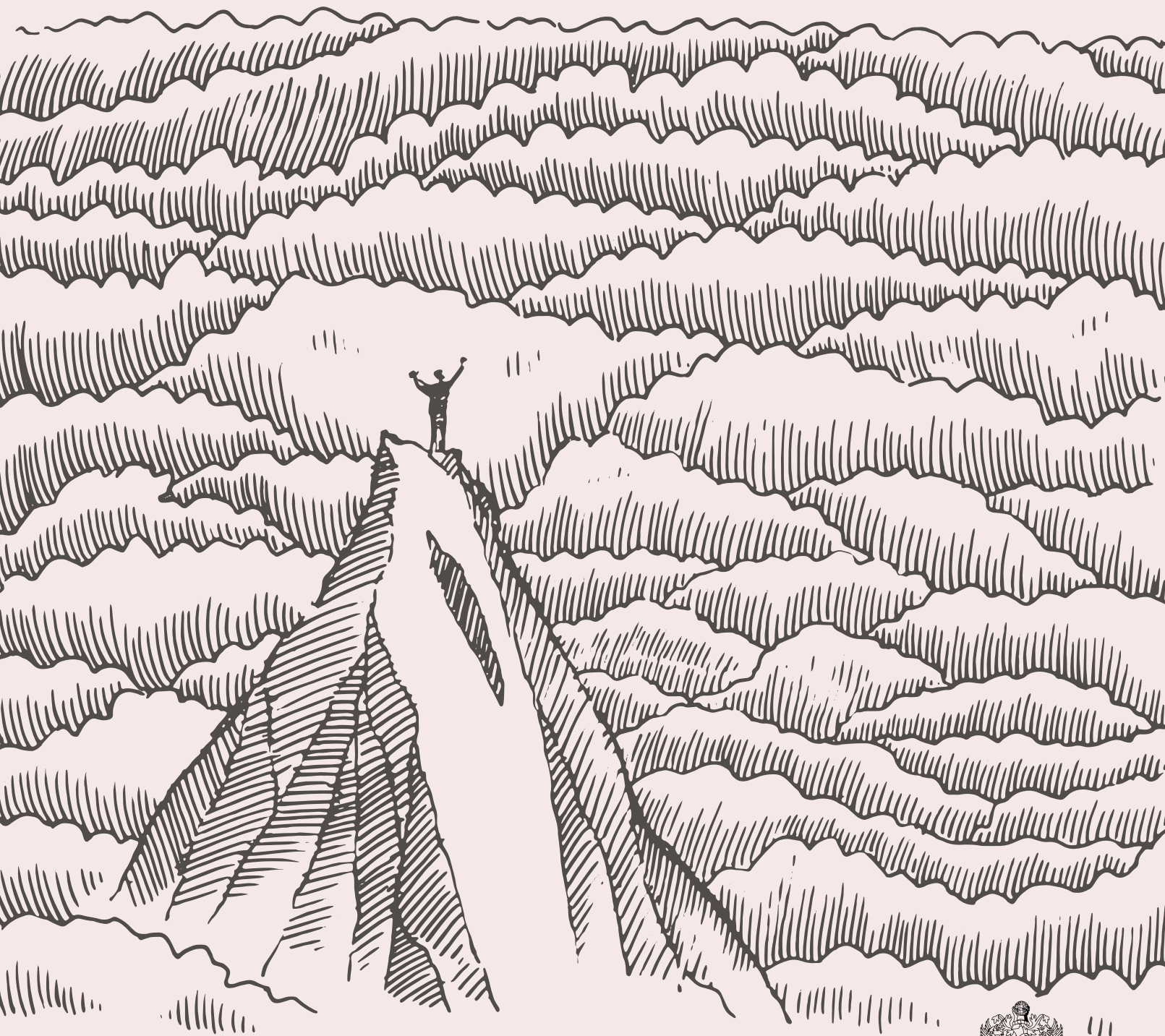


OVERSEAS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE



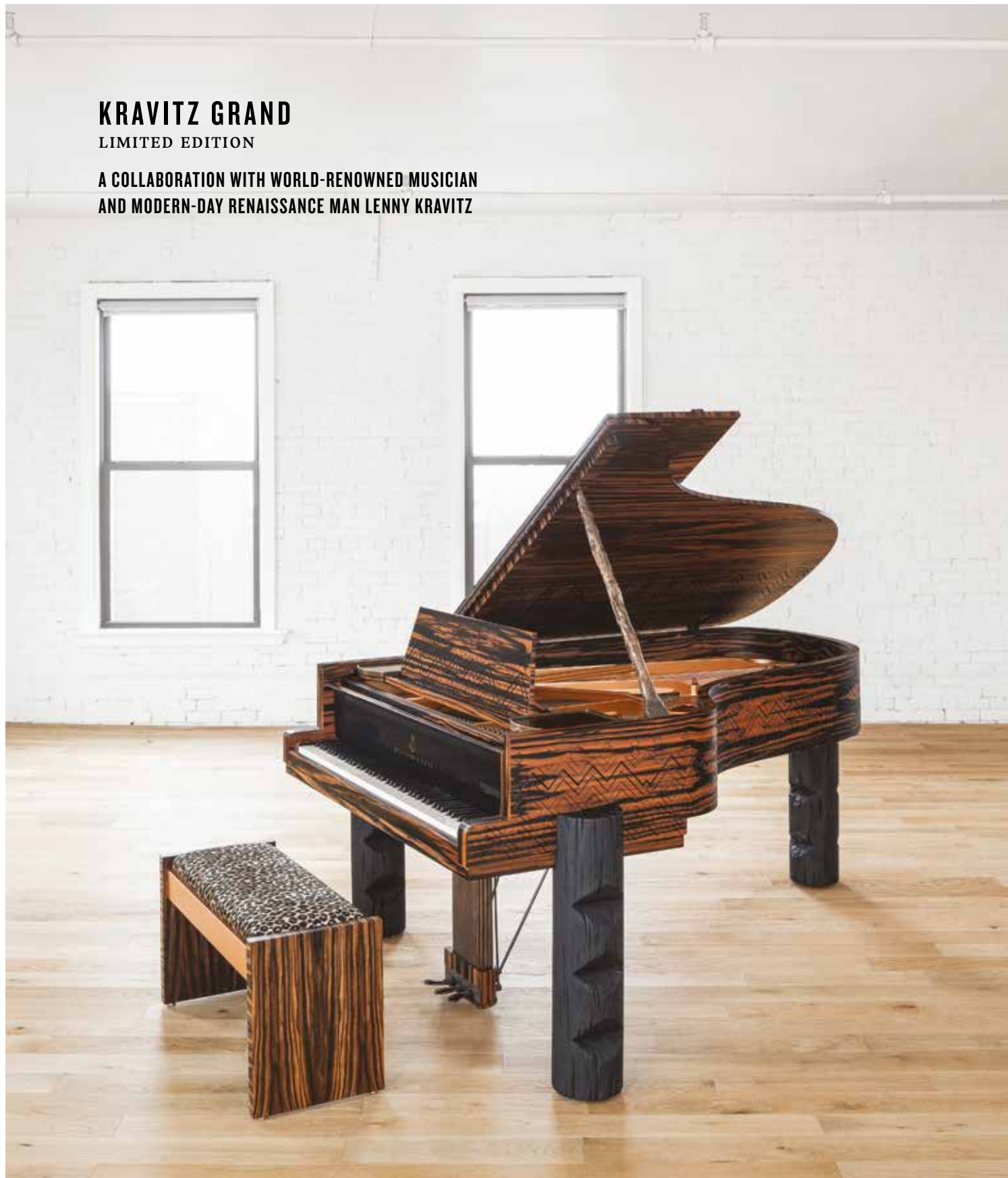
REACHING THE SUMMIT
International cooperation takes
centre stage in 2021



ROSL
ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE
ESTD 1910

KRAVITZ GRAND LIMITED EDITION

A COLLABORATION WITH WORLD-RENOWNED MUSICIAN
AND MODERN-DAY RENAISSANCE MAN LENNY KRAVITZ



“I see design and music as being the same thing:
you start with inspiration and at the end you have a piece of art.”

LENNY KRAVITZ

STEINWAY & SONS

Steinway Hall London W1U 2DB For more information or to arrange a private appointment at our London showrooms, please call: 0207 487 3391 or email info@steinway.co.uk



The Royal Over-Seas League is dedicated to championing international friendship and understanding through cultural and education activities around the Commonwealth and beyond. A not-for-profit private members' organisation, we've been bringing like-minded people together since 1910.

OVERSEAS EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor

Mr Mark Brierley: editor@rosl.org.uk;
+44 (0)20 7408 0214

Design

zed creative: www.zedcreative.co.uk

Advertising

charlotte@parkwalkmedia.com
renata@parkwalkmedia.com

ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

Incorporated by Royal Charter

Patron HM The Queen

Vice-Patron HRH Princess Alexandra KG GCVO

President

The Rt Hon The Lord Geidt GCB GCVO OBE QSO PC

Chairman The Hon. Alexander Downer AC

Deputy Chairman Anne Wilkinson

Hon Treasurer Richard Harbord FCA

Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street,
London SW1A 1LR; +44 (0)20 7408 0214;
Fax +44 (0)20 7499 6738; info@rosl.org.uk;
www.rosl.org.uk

CENTRAL COUNCIL

Anjola-Oluwa Adeniyi, Paul Arkwright CMG,
Ruth Bala, The Hon. Alexander Downer AC,
Nabeel Goheer, Richard Harbord FCA,
Alistair Harrison CMG CVO, Anthony Teasdale,
Susan Walton, Helen Prince,
Atholl Swainston-Harrison, Anne Wilkinson

Director-General

Dr Annette Prandzioch: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x201;
patodirectorgeneral@rosl.org.uk

Chief Finance Officer

Alexis Corzberg FCMA: acorzberg@rosl.org.uk

Director of Membership, Marketing and Communications

Jon Kudlick: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x204;
jkudlick@rosl.org.uk

Director of Education Projects

Margaret Adrian-Vallance MBE:
+44 (0)20 7408 0214 x307; mvallance@rosl.org.uk

Artistic Director

Geoff Parkin: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x325;
gparkin@rosl.org.uk

Resident Manager

Warren Miller: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x203;
wmiller@rosl.org.uk

Director of HR

Sarah Banner: sbanner@rosl.org.uk

Membership

+44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214; membership@rosl.org.uk

For more contacts visit www.rosl.org.uk/the-team

Print Gemini Print Group: +44 (0)127 346 4884

The journal is published by the Royal Over-Seas League,
Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street,
London SW1A 1LR. Any views expressed in editorial
and any advertisements included are not necessarily
endorsed by the Central Council.
ISSN 00307424



WELCOME



“Whilst travel has
been restricted, it's
business as usual on
the international stage”

By the time this edition hits the doorstep, ROSL will have reopened its doors. After what has been a long and difficult time for members and staff, we'll be into a wonderful spring and summer. We're bursting into action with the addition of two key new members of the team following our decision to take catering back in house – highly experienced Food and Beverage Manager Serge Pradier, and Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer, who has Michelin starred experience. We will welcome members back to our wonderful garden with facilities that are better than ever, and the usual cornucopia of music – Artistic Director Geoff Parkin will also be curating a ROSL Recitals: Edinburgh Fringe in London concert series here in the ROSL clubhouse in August - and ongoing public affairs series, including President of the CBI, Lord Karan Bilimoria, former Governor of HK Lord Chris Patten (who will give our inaugural ROSL Annual Lecture), and former Australian PM Julia Gillard. The latter two speakers have, of course, been regulars at International Summits, the topic of this edition. I have a personal passion for international relations – something I know our members share, given our ethos of 'promoting international friendship in the Commonwealth and beyond'. And whilst our own international travels have been restricted, it's good to see business as usual on the international stage. This year includes two major summits in the UK, the G7 in Cornwall and COP26 in Glasgow. Sandwiched between is CHOGM in Kigali, Rwanda. The UK will hand over the baton as Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth at this next biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. I'm delighted that this edition includes articles by our Chairman, the Hon. Alexander Downer AC, quite the veteran of the international stage as the longest-serving Australian Foreign Minister; two more of our Council Members, Paul Arkwright CMG, who until recently was the UK government's COP26 Regional Ambassador for Sub-Saharan Africa and CEO of the UK-Africa Investment Summit; Nabeel Goheer, who, as Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, has been closely involved with several CHOGMs; and Honorary Member of ROSL, the UK's Commonwealth Envoy Philip Parham CMG.

