



THE ROUND TABLE

The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs and Policy Studies

October 2026

COMMONWEALTH HEADS SET TO GATHER IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The 2026 (biennial) Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting is coming up fast in **St John's, Antigua and Barbuda**, to run from 1st-4th November. The official theme is 'Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth'.

The Commonwealth People's Forum, Commonwealth Women's Forum, and Commonwealth Youth Forum, will all take place simultaneously, from 2nd - 4th November.

The **Round Table** will be represented by the journal editor, **Sue Onslow**, the website editor, **Debbie Ransome**, and the journal's regional editor for the Caribbean, **Dianna DaSilva-Glasgow**.

Check the [RT website](#) for regular coverage of the CHOGM, and the [RT journal online](#) for subsequent analysis.



THE COMMONWEALTH AT 77 – SPECIAL ISSUE

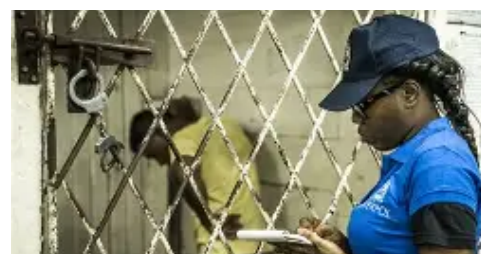
Our October special brings together a range of perspectives on the Commonwealth today – with an introduction by **Christopher Wylde** and **Syed Kamall**.



- **Andrea de Tommaso** rethinks corruption measurement and reform in the Commonwealth.
- Relations between gender equality and economic empowerment in the Commonwealth are explored by **Sangeeta Khorana** and **Santiago Caram**.
- **Andrea Sau** and **Christopher Wylde** offer a Gramscian perspective on hegemony and class in the Commonwealth, while **Marianne Rozario** and **Syed Kamall** focus more on the power of ideas in their 'English School' analysis of the Commonwealth.
- **Xue (Skylar) Wan** and **Surender Munjal** apply AI and big-data to review 75 years' worth of cross-disciplinary Commonwealth academic research, highlighting priority changes.

FROM THE JOURNAL: ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN THE COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN

Cherisse Francis explores the baleful neo-colonial influence of the USA in the struggle against anti-trafficking in persons in the Commonwealth Caribbean, using financial aid and soft power to set the agenda, manipulate activities, and control regional narratives. Following withdrawal of US aid, the author sees an opportunity for the Caribbean – and the Commonwealth as a whole – for setting a new progressive agenda on anti-trafficking.



OPINIONS FROM AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH



W. Andy Knight and **Winston Dookeran** examine *Trinidad and Tobago and Caribbean statecraft* at the United Nations. **Peter Clegg** and **Derek O'Brien** see the *conviction for corruption of Michael Misick*, former premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands, as vindicating UK government's sometimes controversial approach.

Moving to Botswana, *the legacy of Festus Mogae* is assessed by **Kebapetse Lotshwao**, while **Martin Plaut** highlights *Russia's backing of the ANC in South Africa* and its likely interference in the forthcoming municipal elections. **Sidhyendra Sisodia** looks at *India's role in the Maldives-Mauritius Chagos dispute*; and **Robert Summerby-Murray** looks at the risks and rewards in a new *multilateralism embracing Canada, China and the Commonwealth*.

Commonwealth-wide issues are tackled by **Rahul Shamota** and **Swati Beniwal**, who question *if the Commonwealth can enforce its own declaration on democratic resilience*; **Rahul Shamota** and **Govind Yadav**, who look at the Commonwealth *'Model Law on Digital Trade'*, and **Sony Kulshrestha** and **Gargi Sharma**, who urge *Commonwealth universities to help 'decolonise their metrics'*.

