

Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles, 1971.

Region	Commonwealth
Subject	
Sub Subject	
Type	Declaration
Reference Number	
Place of Adoption	Singapore
Date of Adoption	January 22nd 1971
Date of Ratification/Adoption	
Date of Entry into Force	
Treaty Status	
Signature Date	
Date Deposited	
Place of Deposit	
Declarations and Reservations	
Domestic Legislation	0
Relevant Ministry	

SINGAPORE DECLARATION OF COMMONWEALTH PRINCIPLES 1971

When Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Singapore in January 1971, they agreed on a set of ideals which are embraced by all members and provide a basis for peace, understanding and goodwill among all nations and people.

The core beliefs of the Commonwealth are expressed in this Declaration, which embrace equal rights for all regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, the association's commitment to democratic self-determination and non-racialism, world peace and an end to gross inequity, and its commitment to practice international co-operation in pursuit of these goals.

SINGAPORE DECLARATION OF COMMONWEALTH PRINCIPLES, 1971

Issued at the Heads of Government Meeting in Singapore on 22 January 1971

1. The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of independent sovereign states, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace.
2. Members of the Commonwealth come from territories in the six continents and five oceans, include

peoples of different races, languages and religions, and display every stage of economic development from poor developing nations to wealthy industrialised nations. They encompass a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.

3. Membership of the Commonwealth is compatible with the freedom of member governments to be non-aligned or to belong to any other grouping, association or alliance.
4. Within this diversity, all members of the Commonwealth hold certain principles in common. It is by pursuing these principles that the Commonwealth can continue to influence international society for the benefit of mankind.
5. We believe that international peace and order are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind; we therefore support the United Nations and seek to strengthen its influence for peace in the world, and its efforts to remove the causes of tension between nations.
6. We believe in the liberty of the individual, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, and in their inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which they live. We therefore strive to promote in each of our countries those representative institutions and guarantees for personal freedom under the law that are our common heritage.
7. We recognise racial prejudice as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society. Each of us will vigorously combat this evil within our own nation. No country will afford to regimes which practice racial discrimination assistance which in its own judgment directly contributes to the pursuit or consolidation of this evil policy.
8. We oppose all forms of colonial domination and racial oppression and are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality. We will therefore use all our efforts to foster human equality and dignity everywhere, and to further the principles of self-determination and non-racialism.
9. We believe that the wide disparities in wealth now existing between different sections of mankind are too great to be tolerated. They also create world tensions. Our aim is their progressive removal. We therefore seek to use our efforts to overcome poverty, ignorance and disease, in raising standards of life and achieving a more equitable international society.
10. To this end our aim is to achieve the freest possible flow of international trade on terms fair and equitable to all, taking into account the special requirements of the developing countries, and to encourage the flow of adequate resources, including governmental and private resources, to the developing countries, bearing in mind the importance of doing this in a true spirit of partnership and of establishing for this purpose in the developing countries conditions which are conducive to sustained investment and growth.

11. We believe that international co-operation is essential to remove the causes of war, promote tolerance, combat injustice, and secure development among the peoples of the world. We are convinced that the Commonwealth is one of the most fruitful associations for these purposes.

12. In pursuing these principles, the members of the Commonwealth believe that they can provide a constructive example of the multi-national approach which is vital to peace and progress in the modern world. The association is based on consultation, discussion and cooperation.

13. In rejecting coercion as an instrument of policy, they recognise that the security of each member state from external aggression is a matter of concern to all members. It provides many channels for continuing exchanges of knowledge and views on professional, cultural, economic, legal and political issues among the member states.

14. These relationships we intend to foster and extend, for we believe that our multi-national association can expand human understanding and understanding among nations, assist in the elimination of discrimination based on differences of race, colour or creed, maintain and strengthen personal liberty, contribute to the enrichment of life for all, and provide a powerful influence for peace among nations.

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