Dr Annette Prandzioch
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

16

“An opportunity both for continuity and for new endeavour – for Leaders to recommit to Commonwealth values”

WELCOME

3 From the D-G

As the clubhouse reopens, Annette looks forward to the summits taking place in 2021 that will shape the world

ROSL PEOPLE

6 Meet the contributors

Discussing this year's summits, experts from the world of international relations and diplomacy have their say

8 Do summits matter?

First up, ROSL Chairman The Hon. Alexander Downer AC explains why international relations are so important and what it takes to make summits a success

12 It's time to talk – about the Commonwealth

Director-General of The Commonwealth Foundation Anne Gallagher AO asks the questions that really matter to the Commonwealth's 2.4 billion citizens

16 Passing the baton

Ahead of CHOGM in Rwanda, the UK's Commonwealth Envoy, Philip Parham, reflects on Britain's time as Chair-in-Office

18 The common touch

Nabeel Goheer, Assistant Secretary-General at the Commonwealth

Secretariat, explains his role promoting the principals of the Commonwealth and how this will be achieved at this year's CHOGM

20 Global issues, local solutions

Paul Arkwright CMG, former COP26 Regional Ambassador for Sub-Saharan Africa, tells Mark Brierley what the challenges facing the region are when it comes to climate

24 Minister to minister

Navigating the dual storm of Covid and climate change as a small island nation reliant on tourism has been a challenge for

the Maldives as Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid tells Alexander Downer AC

WORLD

28 Oceans apart together

Sharing similarities like language, culture, history, democracies, and liberalised economies, could Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK be a rival to the EU in tomorrow's world? Abi Millar looks at the arguments for and against

32 Nobody is safe until everyone is safe

COVAX is the international effort for sharing Covid vaccines with the world's

poorer countries. But could more be done by rich nations to ensure that recovery from the pandemic is more equitable? Natalie Healey investigates

NEWS & EVENTS

36 Literacy and the pandemic

Margaret Adrian-Vallance explains how our bursary alumni are helping to explain Covid in areas with low literacy rates

37 News & views

Incognito has raised another £4,300 to support our education projects, a new Australian print exhibition will

be launching in the Autumn, an introduction to people behind ROSL's new food and drink, a look back at ROSL's artistic output during lockdown and our search for ROSL's first ever Artist-in-Residence

40 ROSL around the world

News from our branch network, which is slowly getting back to normal

42 Event highlights

Rescheduled AMC dates, garden parties, garden plays and more

43 Events calendar

Upcoming events

From the EDITOR

Accusations of vaccine nationalism are the latest flashpoint in what has been a febrile few years in the world of international diplomacy, thanks to the combative nature of Donald Trump's presidency and Brexit negotiations, among many others. But with three large international summits taking place in 2021; G7, CHOGM, and COP26, the need for effective international cooperation is more pressing than ever.

In this issue of *Overseas*, we look at these summits from a variety of angles, asking contributors from the very highest levels of international relations and diplomacy what their success means for the world. Turn over to page 6 to meet the people who will guide us through.

On page 8, ROSL Chairman Alexander Downer AC asks if summits matter. Multilateral diplomacy in which the agreement many parties must agree, or at least compromise, on a way forward, is front and centre at these summits, and their success is critical to finding solutions to today's global issues.

With a population of 2.4 billion across the Commonwealth, finding that compromise can be difficult. That's why the Commonwealth Foundation's Critical Conversation events ask – and try to answer – the questions that really matter. Their Director-General Anne Gallagher explains all on page 12.

With the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) taking place in Rwanda later this year, the UK Government's Commonwealth Envoy, Philip Parham, discusses what has been achieved during the UK's time as Chair-in-office ahead of the next summit, on page 16. While Nabeel Goheer, the Commonwealth Secretariat's Deputy Secretary-General, explains what will be covered at this year's CHOGM in Kigali on page 18.

Elsewhere, the next climate change summit, COP26, is due to take place in Glasgow in November, and the progress made in Paris five years ago needs to be built upon, with solutions fit for the whole world, no matter the size or prosperity of the country involved. On page 20, Paul Arkwright CMG discusses the challenges facing sub-Saharan countries specifically.

And with Britain's divorce from the EU finally complete as of 2021, is it time for the country to start forming new alliances? One suggestion is CANZUK, which would see the UK join forces with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, taking advantage of the shared history, language, culture, liberalised economies and more. Abi Millar discusses the merits and potential pitfalls of the idea on page 28.

Bringing things right up to date, the unequal speed of the vaccine rollout across the world is under the spotlight on page 32 as Natalie Healey looks at the COVAX programme. Supposed to ensure equitable access to vaccines for all, is international cooperation failing to save the most vulnerable?

Mark Brierley
editor@rosl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTORS



Paul Arkwright CMG was, until recently, the UK Government's COP26 Regional Ambassador for Sub-Saharan Africa. Having left the FCDO, he has set up his own business consultancy focusing on Africa. He was previously CEO for the UK-Africa Investment Summit, British High Commissioner to Nigeria, and UK Ambassador to the Netherlands, and has served in senior posts at the FCDO in London, including as Director for the Commonwealth. He has extensive ties throughout Africa as well as in London.



Philip Parham is the UK's Commonwealth Envoy. He served previously as Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, and High Commissioner to Tanzania. He has also been posted to the British Embassies in Riyadh and Washington DC. At the FCO (as it then was), he served as Head of the Counter-Terrorism Policy Department, Head of the Iraq Operations Unit, a member of the Policy Planning Staff, Private Secretary to one of the Ministers, and Head of the Pakistan/Afghanistan Section. Before joining the FCO, he was an investment banker for ten years, six of which were in Japan.



The Hon. Alexander Downer AC, ROSL Chairman, was born in Adelaide, South Australia. He has served as a career diplomat in the Australian Diplomatic Service and with the United Nations. He was a member of the Australian Parliament for 24 years and spent nearly 12 of those years as Australia's foreign minister. Mr Downer is currently the Executive Chair of the International School for Government at King's College London.

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS

Discussing this year's summits, experts from the world of international relations and diplomacy have their say



His Excellency Abdulla Shahid is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Maldives, having held this position since 2018. Having studied at Canberra College of Advanced Education, Australia, and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in the US, Shahid joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1984, eventually rising to Director. He served as the 16th Speaker of the People's Majlis from 2008 to 2014, playing a key role in the country's transition to democracy, and as an MP since 2008.



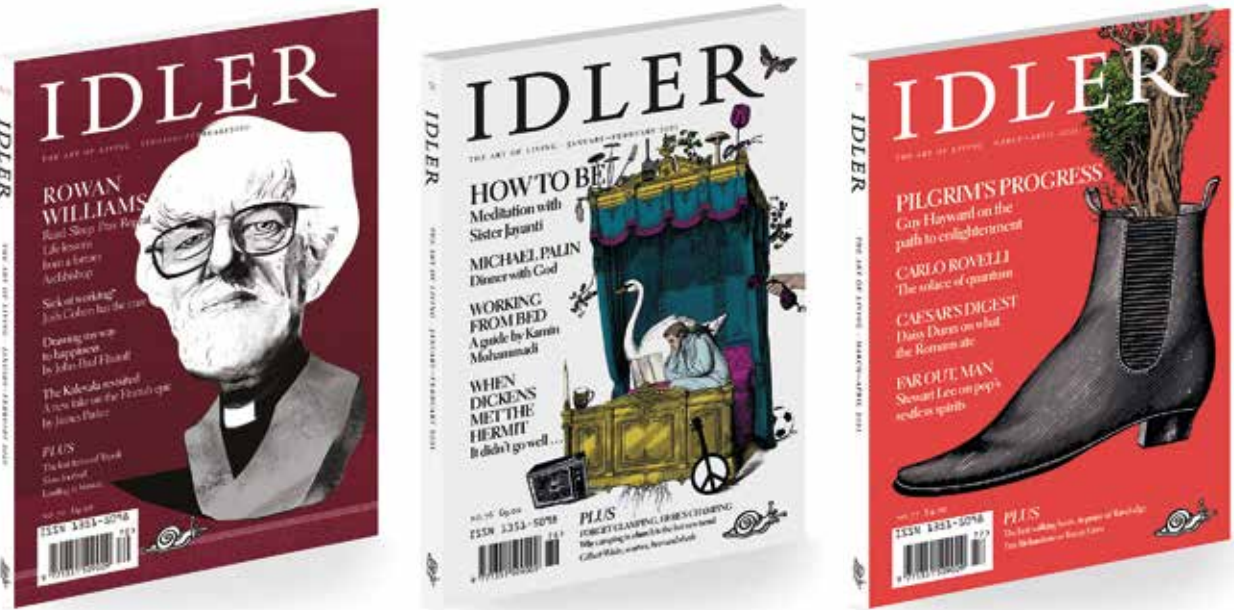
Dr Anne Gallagher AO, Director-General of The Commonwealth Foundation, spent several years teaching in the law school of the Australian National University, before being recruited to the United Nations, where she served for 12 years, including as special adviser to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson. From 2003, Anne worked with the Association of South-East Asian Nations and its ten Member States to strengthen legislative and criminal justice responses to human trafficking and related exploitation. Her recent appointments include; President of the International Catholic Migration Commission, Co-Chair of the International Bar Association's Presidential Task Force on Human Trafficking, and member of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration.



Nabeel Goheer, Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, has a pivotal role within the organisation, and a wide global network both throughout the Commonwealth and beyond, in addition to a background in consultancy involving restructuring of organisations, and a PhD in Management from Judge Business School of University of Cambridge.