OPINION : 'TRUMP THREATS TO UNDERMINE CUBAN HEALTH SOLIDARITY'



Cuba has long been a provider of 'health solidarity' and skilled healthcare workers for other countries in the Caribbean. However, Donald Trump's efforts to isolate and cripple Cuba now include threatened sanctions against countries benefitting from *Cuban medical internationalism*. **Jeremy Jacob Peretz**, **Nigel Westmaas**, **Charlene Wilkinson**, and **Waynewright Orderson** lament Guyana caving in to US pressure on the issue, pointing up the vast contribution Cuban healthcare workers have made.

COMMONWEALTH BOOK REVIEWS & BOOKSHELF

- Peter Clegg** reviews **Diane Austin-Broos's** book on *Jamaica's Struggle for Development* (2024)
- Muhammad Yasin Shafique** reviews *The Aftermath of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971*: edited by **Amit Ranjan**, **Taj Hashmi**, and **Mazhar Abbas** (2024)
- Derek McDougall** assesses *Landslide: The 2025 Australian Federal Election* (2026), edited by **Marian Sawyer**, **Jill Sheppard**, and **John Warhurst**
- The Handbook of Public Policy Evaluation in the Global South: Politics, Praxes and Futures*, edited by **Anis Ben Brik** (2024), is reviewed by **Kai Chen**



For a round-up of the latest Commonwealth-related books, see *Commonwealth Bookshelf* on the Round Table website.

FROM THE WEBSITE: COMMONWEALTH GAMES – SPORT, IDENTITY, VALUES, HISTORY?



The recent *Glasgow Commonwealth Games* – second in the city after 2014 and the fourth hosted in Scotland – again raised issues over national identity and Glasgow's historic ties with empire, trade, and slavery. In a piece for the website, **Grace Carrington** analyses many currents around the Games, and concludes that while 'sport cannot resolve disagreements within the Commonwealth over identity, history, and values ... it can provide a space in which those differences coexist alongside competition, connection, and shared experience'.

ANTHONY LOW COMMONWEALTH LECTURE

In April this year, renowned international lawyer and former director-general of the Commonwealth Foundation, **Anne T. Gallagher**, delivered the annual Anthony Low Commonwealth Lecture, at the Australian National University in Canberra. Here she posed the question of whether and how the Commonwealth could help reverse the erosion of democratic space. Her



answer – based on three key tests of freedom – was dispiriting with regards to the official Commonwealth, but hopeful with regards to the real' Commonwealth – of civil society and individuals. This annual lecture, reprinted here in the RT journal, marking its 10th anniversary, was organised by the Australian branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society, and commemorates **D.A. (Anthony) Low**, the distinguished scholar, Vice-Chancellor of the ANU, and for more than 50 years a contributor to the *Round Table* journal.



FROM THE ARCHIVE: THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE, 1926

100 years ago, the Imperial Conference – forerunner of today's Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings – was held in London in 1926. It was notable for the 'Balfour Declaration', which stated that the self-governing dominions (Australia, Canada, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland, New Zealand, and South Africa) were 'autonomous communities ... equal in status' and 'in no way subordinate' to the UK. In this appraisal, the Liberal politician and journalist **Sir Frederick Whyte** described the declaration as merely, an 'authoritative picture of the Empire as it is'.



ROUTLEDGE / ROUND TABLE COMMONWEALTH STUDENTSHIP AWARDS



The winner from a hefty number of applicants for this year's annual Routledge/Round Table Commonwealth Studentship Award for a UK-based student is David R. Salmon, at the University of Oxford, who is undertaking a comparative study of economic 'upgrading strategies' in different Caribbean states.

The award winner for a student at a non-UK university is Tammy-Lee Lakay at the University of the Western Cape, who is researching the transnational networks of the Labour and Community Resources Project, founded by the (anti-apartheid) South Africa Committee for Higher Education in 1983.



The awards provide support for research on Commonwealth-related themes by doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences.

SOCIAL MEDIA



The Round Table's LinkedIn site continues to grow.

To join the conversation, follow the link [here](#).

The Round Table is also on X (formerly Twitter) [@CWRoundTable](#).