



# THE ROUNDTABLE

*The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*

## NEWSLETTER

### FROM THE JOURNAL

#### WIDENING THE REPARATIONS DEBATE



##### In our current issue of the journal just out:

Martin Plaut examines [the historical background to the current reparations debate](#). Without diminishing the culpability of Western nations engaged in trans-Atlantic slavery, colonialism, and associated atrocities, he points out that slavery was a broader phenomenon, involving African, Arab, Ottoman, Indian, and other non-European actors over at least 5,000 years. He suggests reparations discussions should be made more consequential by focusing on ending contemporary chattel slavery in Africa, and on memorialisation and education.

##### Elsewhere in the journal:

- Adeniyi Awoyemi looks at [ethnicity, partisanship, and vote-buying in Nigeria](#)
- Nazar Abbas and Yasmin Arshad revisit [British 'forward policy' in Balochistan](#)
- Sarah Nyczaj Kyle, and colleagues compare [farm stressors in Canada and the UK](#)
- Arif Zaman detects [an inflection point in Commonwealth trade and investment](#)
- Aditya Shukla and Ranjan Kumar explore the impact of [Trump's tariffs on India](#)
- Peter Phillips examines [Justin Trudeau's legacy](#)

To access the journal, visit the website [here](#).

### CALL FOR PAPERS

#### CULTURES OF DEMOCRACY: LEADERSHIP, ACTIVISM, EMPOWERMENT

Democracy seems everywhere under pressure. The rise of populist leaders, challenges from far-right and authoritarian regimes, attacks on democratic governance, distortions of truth on social media, the rapid rise of artificial intelligence and a disregard for fact-checking are all contributing. As we mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of COMSEC (the Commonwealth Secretariat) The Round Table is keen to explore what role the Commonwealth of Nations can play in this context.

Scholars, research graduates and analysts are invited to submit papers on cultural, legal, political, social, economic and moral issues, relating to the definitions of democracy, mediation, good offices, consensus building and international norms and the challenges of hegemony.

These should be an abstract of maximum 500 words, with a short cv, to Professor Sue Onslow ([editor@commonwealthroundtable.co.uk](mailto:editor@commonwealthroundtable.co.uk)) **by 30 June 2025**. More information [here](#)



## RT OPINIONS

The opinions in this issue cover the usual diverse range of topics, including:

- [Balancing Growth and Sustainability: Gabonese Timber Forests as the Key to Economic Diversification under President Nguema's Leadership](#) is discussed by Trisha Roy & Lakshmi Karlekar.
- Susmita Paul and Pratiksha Rai consider [Fair skin, unfair trade, and invisible victims](#)
- Edward Polsue reflects on [South Africa's 'Government of National Unity': One Year On](#)
- [India and China: A Cautious Dance Beneath the Optics of Thaw](#) is appraised by Joseph Black.

For the full list of opinion pieces, visit the website [here](#).



## RT BOOK REVIEWS

Book reviews in this issue include:

- Matthew Neuhaus on [Toyin Falola's "Understanding Colonial Nigeria: British rule and its impact"](#)
- [Florence Mok and Fung Chi Keung Charles's "A New Documentary History of Hong Kong 1945-1997"](#) is looked at by Stephen Vines.
- Monika and Pritee Sharma assess [Dinsha Mistree, Sumit Ganguly, and Larry Diamond \(eds.\), "The Troubling State of India's Democracy"](#)

To read the book reviews, visit the website [here](#).



## FROM THE WEBSITE

### INDIA-PAKISTAN TENSIONS



The recent short-lived conflict between [India and Pakistan](#) is examined by Victoria Schofield, a former chair of the Round Table, against the background of simmering tension since 1947. She concludes that until India and Pakistan resolve their differences over Jammu and Kashmir - with the involvement of the inhabitants - the cycle of violence will continue.

Elsewhere on the Website: there are new articles on

- [the latest press freedom index](#),
- [workers' rights in the Commonwealth](#), and
- [the potential for Commonwealth trade](#).

## THE ROUTLEDGE/ROUND TABLE COMMONWEALTH STUDENTSHIP AWARDS

Routledge and the Round Table, in association with the Association of Commonwealth Universities, are again offering two Commonwealth studentship awards, worth £5,500 each, to support PhD student researching projects Commonwealth-related themes in the humanities and social sciences. The closing date is 31 July 2025. For eligibility and how to apply, see [here](#).

You can listen to a podcast by one of last year's winners, Rianna Patterson, [here](#), in discussing her research into dementia and health policies in Caribbean communities.



## SELECTED EVENTS



### COMMONWEALTH TRADE MINISTERS MEETING

In a historic first, the 2025 Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting (CTMM) will be hosted outside a seat of the Commonwealth Secretariat in Namibia. This meeting will bring together trade ministers from across the Commonwealth, to discuss on critical trade issues, both within the Commonwealth and globally. Key subjects include: digital and AI trade facilitation, green trade and circular economics, and critical minerals and sustainable energy transition.

The event will take place **18-20 June 2025**. More information can be found [here](#).

## FROM THE ARCHIVE: 50 YEARS AGO

### AMERICA AFTER WATERGATE

Some see the Watergate scandal as an example of how American constitutionalism works - which might be reassuring in the present time. However, in this article from 50 years ago, Max (later Lord) Beloff argued that Watergate exposed the inherent vulnerabilities and unrealistic expectations of the American constitutional system. Courts functioned, impeachment proceeded, and a new president was peacefully installed. Yet, Beloff argues, there was executive overreach, faltering accountability and checks and balances failures.

See the full article [here](#).