IDLER


SLOW DOWN, HAVE FUN, LIVE WELL. *(and save money)*



Save 50% on cover price

Subscribe to the *Idler* for just £27 a year*

Go to [webscribe.co.uk/magazine/idler](https://www.webscribe.co.uk/magazine/idler) or call 01442 820580


“The Idler’s appeal and relevance seem to increase by the day,”
Michael Palin

Use code **ROSL01** when ordering
*UK Direct Debit only offer. Reverts to standard price of £39.95 in second year. Overseas customers get 25% off standard price with same code when paying by card.

DO SUMMITS MATTER?

ROSL Chairman The Hon. Alexander Downer AC looks ahead to some of the important international summits coming in 2021 and what it takes to make them a success

Put in very broad terms, there are two types of diplomacy: bilateral diplomacy and multilateral diplomacy. Bilateral diplomacy is pretty straightforward but when diplomacy requires a large number of countries to get together to address an issue or a series of issues, that is no easy task. What even career diplomats often forget is that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. Political leaders and their ministers operate within the context of their own domestic politics. If they stray too far from that, they could, in time, lose their jobs.

That is what makes diplomacy complicated and it explains why multilateral diplomacy often struggles to be effective.

The institutions of multilateralism like the United Nations and the Commonwealth, are staffed with officials inspired by the idealism of a world working more closely together. So often, that idealism comes up against this brutal political reality. Within individual countries, there is seldom a constituency which matches the idealism of international officials.

This does explain why many multilateral institutions, including those within the United Nations system, struggle to make

a serious impact. The challenge is to try to make multilateralism more effective and one of the best ways to do that is to engage the leaders by holding multilateral summits. Summits of several leaders, which were once rare events, have become an important part of the annual diplomatic calendar.

2021 is going to be a year of such summits – and so it should be. We have been through one of the most alarming periods in world history since the Second World War. The Covid crisis far from bringing countries closer together, has led to a fragmentation of the international community in various ways. 📌



WHEN
11-13 June 2021

WHERE
Cornwall, UK

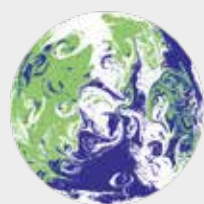
DETAILS
The UK will use its G7 Presidency to unite leading democracies to help the world fight, and then build back better from coronavirus and create a greener, more prosperous future.



WHEN
21-25 June 2021

WHERE
Kigali, Rwanda

DETAILS
The theme is 'Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming'. Leaders will discuss how to deliver the things which were discussed at CHOGM 2018 in London.



WHEN
1-12 November 2021

WHERE
Glasgow, UK

DETAILS
The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

It is true the WHO was slow to show leadership in advising governments on how to respond to the Covid outbreak. Why it was slow is a debate for another time. But as a result, governments took it upon themselves to develop their own national responses. This was natural enough and short of a dramatic multilateral initiative it was all they could do. It might have been better, had a summit been convened immediately the Covid outbreak was recognised and a multilateral response developed. In particular, a summit, properly led, could have led to an internationally coordinated effort to stem international travel. That alone would have had a major impact on the spread of Covid.

Then there has been the issue of the vaccines. Several governments such as the UK and US have invested heavily in vaccine development, others have just hoped distribution would come their way. In the end, nations have put their own interests ahead of the broader global community. Short of a multilateral response, again they had no choice. But once more, an early summit to discuss funding for vaccine development and the distribution of vaccines would have made the process a good deal more manageable than that has been.

These two examples, so stark to us today, do demonstrate that multilateral approaches to global issues are needed. And to drive those multilateral approaches, heads of government have to be engaged. That's why

we have summits.

This year, there will be two key summits in the UK. The first, in June, is the G7 summit, which will also include India, South Korea, and Australia. This is an opportunity for the major democracies of the world to work out how to stimulate economic recovery without destroying fiscal responsibility and creating hyperinflation. It's far better that these major economies meet together rather than act in an uncoordinated way.

Later in the year, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will host the climate change summit, known as COP 26. This is a classic case of where summitry is a *sine qua non*. Climate change caused by excessive CO₂ emissions, cannot be addressed by one country alone. It has to be a total global effort. The best way to do that, is to get heads of government together around the table – or in this case a series of tables – to thrash out measures that will be painful economically. Because they will be painful economically, the pain will have to be shared in an equitable way.

The Covid crisis, far from bringing countries together, has led to a fragmentation of the international community

So there you have it. Summits have their value. But that doesn't mean they always work well or, for that matter, that they're always very interesting. A summit needs two things to work. First, it needs a very specific agenda. I've sat in summits where there is no particular agenda and the leaders are just meeting for the sake of meeting. Rambling prepared speeches are made, which generate little interest from the other participants. Leaders can be seen playing with their mobile phones as they surf through their SMS, WhatsApp, and email messages, ignoring the pereration of the president of some far-flung land!

Secondly, a good summit needs a good leader, like everything. With a strong agenda and a good leader, a summit can be a truly effective way of achieving an outcome. Summits have made real progress on climate change, they have been effective in addressing terrorism and from time to time they have achieved good outcomes on economic coordination. That was particularly the case during the global financial crisis in 2008.

We can expect summits to become an increasingly important component of diplomacy. Globalisation – which is not very popular just at this moment – is irreversible and to make the wheels of globalisation turn, multinational summits are going to be an essential component of statecraft.

ROSL
PHOTOGRAPHY
COMPETITION

Camera category
winner 2020:
Holding Hands
by Isabella Agbaje

SHOWCASE THE CONTEMPORARY CULTURE OF THE COMMONWEALTH

The Royal Over-Seas League is pleased to announce the 2021 theme of the ROSL Photography Competition as 'International Friendship'

Prizes of up to £2,000 available

The competition has two categories: Camera and Mobile Phone

Enter now: www.rosl.org.uk/photography

The deadline for entries is 5pm GMT on Monday 6 September 2021

IT'S TIME TO TALK – ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH

Director-General of The Commonwealth Foundation, Anne Gallagher, discusses the organisation's **Critical Conversations online events series**, which asks - and tries to answer - the questions that really matter to the Commonwealth's 2.4 billion citizens



As a veteran of the United Nations, the Commonwealth was something of a mystery to me when I joined two years ago. Since, I have come to appreciate the strength and complexity of this unique organisation: a grouping of very different states that would otherwise rarely find themselves in close proximity.

Much of what I learnt during my first weeks in post surprised me: for example, that most Commonwealth citizens are under 30; that most Member States are republics; and that the Commonwealth is growing to include countries that were never a part of the British Empire.

And the Commonwealth is, to my knowledge, the only intergovernmental grouping in existence to have created an agency explicitly mandated to advance the interests of civil society. Enter the Commonwealth Foundation. My job, in effect, is to be the Ambassador for the People of the Commonwealth: to work with Member States in ensuring that this Organisation is—and is seen to be—much more than a club of States. In many ways, the existence of the Foundation is an affirmation of the Commonwealth Charter itself, which begins with those fine and stirring words, 'We the people'.

Among the Foundation's

responsibilities is the Commonwealth People's Forum, which brings civil society into the biennial Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). When CHOGM 2020 was postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we started thinking about how to maintain momentum—and, more importantly, how to ensure that the voice of Commonwealth civil society could be heard during these extraordinary times. We knew what was at stake: our world is in a state of instability and change, unprecedented in human history. Crises create unimagined opportunities, but they also bring disruption and uncertainty. Better ideas are needed—and more powerful, diverse voices—if we are to adapt and lead the transformation of systems and attitudes that entrench inequality and marginalise so many.

The result of our thinking was *People of the Commonwealth: Critical Conversations*, an online event series that began in October 2020 and will hopefully continue as a pillar of the Foundation's work. *Critical Conversations* asks—and tries to answer—the big, important questions of our age. How do we harness the best of humanity—the forces of love, compassion, equality, and justice—to advance our common future and protect our planet? How do we acknowledge the past in ways that advance a common vision for the future? How do we work together to build or re-fashion

our institutions so that they support a world that leaves no one behind?

We are currently putting finishing touches on the sixth event which will deal with the right to health and attempt to shed light on what we have learned over the past year, as well as the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Below are some highlights from a few previous events which, taken together, have reached many thousands of people across all regions of the Commonwealth and beyond.

A Commonwealth for All: Young Leaders Speak

Building on a previous Conversation that addressed the issue of the Commonwealth's colonial legacy, this event brought together a group of inspiring young leaders to discuss what the Commonwealth means to them; what they hope for its future; and what might be done to make the Commonwealth more accessible to its people, and more relevant for today's world. Thousands signed up to this event and the interaction from participants was intense.

While speakers provided very different perspectives, all

Better ideas are needed - and more powerful, diverse voices - if we are to lead the transformation of systems and attitudes that entrench inequality



were united in their view that the Commonwealth needs to adapt and change to meet the demands of our new world. All agreed that the Commonwealth could do much more to promote justice, freedom, and equality, and to actively fight the discrimination that blights so many lives. All welcomed the Commonwealth's increasing focus on young people, and their inclusion in policy platforms. But there was a strong warning against tokenism: it's not enough to invite one young person to join a meeting, a panel, or discussion. What is needed is a wholesale rethinking of how we include young people when decisions are made and policy is formulated.

'We are the Commonwealth so we need a say in our history.' – Kavindya Thennakoon during *Critical Conversations*:

A Commonwealth for All: Young Leaders Speak

'Young people have the passion, desire and drive, but we sometimes forget about consultation, which should come from somebody with experience... Learning and drawing from experiences is necessary so that we don't make the same mistakes going forward.' – Darrion Narine during *Critical Conversations*: **A Commonwealth for All: Young Leaders Speak** ●

Protecting Media Freedom
Freedom of expression—including media freedom—is essential to the flourishing of democratic societies and a basic condition for development. Intergovernmental organisations have played a vital role in elevating freedom of expression to the status of a universally recognised right. And while the Commonwealth has not led the pack, we should not forget that, through its Charter, this organisation has loudly and clearly affirmed the right of every Commonwealth citizen to freedom of opinion and expression—and critically, the obligation of every Commonwealth state to protect that right.

The work done on Critical Conversations will be reflected in a forum designed to bring the voice of the people into the conversations and decision-making spaces that affect their lives

Sadly, media freedom is being eroded across the Commonwealth. Over a third of Commonwealth countries languish in the bottom half of the World Press Freedom Index. Journalists face intimidation, imprisonment, and assassination—and impunity for these crimes exacerbates their lasting impact. In too many countries counterterrorism legislation is used to shield public officials from media scrutiny; defamation and libel laws are wielded against public

interest reporting; and political and commercial interests are distorting the free flow of information. The pandemic has exacerbated many of these disturbing trends.

The *Critical Conversations* event, *The People's Voice: Protecting Media Freedom in the Commonwealth*, brought together frontline journalists, other media practitioners and policy experts to raise awareness of the seriousness of this issue and to confront the apparent inability of Commonwealth Member States and institutions to arrest this downward slide. The stories this event brought to light are worrying. But there are also real signs of hope, not least the work of Commonwealth Member States to speak out against repressive policies and actions and bring the Charter's commitments to life.

