



THE ROUND TABLE

The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs and Policy Studies

February 2026

FROM THE JOURNAL

TRADE, DIGITISATION, POVERTY AND FOREIGN POLICIES EXAMINED



- Nnamdi O. Madichie, Motshedisi Mathibe and Nobulali Dangazele examine the **impact of African creative industries** and the re-emergence of Commonwealth trade relations.
- Felix Kumah-Abiwu reviews trends and strategic priorities in **Ghana's foreign policy** under Nana Akufo-Addo.
- Michelle Barrett Ferrier, Gemma Horton and Purva P. Indulkar look at the way TrollBusters have used **artificial intelligence to triage support for journalists.**
- Kira Atkins uncovers the **unequal relationship in the 2024 Nauru-Australia Treaty.**
- The contours of **India-Bangladesh relations under the Modi government** are revisited by Jayarama M.
- **Radicalisation in Jammu and Kashmir** is appraised in an article by Waseem Raja, Talha Latief Tantray and Neeta Rani.

ELECTION DISINFORMATION: GENDERED ATTACKS IN KENYA

Disinformation has become a key feature of electoral campaigns globally. Nicola Laubscher Davies, Dani Madrid-Morales and Herman Wasserman examine **gendered attacks, threats and disinformation in Kenya** during the 2017 and 2022 elections.

They use interviews with journalists, academics, and campaigners, to uncover the complex intersection of disinformation, gendered political violence and digital harassment, faced by Kenya's women politicians.



RT OPINIONS ON SPACE, BRICS & RESILIENCE



In a bumper February issue for opinion pieces:

- Space law and enterprise feature in two opinions, with **Charles Ho Wang Mak** on the Commonwealth and orbital sustainability in the era of private space enterprise, and **Adithya Variath** on Krishna Rao, India and the exclusionary making of space law.
- **Lord Marland** looks at the role of the Commonwealth in terms of economic resilience in a fragmented world.
- **Apeksha Pandey** believes BRICS is at a crossroads, and examines how BRICS can strike a balance between ambitious expansion, institutional reform and geopolitical resilience.

RT OPINIONS FOCUS ON INDIA

India features extensively in other opinion pieces:

- **Anurag Tripathi** and **Pournamy** looks at [the paradox of Mahatma's Gandhi's leadership](#), as 'transformation through inconsistencies'.
- [India's rising equality](#) is the subject for **Rohit Singh Tomar** and **Bharti Singh**.
- **Neeraj Singh Manhas** asks whether [the Indo-Pakistan Indus Waters Treaty](#) can survive current tensions between the two countries.
- The enduring legacy of ethnic tensions from the [1949 merger of Manipur](#) is in the spotlight for **K. K. Loung Nathan** and **Anagha Babu**.
- **K.K. Loung Nathan** also rethinks [Indigenous adaptation in post-colonial India](#), this time with **Geethu Jayan**.
- The [absence of Naga women from politics](#) is the focus for **Sentsuthung Odyuo** and **Maya M.**



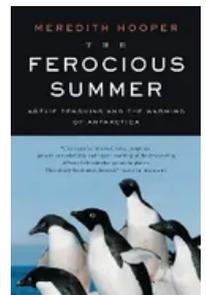
MEREDITH HOOPER (1939–2005)



We are sad to report that **Meredith Hooper, emeritus editorial board member**, died on 27 December 2025, aged 86. She joined the RT's EB in 1988, and was a much-valued adviser to successive editors and a wise head on EB matters well beyond her particular expertise and interest in the Antarctic. Her writings ranged from acclaimed scholarly monographs to children's books.

She has received several obituaries, including one from the [Royal Geographical Society](#). Her son, Tom Hooper, was interviewed BBC Radio 4's [Last Word](#) programme.

Her 1996 article for the journal, 'The ignoring of Antarctica' – a plea for better knowledge of the frozen continent – can be found [here](#).



COMMONWEALTH BOOKS

- **Terry Barringer** reviews [Unbroken Chains](#), Martin Plaut's wide-ranging history of African slavery over the last 5,000 years.
- **Derek McDougall** reviews [Turbulence: Australian Foreign Policy in the Trump Era](#), by Clinton Fernandes.
- [Melanesia: Travels in Black Oceania](#), by Hamish McDonald, is reviewed by **Theresa Meki**.
- **Godfrey Baldacchino** reviews [Global Decolonisation and Non-Sovereignty: Small Island States in the Caribbean](#), by Grace Carrington.
- On the website, Terry Barringer continues her bimonthly round-up of books relating to the Commonwealth in [Commonwealth Bookshelf](#). The latest listing provides details of more than twenty books of potential interest to Round Table readers.
- To access previous listings, search Commonwealth Bookshelf on the Round Table [website](#).



CONFERENCE REPORT: CULTURES OF DEMOCRACY

On 20 to 21 November 2025, the Round Table, along with the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, the University of Picardie Jules Verne, the Institut Universitaire de France, St Mary's University (Twickenham), and the University of Strasbourg sponsored a conference on **'Cultures of Democracy: Commonwealth leadership, grassroots activism and people empowerment in time of crisis'**.



Against a backdrop of rising populism, AI-driven misinformation, and 'transactional diplomacy', panellists explored whether the Commonwealth's 56 nations are truly equipped to defend a rules-based international order. You can read the full report [here](#).

COMMONWEALTH DAY – MARCH 9TH 2026



Commonwealth Day this year is March 9th and its theme will be ***'Unlocking opportunities together for a prosperous Commonwealth'***. This will be the highlight of a week-long series of events and activities around the Commonwealth.

This kicks off a Commonwealth year which will include the **Commonwealth Games** in Glasgow from 23 July - 2 August, and the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting** in Antigua and Barbuda from 1 - 4 November.

FROM THE WEBSITE

Ancient Greek historian Thucydides wrote that 'the strong can do what they can, and the weak must suffer what they must'. This has much bandied about lately, particular as Donald Trump, Xi and Vladimir Putin press their national claims - impacting necessarily on many Commonwealth interests.

In a fascinating [article](#), classicist **Neville Morley** explains the context of Thucydides' words - from the negotiations between the Athenians and the Melians, before the former brutally destroyed the latter - and argues that context matters and creates a much more nuanced and questioning interpretations.



FROM THE ARCHIVE – 25 YEARS AGO



"Democracy cannot march on an empty stomach", warns the Commonwealth's third Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, in this article (published in 2000) soon after he retired.

The Chief, who spoke at a recent RT conference, offers an optimistic assessment of the Commonwealth's commitment to upholding democratic values. But in this article, **'Cultures of Democracy'** he urged attention to the impact of poverty and underdevelopment, alongside global economic forces and trade.

SOCIAL MEDIA



The Round Table's LinkedIn page continues is flourishing. To join the conversation, follow the link [here](#). The Round Table is also on X (formerly Twitter) [@CWRoundTable](#).