

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate use

### **New scholarships endowment fund appeal to be launched**

17CCEM will see the launch of a new endowment fund appeal to support Commonwealth Scholarships in a wider range of countries than ever before. The fund will provide a suitable legacy to mark the 50th anniversary of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) in 2009, and provide the basis for the Plan to expand still further in the future.

The fund will support scholarships hosted by low and middle income Commonwealth countries, and will be available to citizens of all Commonwealth countries. As well as establishing the Plan as genuinely Commonwealth-wide, the fund will provide a platform for developing country institutions to demonstrate their strengths, offer unique opportunities for students from developed Commonwealth countries to study in the south, and instigate a new mechanism for south-south collaboration. This will be a new and distinctive strand of activity for the Plan, in addition to the awards supported by several member states in their own countries. The idea of an anniversary endowment fund was instigated by Commonwealth Education Ministers at 16CCEM in Cape Town in 2006.

Prior to its launch, £1.3 million has already been raised, including £500,000 from the governments of Malaysia and the UK, £250,000 from the Association of Commonwealth Universities, and £25,000 each from the UK-based Puri foundation and the Commonwealth Secretariat. In addition, HRH Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales, has agreed to act as Patron of the fund. The formal fundraising period will run from 17CCEM in June 2009, as the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the CSFP, to October 2010, the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the first cohort of Commonwealth Scholars.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) is an international programme under which member governments offer scholarships and fellowships to citizens of other Commonwealth countries. The Plan was established at the first Commonwealth education conference in 1959 and is reviewed by Ministers at their triennial meetings.
2. The CSFP endowment fund is being managed by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). The ACU is the oldest inter-university network in the world, with over 500 members in six continents. The ACU also provides the secretariat for the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom.
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