"We have seen both the weaponisation of freedom of expression causing the destabilisation of democracy and also states weaponising the law to justify crackdowns." – Julie Posetti during *Critical Conversations: The People's Voice: Protecting Media Freedom in the Commonwealth*

The gendered impacts of the pandemic
There is now clear evidence that women are experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic differently to men—despite a relatively lower mortality rate. Overall, the vulnerabilities that reflect women's gender roles and unequal social status have been exacerbated. We see the results in higher rates of violence, faster economic decline and continued exclusion from decision-making and policy

development.

The issue of differentiated needs arises *between* as well as within countries. Responses to Covid-19 have largely been 'boilerplate'—a one-size-fits-all approach that reflects both the urgency and the novelty of our situation. But it is becoming clear that policies and approaches that might work well in one part of the world will not necessarily make sense elsewhere. For example, support to the informal economy may be a minor policy issue in a developed country but is a critical question of human survival—one with special resonance for women—in many developing countries. How do we make sure that these differences are recognised and taken account of?

This was the subject of our Critical Conversation: *Equality and Justice in Covid-19 responses*, moderated by Hilary Bedemah, Member and former Chair of the United Nation's Women's Committee and bringing together a formidable line up of women advocates and practitioners with real expertise and insight.

Looking to the future, it is our hope that the *Critical Conversations* series will continue, providing a space for difficult, sometimes sensitive topics to be explored openly and honestly; and giving voice to those who have something important to say about issues that matter to us all. All events in the series are available to stream from the *Critical Conversations* website. I also encourage readers of *Overseas* to keep an eye on developments around the Commonwealth People's Forum, which will now take place in June 2021. Updates



on the Forum will be sent via the Foundation's newsletter. We are confident that the work done on *Critical Conversations* will be reflected in a Forum designed to bring the voice of the people into the conversations and decision-making spaces that affect their lives.

'Outcomes of women have not been that different across the [west African] region. We need to have a gender lens because women suffer the most. People were not compliant because it was expensive to be compliant.' – Fatmata Sorie during *Critical Conversations: Equality and Justice in Covid-19 responses*

THE WORLD TODAY

CHATHAM HOUSE'S INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS MAGAZINE,
BRINGING RESEARCH TO LIFE SINCE 1945



SIX EDITIONS A YEAR | EXCLUSIVE ONLINE CONTENT INCLUDING
A SEARCHABLE ARCHIVE OF THE PAST 20 YEARS | WEEKLY INSIGHTS
INTO WORLD AFFAIRS | SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM £33

To subscribe go to www.theworldtoday.org. For any enquiries relating to marketing and subscriptions, please contact Roxana Raileanu by email: RRaileanu@chathamhouse.org

PASSING THE BATON

With CHOGM set to take place in Rwanda later this year, the UK Government's Commonwealth Envoy, Philip Parham, reflects on the nation's time as Chair-in-Office

As Commonwealth Chair-in-Office since 2018, the UK has tried to do four things:

- lead, support, and encourage delivery of the commitments and aspirations set out by Commonwealth Leaders at the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) in London
- boost the voice of the Commonwealth in the international community
- enhance the sense and practice of solidarity among Commonwealth members
- reform and strengthen the Commonwealth institutions.

DELIVERY

In 2018, leaders pronounced ambitions for fairness, sustainability, prosperity, and security. Here are just some examples of what we have done in each of those areas.

To build a fairer future in the Commonwealth, the UK's Equality & Human Rights Commission has built up the network of National Human Rights Institutions in the Commonwealth, so that they can support each other through peer-to-peer learning, including an online learning programme on LGBT rights assisted by the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Rights.

Our Pacific Commonwealth Equality Project has helped our Pacific partners establish or strengthen National Human Rights Institutions. With UK funding, the Equality & Justice Alliance of NGOs has, among other things, provided technical

assistance to governments on tackling domestic violence, hate crimes, discrimination, sexual violence, and online abuse. The Alliance has supported the government of St Lucia in fulfilling its reporting obligations under the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, developing progressive domestic violence legislation, and increasing parliamentary scrutiny and public engagement on new legislation.

We have funded the establishment of the Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth Network, which now counts 46 members in

This will be an opportunity for both continuity and for new endeavour to recommit to Commonwealth values

21 countries. Through the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the UK-funded Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy has supported the updating of the Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures, and helped 12 parliaments assess themselves against them.

To build a more sustainable future, the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, funded by the UK and Australia, has helped to source \$34million for 23 climate change projects in some of the most climatically vulnerable countries. And it is

supporting development of 59 projects with a finance requirement of \$650million in eight Commonwealth countries.

Our Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme is collaborating with Commonwealth island states in the Pacific and Caribbean to map and analyse their maritime economies, so that they can develop bespoke sustainable national maritime economy plans: these will increase prosperity and economic resilience, while conserving and enhancing maritime resources and biodiversity. Antigua & Barbuda have just launched their plan.

Also through the Marine Economies Programme, 13 Commonwealth island states are now able to undertake seabed mapping, monitor acidification and sea level rise, or collect tidal data. The mapping of 32 islands and atolls of Kiribati have enabled safe navigation for maritime trade, and catalysed a £30million World Bank and Asian Development Bank project. In Guyana, the shrimp industry has been revitalised sustainably with support from the UK Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture.

Under the Commonwealth Blue Charter, the UK and Vanuatu have co-led the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance to tackle the scourge of plastic pollution. Thirty-four Commonwealth member states have joined the Alliance, committing themselves to practical steps such as banning the manufacture and sale of microbeads in rinse-off personal care products by 2021. A £6million programme match-funded by the UK and Singapore has increased

understanding of the impact of plastic pollution on marine ecosystems in South East Asia. Under the Blue Charter Fellowship programme, 20 researchers have been placed in Commonwealth universities to support the investigation of marine plastics.

To build a more prosperous future, we funded the establishment of the Commonwealth Standards Network. This now comprises the national standards bodies of 50 Commonwealth members. By increasing awareness and adoption of international standards, it reduces non-tariff barriers and eases trade. Similarly, our Commonwealth Trade Facilitation Programme, with the World Customs Organisation and the UN Conference for Trade & Development, has helped 18 countries implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and so reduce the costs of trade.

The UK and South Africa have led the Digital Connectivity cluster of the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda for Trade & Investment – exploring how to develop digital connectivity in ways that will help us towards the target of \$2trillion intra-Commonwealth trade per year by 2030. We have also supported Barbados's chairing of the Regulatory Connectivity cluster.

Finally, to build a more secure Commonwealth future, we have taken forward the Commonwealth Cyber Declaration – helping Commonwealth

partners conduct cyber security audits, identifying weaknesses and steps to address them. Forty Commonwealth countries have developed National Computer Security Incident Response Teams.

With UK support, the Commonwealth Secretariat's team for countering violent extremism has provided training and built the capacity of several Commonwealth governments from Tanzania to Trinidad & Tobago.

We have also funded work by the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the UN Office on Drugs & Crime to tackle modern slavery – helping Commonwealth members strengthen legislation, increase parliamentary scrutiny and improve enforcement; establishing a network of parliamentary champions, and developing a handbook on legislating against modern slavery, human trafficking, and forced labour. Thanks to this work, Malawi, for example, has seen a clear increase in the numbers of victims rescued from modern slavery.

VOICE

At the UN General Assembly in 2018, Prime Minister Theresa May addressed UN members as Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth on behalf of its (then) 53 Heads of Government – the first time this had happened. In 2019, Commonwealth Trade Ministers, meeting in London under their UK Chair, issued a strong

call for open and inclusive trade. Last year, Commonwealth leaders agreed a wide-ranging statement on the global response to the Covid-19 pandemic; Foreign Ministers issued a united call against racism; and the Commonwealth, for the first time, made a joint statement in the UN Human Rights Council.

SOLIDARITY

We have encouraged awareness among Commonwealth members of each others' needs and objectives in multilateral organisations, including candidates for international positions. We have arranged for Commonwealth members of the UN Security Council to discuss its business regularly with other Commonwealth members. The UK and others have supported the Commonwealth Permanent Joint Office in New York and the Commonwealth Small States Office in Geneva, where we also fund trade and human rights advisers – enabling smaller members to protect and pursue their interests in international organisations.

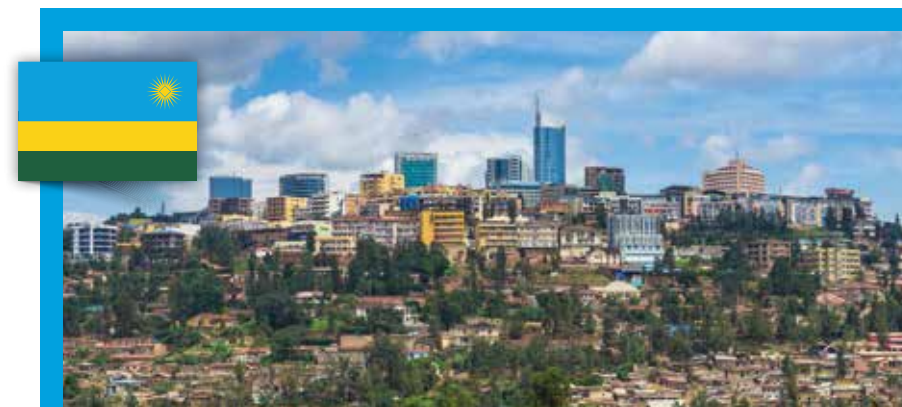
REFORM

Following reports by a High Level Group on the governance of the Commonwealth Secretariat and its collaboration with other organisations, we reached agreement among all Foreign Ministers on a set of reforms – to be endorsed by Heads of Government at their meeting this year.

CHOGM 2021

We look forward to the CHOGM in Kigali, where Rwanda will take over from us as Chair-in-Office. The theme is *Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming*. And the policy framework is: Governance & The Rule of Law; Sustainability (Economy, Trade, Environment); Health; Youth; Technology & Innovation.

This will be an opportunity both for continuity and new Commonwealth endeavour – for Leaders to recommit to Commonwealth values, the Blue Charter, the Connectivity Agenda and the Cyber Declaration; and to promote new initiatives which will help us build back better from the pandemic. Crucially, we will have the chance to boost momentum towards an ambitious and successful COP26 – demonstrating the real value of the Commonwealth's free and incredibly diverse association of equal sovereign states united by the values and aspirations of its Charter.



KIGALI, RWANDA

The largest city and capital of Rwanda, Kigali is home to more than 1.1 million people today, growing from just 6,000 people upon independence in 1962. Much of that growth has taken place since the end of the Rwandan Civil War in 1994, with large parts of the city rebuilt. The centre of the Rwandan economy, Kigali accounts for 42% of the country's GDP. As well as CHOGM, the city also hosted the African Development Bank's 2015 General Assembly and 2018 African Union summit.

The Commonwealth of Nations was born on 26 April 1949. The United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon (Now Sri Lanka) decided to form an association of 'free and equal members' for the 'pursuit of peace, liberty and progress'. The Commonwealth Secretariat was established in 1965 'as a visible symbol of the spirit of cooperation which animates the Commonwealth'. In the last seven decades, the association has grown almost seven-fold. It has 54 members now. Other than the Secretariat, there are two more intergovernmental associations, as well as eight associated and 80 professional organisations. In essence, it is a system of 54 governments, and 88 parliamentary, professional, civil society, and private sector networks. It is spread across five continents, represents 2.5 billion people, and has a combined GDP of approximately £8trillion.

