance Learning in the islands. It also offered to host the headquarters of the Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) when that initiative was first proposed.

SUMMARY

2003-2006 was a period of excellent co-operation with COL. Malta has been a solid supporter of the VUSSC). Malta has played a central role in the creation of Commonwealth Connects.

POLICY AND SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT

COL's Chairman, President and the Programme Director for Malta attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) which was held in Malta in October 2005.

Both COL and Malta have been involved in the Commonwealth Connects initiative. The Foreign Minister of Malta chairs the group and attended the recent launch of the initiative in London, in August 2006.

The Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Malta is an active supporter of VUSSC (see Pan-Commonwealth initiatives section for more details of VUSSC) and has attended all three meetings held so far.

LOOKING FORWARD

The very effective working relationship COL has with Malta will be a good foundation for future work especially as VUSSC gains momentum.