I work for the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is the principal organ of the system (like the UN Secretariat in New York), and based in London. Our job is to promote common values and principles, facilitate dialogue for consensus building and cooperation, advocate for and influence global mechanisms (in line with the agreed Commonwealth positions), and ensure system-level coordination and coherence (where possible). As the Assistant Secretary-General, my role is to support the Secretary-General in providing leadership to the system and the Secretariat, represent the organisation externally, facilitate dialogue and consensus building in the governing boards, facilitate system wide coordination, and supervise a department that is responsible for Secretariat's strategy, portfolio management, evaluation and learning, strategic partnerships, as well as technology and innovation.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) is held every second year. This year, it will take place at Kigali in Rwanda. CHOGM is a time when the entire Commonwealth system comes together. The last meeting was in London in which

46 heads of government, 49 foreign ministers, 10 members of the UK royal family, and 5000 delegates participated. Four for a (Youth, Women's, Business and People's) were held before and alongside the official meeting. Their outcomes were presented to leaders. In addition, Commonwealth parliamentary and professional networks made presentations to senior officials of member states. The then Foreign Secretary of the UK (now Prime Minister) along with other Foreign Ministers, also met with 90 or so Commonwealth organisations to learn about their work,

forums and accredited organisations. Their proposals will be considered by Foreign Ministers and leaders at Kigali to make policy decisions and to forge common positions. The following paragraphs provide a Commonwealth perspective on these topics.



GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

provides the context for the reaffirmation of the Commonwealth's fundamental values. As popular demands for democracy, tolerance, inclusivity, equality, and prosperity increase globally against the rise of

nationalism and threats to multilateralism, the Commonwealth must continue to show global leadership as a values-based

organisation in line with its Charter. The Kigali CHOGM will coincide with the start of the last decade for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring peaceful, just, and inclusive societies anchored in strong institutions will create a conducive environment for attaining this agenda. Such a commitment to good governance requires transformational leadership that is accountable and transparent, and that prioritises citizen engagement. At CHOGM 2021, the Commonwealth will reiterate and provide leadership on these core Commonwealth values by building on achievements in governance and the rule of law.



SUSTAINABILITY

is an overarching theme, encompassing 'Trade and Environment'. In light of the global economic recession brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, this sub-theme recognises that the Commonwealth cannot continue doing "business as usual". The Commonwealth must realign its resources and efforts towards a more sustainable model that is centred around people and the environment. Since adopting the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment in 1989, Commonwealth Heads of Government have continued to advocate for multilateral solutions that support

THE COMMON TOUCH

Nabeel Goheer, Assistant Secretary-General at the Commonwealth Secretariat, explains his role promoting the common values and principles of the Commonwealth, and how this will be achieved at this year's CHOGM in Kigali

appreciate the value of this unique network, and to provide direct guidance.

The upcoming Kigali CHOGM was delayed for a year due to the ongoing pandemic. It is now scheduled to be held in the week of 21 June, 2021. The entire Commonwealth system is focusing on the theme - Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating and Transforming. There are five sub-themes that are - Governance and the Rule of Law; Sustainability; Health; Youth; and, Technology and Innovation. These sub-themes are being discussed by senior government officials, participants of four

member countries in meeting commitments under national, regional, and international frameworks such as the Paris Agreement, the Montreal Protocol, and Kigali Amendments. The Commonwealth is proud of outcomes achieved in this area, which include its collective contribution to the ambitions of the Paris Agreement at the CHOGM 2015 (Malta) and the adoption of the Commonwealth Blue Charter at CHOGM 2018 (London). CHOGM 2021 is expected to build on progress and bolster the Commonwealth's global leadership in this area.



HEALTH

is a standalone sub-theme. It has been adopted following the devastation wrought by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Since the announcement of the pandemic by the World Health Organisation in March 2020, Covid-19, it has claimed approximately three million lives worldwide (as of 13 April, 2021). Countries, rich and poor, were not prepared to deal with this pandemic, raising questions about the state of public health systems. The highly infectious nature of the coronavirus also highlighted the importance of having coordinated responses nationally, regionally, and globally, noting our interconnectedness. Information and experience sharing among countries remains key in strengthening public health policies and systems.



YOUTH has been a focus of Commonwealth action since 1970s. Two out of every five citizens of the Commonwealth are under the age of 30. The Commonwealth has a track record of advocating youth empowerment on the global stage while supporting the participation of young women and men at all levels of decision-making, including through national youth networks. Progress achieved



Sharing a cheerful moment with Commonwealth Secretary-General and President Kagame

so far includes: dedicated support to member countries in mainstreaming youth in national policies for the past 40 years; supporting youth-designed and led networks, of which there are currently nine including the Commonwealth Youth Council, the official representative voice of more than 1.2 billion young people in the Commonwealth; the creation of a globally accepted measure of

Our job is to promote common values and principles, facilitate dialogue for consensus building and cooperation

youth development, the Youth Development Index; advocating for the professionalisation of youth work, and sport for development and peace. Kigali CHOGM will highlight youth entrepreneurship and employment - issues that affect a significant number of member countries and pose a threat to young people's ability to realise their full potential.



TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

is a cross cutting subtheme. Though the fourth industrial revolution has contributed to closing major access gaps related to information, knowledge, services and business, the COVID-19 crisis has exposed the digital divide that still exists. To be future-ready, the Commonwealth must



London CHOGM 2018: Assisting Foreign Secretary Johnson in the Foreign Ministers Meeting

GLOBAL ISSUES, LOCAL SOLUTIONS

International cooperation will play a key part in our approach to tackling rising global emissions. ROSL Central Council member Paul Arkwright CMG, former UK High Commissioner to Nigeria and the UK's former COP26 Regional Ambassador for Sub-Saharan Africa, tells Mark Brierley what the challenges facing the region are when it comes to climate change

With COP26 taking place later this year, how far do you think targets need to go beyond current agreements if we are to succeed in keeping global warming below 1.5-2 degrees?

We need to go quite some distance beyond the current efforts that are being made internationally. If we continue on the trajectory from the Paris climate change agreement of five years ago, then we would miss the 1.5-2 degree target by a considerable margin. So, we need to make additional efforts both in terms of NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions), which are set by governments, and through new commitments from business, industry, and civil society. It's a whole of society effort to make sure that we make even more ambitious plans.

As you say, it's not only governments, it's the whole of society's responsibility. Do you think the weight of public opinion is swinging in the right direction?

Yes, it's moving in the right direction, I'm just not sure it has moved far enough quite yet. A lot of businesses are now realising they have a responsibility to do more and so, a lot of them are signing up to 'Race to Zero'; an initiative for the private sector to go carbon neutral by 2050. We're seeing more businesses sign up, from SMEs to large multinationals. So, there's a lot of momentum building, but the challenge is that it's easy to say we will be carbon neutral by 2050, but implementing that commitment involves taking very difficult decisions that are needed to make it a reality.

In the run up to COP26 and after it, we're going to need to see some very hard-headed plans on how these targets are going to be reached in terms of the practical action they are going to take to decarbonise their activities.

In terms of civil society, you have the very active NGOs and people like Greta Thunberg, but what it needs is even more of a realisation amongst the wider public, the consumer, especially in the West and places like China, of the need to change personal behaviour. Again, we are seeing that, but it needs to accelerate. People's lifestyles will need to change, but just how much is the question. People are waiting for the silver bullet of technology to help get us out of this, but I think people's approach and attitudes need to change radically pretty early on in order for consumers to make a difference. You can do that by going to the

supermarket and looking at the labels, and working out for yourself what is harmful and what might benefit the planet. Spending power is one of those really big factors in moving things in the right direction.

COP26 had been planned as the largest ever international gathering hosted by the UK with 30,000 attendees. How appropriate do you think this is given the subject of the summit and can the summit still work effectively remotely in a post-Covid environment?

There's a valid criticism about flying in all of these participants and that's something that needs to be looked at in terms of carbon offsets, for example. But it's not just 30,000 gathering to have a chat, it's about the working groups, the negotiators, the heads of government, coming together physically to come up with an agreement on a way forward. That's much more difficult to do in a virtual world. The other downside to an entirely virtual event is that it penalises the smaller countries that might not have the resources, perhaps not even the internet access, and fear that they may be frozen out of the negotiations.

I can see some kind of hybrid event, where you would have a smaller number of delegates, perhaps two or three negotiators per country and ministerial-level representation meeting physically. The political decisions and trade offs that are needed are much easier to achieve if people are physically present. So, perhaps a high-level segment of leaders together towards the end of the summit, and then some kind of virtual conference for the majority.

What will be the specifics discussed and agreements that will be thrashed out at the summit to ensure global warming remains below 1.5-2 degrees? Can we afford to wait another five years for international agreement if nothing is decided at COP26?

The bulk of the negotiation over what should happen was completed five years ago in Paris. There are a few small quite technical things that have not yet been agreed, such as the carbon trading mechanism that needs to be established, and a few other areas where COP26 should bring about agreement. This COP is not about renegotiating the treaty, it's about moving forward with implementation with what has

Work out for yourself what is harmful and what might benefit the planet. Spending power is one of those really big factors in moving things in the right direction



LOCUSTS IN EAST AFRICA

Caused by unusually high rainfall in Arabia, locusts could breed in the wet sand and then fly westward to cause the first invasion in Kenya and other East African countries in over 70 years. Swarms of up to 80 million locusts have destroyed crops and could leave as many as five million Africans facing starvation



DESERTIFICATION IN THE SAHEL

The semi-arid strip of land that runs across the continent along the southern border of the Sahara has seen increasingly variable rainfall since the late 20th century. The combined effects of inconsistent rains, population growth, deforestation, continuous cropping and overgrazing have produced one of the most degraded environments on Earth

already been agreed. That will be the key to the success. It's both a chance to take stock; to see where we are, with each country coming forward with more ambitious NDCs; and also to come to an agreement on a way forward in order to speed up the momentum. That will need some kind of roadmap where we can hold ourselves to account for progress that is made over the next five years. If a country says it will halve emissions by 2030, that should of course be applauded, but the question remains: how will you achieve that?

And if agreement couldn't be reached, could we afford to wait another five years?

Scientists say we are at a crossroads every year in terms of climate change, but I really do think, having looked at the way the graphs are going, we need to move emissions downwards on a fairly steep trajectory. That needed to have started several years ago. There are signs that emissions are levelling off, but now we really need to start reducing emissions significantly. If we were to wait another five years, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to bend that curve down.

What are the specific challenges facing Sub-Saharan Africa when it comes to climate change? The next COP27 is also scheduled to be hosted in Africa. Is this

The G7 can't dictate to small countries what they need to do. The G7 must set the right example by setting very ambitious targets for themselves

the perfect opportunity for the needs of the continent to be put forward?

Africa is one of the regions that is most affected by climate change but which is least responsible for causing climate change. They are directly affected by droughts, floods, desertification, and agricultural disasters such as the locust infestation that devastated East Africa last year. They are also impacted by lack of access to energy, so the question of how you get the energy to the vast number of people in Africa who don't have access is a tricky one. A number of countries are producers of fossil fuels and are dependent on their export to keep their economies going. African countries need a lot of support in terms of adaptation and resilience, climate financing, energy transition, and so on. The potential for renewable energy is massive, in solar, wind and hydro, but they can't just flick a switch and turn from fossil fuels to renewables. You have to have an energy transition. So, there are complexities to the situation in Africa that need to be addressed in the COP discussions. And in my view, we in the West have a responsibility to support Africa – after all, it's in our interest to ensure Africa thrives in the decades ahead.

Many countries in Africa are very ambitious when it comes to their climate change targets and are not denying the



DROUGHT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Since late October 2018, several southern African states have been experiencing a prolonged drought, as climate change has caused El Niño to disrupt the region's annual rainfall. Described as the region's worst drought for 90 years, Windhoek has not had such low rainfall since 1891. Agricultural production has dropped by 17.5% and livestock numbers have declined severely due to starvation

consequences of climate change. They understand the impact that it is having on their citizens and their livelihoods. They do have many of the answers themselves, we just have to make sure they are properly supported and financed to achieve those.

The combination of COP27 in Africa next year and CHOGM in Rwanda later this year will throw a spotlight on Africa. It will mean that the world is forced to face up to and address these issues that are arising in the region. The Commonwealth can be a force for good in this respect, given that it represents something like a third of the global population and that there are 19 African countries as members. One of the key strengths of the Commonwealth is the networks that it builds, the way that it spreads best practice. It's vital that the Commonwealth has a voice and uses that voice when it comes to issues like climate change. I'm sure the outcomes we will see from CHOGM in Kigali will reflect the importance of the issue: the meeting will be a key milestone on the road to Glasgow in November.

It's also worth mentioning the role of the Prince of Wales in this context. At the last CHOGM, it was agreed that he would be the Head of the Commonwealth when the time came, and as we know, he is very focused and passionate about the environment, so he could really help to galvanise action.

With the G7 also taking place this year, what is their role in tackling climate change? Are the world's leading economies

GROUNDWATER SALINISATION IN COASTAL AREAS

Rising sea levels have caused coastal areas to experience increasing groundwater salinity. Safe drinking water will become increasingly scarce as sea levels continue to rise and salinity increases. Rivers such as the Niger, which is seeing salinity increase close to the coast, supports the lives of 100 million Africans



leading by example? And should they dictate the way in which other countries develop when it comes to climate change policies?

I think they have to take responsibility for being among the top emitters in the world. This G7 in Cornwall will also see India, South Korea, Australia, and South Africa invited, who are also large emitters. So the G7 needs to reflect global climate change ambition as they discuss the overarching themes of the global economic recovery from Covid. We now have the new US administration, President Biden, providing global leadership on climate change that has been missing in the last four years. It's a coincidence, but a happy one, that the UK is hosting both COP and the G7: it's a golden opportunity for the UK to take the lead in bringing us back from the brink.

But crucially, the G7 can't dictate to smaller countries what they need to do. The G7 must set the right example by setting very ambitious targets for themselves. They can also lead the way when it comes to innovation and technology – and sharing the benefits of that research – to allow the energy transition to become a reality. It's a very strongly held view in Africa that we in the West developed and industrialised on the back of fossil fuels, so who are we to tell developing nations that they can't use the same methods to improve the lives of their people and help lift them out of poverty? So, it's a matter of supporting and encouraging them to move in the direction of renewable energy without dictating or lecturing, providing the example ourselves in terms of policy and implementation that shows we are serious about tackling the most pressing global issue of our time.

MINISTER TO MINISTER

Navigating the dual storm of Covid and climate change as a small island nation reliant on tourism has been a challenge for the Maldives. Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid plots the country's course with former Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer AC

Alexander Downer: The Maldives has been a successful economy, driven in large part by, tourism. How are you weathering the Covid crisis and what has the been impact on the industry?

Abdulla Shahid: We have been very successful in transforming and developing our economy from independence in 1965 up until 2004. However, in 2004 the Indian Ocean Tsunami hit us and wiped away almost 60% of our GDP. So, we then had to start again, and have successfully rebuilt the tourist industry in the

Maldives. In 2019, we reached the two million a year tourist arrivals mark for the first time. Everything was looking very sunny. However, no one was prepared for this huge pandemic.

Our first Covid case was detected in March 2020 and on 15 March, we were forced to close our borders. Overnight, the Maldives went from being a middle-income country to a low-income country. The entire tourism industry came to a standstill. 60% of our GDP, in some way or another, is connected to

tourism, so when the tourists stopped coming, the airport was shut down, people lost jobs there, people lost jobs at the resorts, in the transport system. The entire country came to a standstill. We were able to continue to sustain ourselves because of our international connections.

We import everything, from basic foodstuffs to essential medication, but we were able to continue because we have special relationships with our neighbours and international organisations. The World

Bank looked sympathetically at the situation of small developing countries and helped out. We made painful but necessary steps, and as a result, we were able to see positive signs of improvement in the Covid pandemic. But the socio-economic pandemic continued.

So, we decided to make a call on the reopening of borders on 15 July after three months. As an archipelagic nation, we have tourist resorts on individual islands, so if we could put in place strict protocols for ferrying tourists from the airport to hotels, then the islands themselves are separate and very safe for tourists. By the start of 2021, all the beds in the Maldives were full again, despite major markets such as Europe and China still being closed. Instead, we received tourists from new markets in Central Asia and India.

Things are now starting to look brighter. We have also been able to start the vaccine rollout thanks to our special relationship with India. After just 48 hours of the beginning of the Indian vaccination programme, we received 200,000 doses. We have now been able to reach 67% of the population with the first dose.

We are now slowly starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. From April, we are beginning to allow inter-island transport for people who have had both doses of the vaccine. I think an international system needs to be established by which all countries accept a common system that allows vaccinated individuals to travel. We believe in opening up, because for us it means survival. Shutting down borders forever is not an option.

Will you be pushing for the opening of borders through multi-lateral institutions? You are a member of the Commonwealth, and CHOGM is taking place in June, will this be something you will bring up there?

At the moment, there are bilateral agreements between countries, but in the long term there needs to be an international regime. One of the forums to raise this would be CHOGM. One of things that has come to the attention of the international community through the pandemic is the importance and critical role that the tourism industry plays in the economy of not only small island nations but also larger countries. So far, the tourism industry has not been a major part of the conversation vis-a-vis international cooperation. I believe the Commonwealth, the United Nations, and other international organisations need to deal with this.

MALDIVES FACT SHEET

POPULATION

557,426 inhabitants spread over 26 atolls, with a total land area of 115 square miles.

ELEVATION

Average elevation of just 1.5m above sea level, with the highest point being just 5.1m

ECONOMY

GDP (nominal) estimated to be \$4.5billion in 2021. Largest sectors: fishing and tourism

COMMONWEALTH

Initially joined in July 1982, before leaving in October 2016 and rejoining in February 2020

When I was the High Commissioner in London for four years, the Maldives left the Commonwealth during that time and then rejoined. Does that suggest you value your membership of the Commonwealth?

Yes, absolutely. It's interesting in the case of the Maldives that when we became independent in 1965, we did not join the Commonwealth right away, but in 1982, we decided we wanted to be a part of the grouping, becoming a full member in 1984. We have benefited immensely. Looking at the leadership of the Maldives; political, economic and academic leadership; many of them are graduates of institutions in Commonwealth countries. Australia, for example, myself included, I studied in Canberra. Many cabinet members have studied there, in the UK, in India, in Fiji, and more.

The benefits we have received from the Commonwealth have been outstanding, from institutions such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. For a country like the Maldives, these are vital because we have a lack of institution-building capacity. These associations gave us that opportunity.

However, in 2016 the then-government decided to leave the Commonwealth. I was in

The entire country came to a standstill. We were able to sustain ourselves thanks to our international connections

opposition at the time and we protested against it. Some of us were even jailed for protesting, but we passionately believed that the Commonwealth was telling us to do the right thing; get back into the fold internationally, start respecting human rights, promote good governance, transparency and so on. The things that come with modern day democracy.

One of the first decisions the cabinet made upon winning power, on the first day in office, was to rejoin the Commonwealth. We are very glad that by the time of the Kigala summit, we will once again be a full member. I was honoured to be at Marlborough House in February 2020, in London, to raise the flag of the Maldives once again, and to be in the family of nations. We firmly believe it is a family.

You are the lowest lying country in the world. COP26 in Glasgow will be an opportunity for small island states such as the Maldives to push the threat of sea level rise quite strongly.

For the Maldives, climate change is reality. We see our shores being taken by the sea. The ocean is encroaching on the small islands that we have. It's very difficult to take a side because we live from the ocean, but it's the ocean coming and taking away the precious land. For many countries, the concept of sea level rise would be difficult to comprehend. I was at one of the sand banks last week with my family, which was completely dry when we landed, but within a couple of hours we were knee deep. It brought home to me the fate of many many island states. This is how vulnerable we are. That's why we will also make sure we raise the issue, we cannot be silent when it comes to climate change. We are looking forward to COP26, especially as we now have the US and China discussing a common position on some issues pertaining to climate change. It shows the will of the people is being listening to. The democratic process does back good decisions.

We are ambitious, the Maldives submitted our NDCs on 27 December 2020 to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030, keeping in line with the timeline set at the Paris Agreement five years ago. However, we will require the assistance of the international community, our partners in the developed world, to achieve this.

Our future is also ocean, we need to save the oceans. Plastic pollution is killing the oceans. We have decided to ban the use of single-use plastics by 2023. It's going to be tough but we want to be an example, we want to be speaking internationally from the moral high ground.



OFFICE SPACE AT ROSL

We are adapting to these Covid times and are re-purposing some of our bedrooms into office spaces. We can provide an office for two to three people, including an ensuite bathroom, Wi-Fi, and the option to hire meeting rooms when you need more space with colleagues and clients.

The Copper Tower, the small two-storey building on the right as you enter ROSL's courtyard, is also available as a self-contained office, with space for up to six people.

Your business can take advantage of our wonderful Mayfair location with a garden overlooking Green Park, and beautiful Grade 1 listed building. If you know of a small organisation looking for a new home, please contact Jon Kudlick jkudlick@rosl.org.uk



OCEANS APART

T'OGG'T'HEIR

Sharing similarities like language, culture, history, democracies, and liberalised economies, could Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK be a rival to the EU in tomorrow's world? Abi Millar looks at the arguments for and against



On 23 June 2016 – a date that stirs very different emotions in different people – the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. This verdict, delivered on the narrowest of margins, would lead to four years of political wrangling before the exit finally came into force.

As of 31 January 2020, the UK is no longer a member of the EU. Standing alone on the world stage, it must begin to negotiate new trading relationships and redraw the map of its allegiances. This, say proponents of the idea, is the perfect time for a new trade alliance that would meld four English-speaking economies: Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

CANZUK, as the hypothetical bloc is known, was first proposed as early as the 1950s, but has been revived in light of Brexit. It would cover more than 136 million people and, according to neoconservative think-tank The Henry Jackson Society, would spawn 'the second-most-powerful geopolitical union in the world behind the EU, and quite possibly the fourth-largest economic union behind China'.

Supporters say that CANZUK would boost economic prosperity, while creating new travel and employment opportunities between the four countries. Detractors argue that the idea is unworkable and that the purported links between these far-flung

countries aren't enough. So how tenable is CANZUK really and what are the underpinnings of the idea?

CANZUK COMBINED

Have a population of
129 million people

Rank #3
in global GDP
(US\$6.26trillion)

Have a Per Capita GDP of
US\$47,225

Have an inflation rate of
0.97%

Have an unemployment
rate (of total population) of
6.0%

Rank #3
in global defence spending
(US\$104billion)

Rank #5
in overall Quality
of Life indices

Source: CIA World Factbook

What kind of benefits could it bring?

James Skinner is the chief executive of CANZUK International, a lobby group he founded in 2015 to promote the alliance. Born in the UK, he relocated to Australia and then to his current home of Canada, and knows the challenges of immigration first-hand. He is a passionate advocate for free movement between the CANZUK countries.

"I started off with just a simple online petition, which within the first couple of months had 100,000 signatures," he says. "So I realised there was a demand for CANZUK and the benefits it provides. I started lobbying the government and doing advocacy work on social media and in person at universities. And it's just snowballed since then."

As Skinner explains, the idea of CANZUK revolves around three initiatives. First, reciprocal migration between the four countries. Anybody living within the bloc would be able to freely live and work elsewhere in the bloc – building on the existing Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement between Australia and New Zealand, and paralleling the free movement Britons once enjoyed within the EU. ➔

“This is appealing to people who wanted to remain in the EU, because they still have the travelling work opportunities that they would have had anyway, but just with different countries,” says Skinner.

The second objective would be free trade. This would entail removing tariffs and other barriers to commerce, as well as introducing initiatives like mutual skills recognition.

“If you’re a plumber or electrician or architect from the UK, you could come to work in Canada, Australia or New Zealand,” says Skinner. “Instead of having to go back to an educational institution to recertify your credentials, your existing qualifications would be recognised in those countries. You could work the very next day in a profession that you chose.”

The third pillar of the plan is greater foreign policy cooperation. While the CANZUK countries already have strong ties in this regard – notably via the Five Eyes intelligence alliance, a military intelligence sharing agreement with the US – Skinner thinks those links could be strengthened.

“CANZUK is an endless pool of ideas that people could choose from, with the three main ones obviously being reciprocal migration, trade, and foreign policy,” he says. “It’s incredibly beneficial for everybody involved – not just employers and businesses, but also your average citizen like me.”

The Brexit vote, he feels, came as a major boost to the campaign, adding credence to an idea that would have been essentially impossible while the UK was part of the EU.

“People saw that we don’t really have a future with the EU or certainly not the type of relationship that have had for the better part of 50 years,” recalls Skinner. “They started to ask what else is out there, especially with the government advocating for being a more global Britain.”

Reviving the Anglosphere?

While the idea has amassed strong support in some quarters, CANZUK has also come under flak for what some see as its imperialist undertones. It hasn’t escaped critics’ attention that Canada, Australia and New Zealand once formed part of what empire builders called ‘the white dominions’.

The idea of reviving the ‘Anglosphere’ – an idea with an uncomfortable historical precedent – won’t sit well with everyone. And certainly there are questions to be asked about why these four countries have been picked, as opposed to say,



CANADA

English speakers (population) **58.7%**

Life expectancy from birth **81.9 years**

Population **35,362,905**

Population growth rate **0.74%**

GDP (Official exchange rate) **\$1.532trillion**

GDP per capita **\$46,200**

Unemployment rate (of population) **7.1%**

Inflation rate **1.6%**



NEW ZEALAND

English speakers (population) **89.8%**

Life expectancy from birth **81.2 years**

Population **4,474,549**

Population growth rate **0.8%**

GDP (Official exchange rate) **\$179.4billion**

GDP per capita **\$37,100**

Unemployment rate (of population) **5.1%**

Inflation rate **0.6%**

Jamaica or Singapore. (CANZUK supporters, for their part, tend to strongly resist any insinuations that they want to revive an old world order.)

“CANZUK debates go back to the late 19th century,” points out the political scientist Srdjan Vucetic, an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa. “Ever since the British voted to leave the EU, a small group of conservatives in the UK and elsewhere – not all of whom are upper-case Conservatives – has been trumpeting mutually beneficial ‘growth potential’ in relations between these four states. Brexit has given them a license to be bold and think big. ‘Who needs Europe, when Australians, Canadians, and New Zealanders both like us and are so much like us?’ the argument goes.”

CANZUK IS AN ENDLESS POOL OF IDEAS THAT PEOPLE COULD CHOOSE FROM

The likeness between the four, say CANZUK supporters, almost goes without saying. They point to the fact these countries speak the same majority language; have similar legal systems; have low unemployment rates and high GDP; are connected through the Commonwealth; and share the same respect for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. They share common cultural reference points and in many ways resemble old friends.

“It’s very difficult, if not impossible, to find four other countries in the world that are so closely aligned,” says Skinner. “The truth is, you could take your average person in the United Kingdom and land them in the middle of Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, and they would still feel at home. We’re close allies on the international stage, and we’ve worked together through thick and thin, for many, many years.”

Vucetic, however, sounds a note of scepticism about these apparent ‘familial ties’.

“CANZUK advocates have come up with criteria of affinity that include everything from the English language to common law to evidence of public opinion support for various CANZUK deals,” he says. “These commonalities are real but

also overstated. For one, the part of Canada where I live happens to use French and civil law.”

He believes other members of the Commonwealth should weigh in on CANZUK, since the two projects are effectively working at cross-purposes.

“After all, the UK has the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, not the Foreign, Commonwealth & CANZUK Office,” he says.

The geographic challenge

The other main challenge to the CANZUK argument is a simple matter of geography. Apart from Australia and New Zealand, the CANZUK countries are separated by thousands of miles. The UK and New Zealand, for instance, are 11,426 miles apart, making the idea of dramatically scaled-up trade links a non-starter.

“The idea’s historical background is not troubling for everyone – it really depends on one’s politics,” says Vucetic. “But the key flaw is that geographic distance no longer matters for trade or human mobility.”

Currently, the UK’s primary trading partner is Europe, with nearly half its exports going to EU-27 countries, according to 2018 figures from the World Bank. Australia and New Zealand are Asia-Pacific economies, with the APAC region accounting for more than three-quarters of Australian exports, while three-quarters of Canada’s exports go to the United States.

Just 2.94% of the UK’s exports go to CANZUK countries, along with 4.83% of Australia’s and 3.24% of Canada’s. Although the figure for New Zealand is higher, at 19.87%, that is mostly due to its existing trade agreement with Australia. Whatever the geopolitical arguments for CANZUK, these figures suggest that proximity is the single most important factor when it comes to deciding whom to trade with.

Skinner, however, is optimistic that geographic distance is “nothing that can’t be overcome”. He points to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) trade deal as an example of the ways the world is getting smaller. The agreement includes Canada, Australia, and New Zealand along with eight other countries in the Pacific region. If the UK is successful in its application to the CPTPP (despite not being in the Pacific region) this could be a precursor to CANZUK.

“If we were talking about 1950s or 60s, I would see an issue, but we’re in 2021 and modern technology and transportation means it’s really not an issue anymore,” says Skinner. “The CPTPP



AUSTRALIA

English speakers (population) **76.8%**

Life expectancy from birth **82.2 years**

Population **22,992,654**

Population growth rate **1.05%**

GDP (Official exchange rate) **\$1.257trillion**

GDP per capita **\$48,800**

Unemployment rate (of population) **5.8%**

Inflation rate **1.4%**



UNITED KINGDOM

English speakers (population) **90.1%**

Life expectancy from birth **80.7 years**

Population **64,430,428**

Population growth rate **0.53%**

GDP (Official exchange rate) **\$2.65 trillion**

GDP per capita **\$42,500**

Unemployment rate (of population) **4.8%**

Inflation rate **0.5%**

agreement includes countries from all over the world, and the geographical distance between these countries doesn’t really make a difference.”

Support for the idea

Although CANZUK may sound far-fetched to some, polls have shown significant public support for the idea. In one online poll, conducted by CANZUK International for the rightwing *Daily Express*, 94% of respondents said ‘yes’ to the question: ‘should the UK form a superpower alliance with Australia, Canada, and New Zealand?’.

More scientifically, a 2016 YouGov survey found that 70% of Australians, 75% of Canadians, 82% of New Zealanders, and 58% of Britons support free movement within the four nations.

Whether politicians would vote for CANZUK might depend on what they were being asked to vote for. As critics have argued, it isn’t always clear what CANZUK actually means – is it a ‘superpower alliance’ or is it just a loose grouping of four separate governments?

“Advocates are not pushing for the same thing,” points out Vucetic. “Different people and organisations have put out different proposals. Other proposals are still forthcoming – Canadian Conservatives’ CANZUK policy paper, for example. We can’t speak of a CANZUK trade alliance until we have more than bullet points.”

A recent survey showed that most UK politicians (94%) support the free movement of goods within the CANZUK countries, while 61% support the free movement of people. Far fewer (19% of Labour MPs and 16% of Tory MPs) back a political union between the CANZUK countries – which CANZUK International says falls in line with its own policy.

It will fall to CANZUK supporters, then, to really nail down the details of what they’re fighting for. Skinner is hoping to see more talks between the four respective parliaments, formulating joint strategies on how CANZUK can be advanced and presented to Cabinet ministers. He is also keen to frame CANZUK as a concept that transcends the usual left-right divide, amassing cross-party support in all four nations.

That said, it remains true that, for now, much of the pro-CANZUK rhetoric stems from Eurosceptic and Conservative sources.

“If we end up with Conservative or Conservative-led governments in all four countries at once, we may well see one or more CANZUK deals materialise. In most other scenarios, I don’t see it advancing very far,” says Vucetic.

NOBODY IS SAFE UNTIL EVERYONE IS SAFE

COVAX is the international effort for sharing Covid vaccines with the world's poorer countries. But could more be done by rich nations to ensure that recovery from the pandemic is more equitable? Natalie Healey investigates

When Pfizer and BioNTech announced successful results for their Covid-19 vaccine in November last year, the collective relief was palpable. Experts had warned that immunisations were likely the only way out of the crisis, but nobody had expected a working jab to arrive so quickly. We now have several other vaccines that have been shown to stop people contracting moderate or severe disease with Covid-19. And in some nations, vaccination programmes are well underway - half of Israeli citizens had received two doses of a Covid jab by mid-February. But it's a different story in many other parts of the world. Research suggests some low-income countries may not receive sufficient supplies of coronavirus vaccines until as late as 2024.

Everyone should care about equitable recovery from the pandemic. An International Chamber of Commerce Research Foundation study found that if Covid-19 vaccines aren't distributed equally, the economy could contract by up to \$9.2trillion this year - around 7% of global GDP. "Science has given us the exit strategy, but it will only work if its benefits can reach the maximum number of people around the world," said Jeremy Farrar, director of global research charity Wellcome Trust in a statement for the Science Media Centre in mid-March. He was talking about the emergence of new strains of the virus, like ones first discovered in countries such as South Africa and Brazil that may have evolved ways to evade immunity gained from previous infection or vaccines. If a vaccine-resistant strain arrives in a country that has successfully inoculated its population, all that hard work could be for nothing. Health systems may be at risk of being overwhelmed all over again. The best

way to reduce the opportunity for Covid to mutate and potentially produce new variants of concern is to reduce virus spreading as much as possible. Vaccination is the best tool we have to do that. But only if everyone can access it.

Moral argument

As well as preventing mutant super strains of coronavirus, there is also a strong moral argument for ensuring equal distribution of Covid-19 jabs around the world. Vaccinating all of one country before anyone from another receive a jab puts millions of people at unnecessary risk. "It really doesn't make sense for a healthy individual in his 30s to get vaccinated before a much higher risk individual elsewhere," sums up Olivier Wouters, Assistant Professor of Health Policy at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). But rich nations will always have more leverage in this situation. In December, The People's Vaccine Alliance, a coalition of global health organisations and charities such as Oxfam and Amnesty International, found rich nations representing 14% of the world's population had bought up more than half of all the most promising vaccines.

"If rich countries continue to monopolise the world's supply of vaccines, leaving low and middle-income countries behind, there will be a huge number of avoidable deaths in countries that can't receive widespread vaccination coverage," says Deborah Gleeson, public health policy researcher at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. "This is why the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) refers to the current inequitable distribution

of vaccines as a 'catastrophic moral failure.'" Without a collaborative effort to manage access and distribution for everyone, there could be hoarding in some places and shortages in others. That's why a vaccine-sharing scheme called Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access Facility (COVAX) hopes to deliver more than two billion doses to people in 190 countries in less than a year.

Although the world has not faced a health challenge as severe as Covid-19 before, we can learn lessons about vaccine equity from previous epidemics, says Wouters. In 2009, swine flu killed nearly 285,000 globally. Scientists quickly developed a vaccine. But high-income countries were able to secure contracts with pharmaceutical companies to receive the jabs, and low-income nations were pushed to back of the queue. Many

countries did not receive the vaccinations until the epidemic was already over. Luckily swine flu was not as deadly as first feared, but a similar issue with HIV treatment was a more sombre story for low-income countries. When effective drugs for the virus were first developed in the 1990s, many developing nations couldn't buy them because of the prohibitive costs. It

was only several years later when generic versions of the drugs were available at a much lower price that everyone gained access to the life-saving treatments.

Vaccine nationalism

COVAX, which launched at the start of the pandemic in April 2020, is intended to ensure such medical inequity is not repeated during the coronavirus crisis. The scheme was set up by WHO, the GAVI vaccine

RESEARCH
SUGGESTS SOME
LOW-INCOME
COUNTRIES MAY
NOT RECEIVE
SUFFICIENT
SUPPLIES OF
CORONAVIRUS
VACCINES UNTIL
AS LATE AS
2024

SHARE OF PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED AT LEAST ONE DOSE OF COVID-19 VACCINE - 13 APRIL 2021

The nations who have developed vaccines domestically, and those rich enough to afford to buy up stocks from manufacturers were already beginning to pull ahead in the race to vaccinate their populations by April. Despite slow rollouts in some rich countries, such as the EU, poorer nations could still be waiting much longer, even until 2024, before they get access to the vaccines they need to safely protect their citizens.

alliance and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). Richer countries buying vaccines agree to help finance access for poorer nations. The idea is that all participating countries will initially receive sufficient vaccine supplies to inoculate 20% of their populations. And that no country should vaccinate more than a fifth of its residents until all countries have done the same. “For lower-income funded nations, who would otherwise be unable to afford these vaccines, as well as a number of higher-income self-financing countries that have no bilateral deals with manufacturers, COVAX is quite literally a lifeline and the only viable way in which their citizens will get access to Covid-19 vaccines,” says GAVI. COVAX saw its first success story on 24 February, when 600,000 doses of the AstraZeneca/Oxford coronavirus vaccine arrived in Ghana.

Not everyone is convinced that COVAX will succeed, however. There are several challenges that need to be overcome with the scheme. One hurdle is vaccine nationalism. “COVAX cannot fulfil its mission if rich countries continue to buy up the very limited stock that’s available this year,” says Wouters. But many high-income nations have opted not to purchase their jabs via COVAX and have instead struck advance purchase agreements with pharmaceutical companies to ensure there is sufficient supply to vaccinate their entire adult populations by the end of this year. Perhaps unsurprisingly, many countries have put widespread inoculation of their own populations ahead of protecting the vulnerable in poorer parts of the world.

“Developed and wealthy countries, out of either personal survival or fear of backlash from their citizens if they do not effectively

control the outbreak, have decided to essentially hoard vaccines before they left the vaccine production lines,” says Mosoka Fallah, a public health consultant and lecturer at the University of Liberia. “Hence, there is limited access for other countries.” This approach becomes a vicious circle as more countries procure vaccine doses directly, concerns about the COVAX supply increase and more nations panic buy doses for themselves. Fallah believes COVAX is the best platform we have for equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines, but he questions whether the 20% figure will be enough. “Experts in Africa are saying we need to vaccinate at least 60% of people on the continent to achieve herd immunity,” he says.

Share the know-how

COVAX might have greater impact if it used its purchasing power to push corporations to share the science, knowledge, and technology behind the vaccines which could lead to scaled up production, says the People’s Vaccine Alliance. “As injections of hope are being administered at a rate of one a second in rich nations, people in poorer countries are dying from Covid-19 because they lack the basics like oxygen and have little hope of a vaccine,” says Anna Marriott, Oxfam’s Health Policy Manager. “Rich nations have a chance to stand on the right side of history and support, not block, calls made by developing countries for a temporary waiver of pharmaceutical intellectual property rights to unlock more manufacturing capacity around the world.” In October, South Africa and India asked the World Trade Organization (WTO) to waive IP rights related to Covid jabs until most of the world has been vaccinated. Not surprisingly, the pharmaceutical industry was unconvinced. “At a time, when the focus

should be on science and innovation, undoing the very system that supports it is dangerous and counterintuitive,” said Thomas Cueni, Director General of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) in a statement at the end of last year.

But intellectual property is not the only problem. Vaccine supply chains are fragile. Several regions, such as India and the European Union have announced restrictions on vaccine exports this year. And unlike some medicines that are relatively easy to copy if you have the right equipment, many of Covid-19 jabs are difficult to replicate because they are made of biological material. Making them is a complex process requiring hard-to-source ingredients and multiple quality

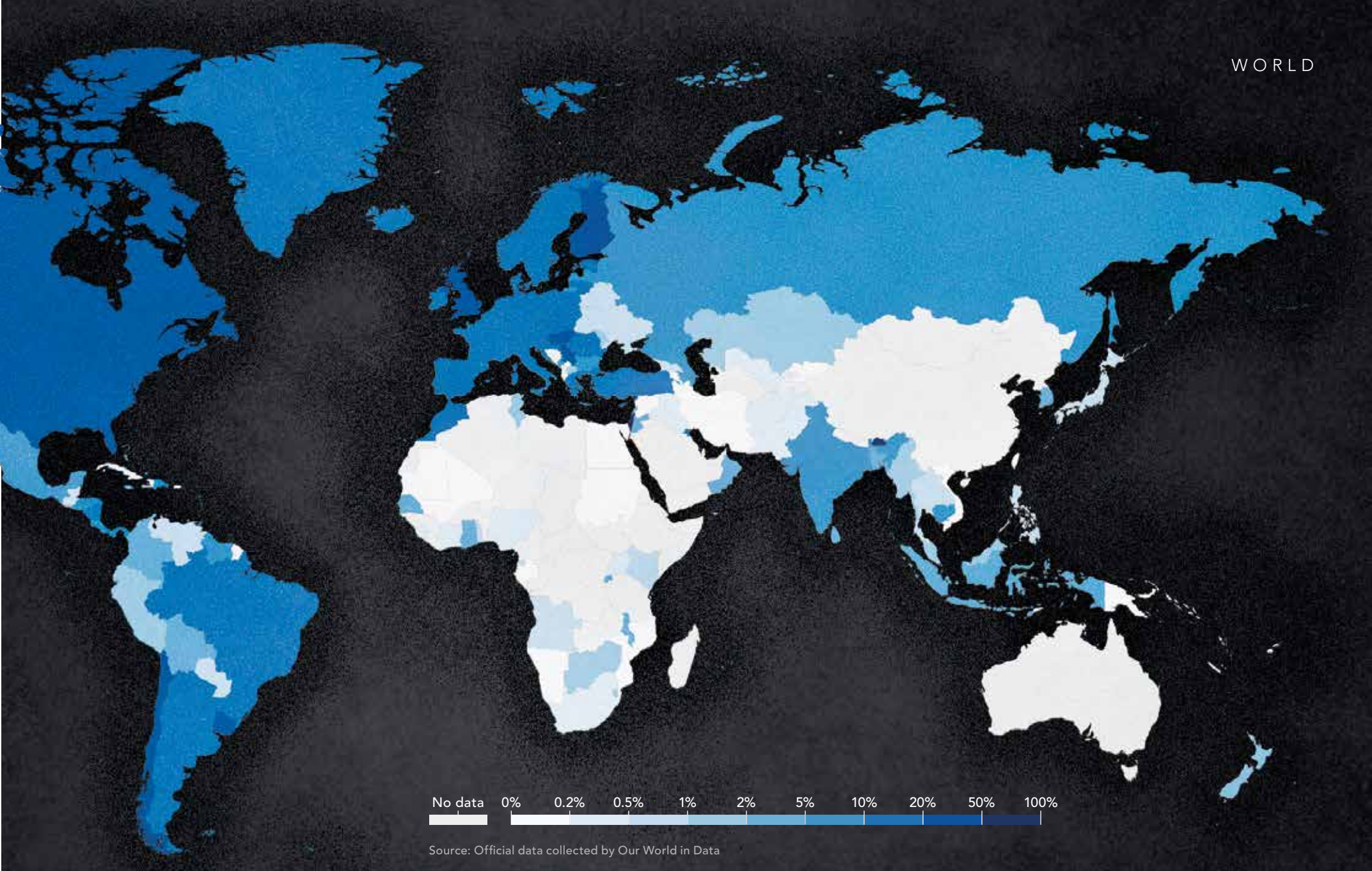
control steps. Some pharmaceutical companies have been more forthcoming than others though. AstraZeneca has licensed production of its vaccine, developed at Oxford University, to companies in India, Brazil and Argentina. And WHO’s Covid-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP) promotes ‘technology transfer’ (where companies license their IP rights to third parties) so other institutions are able to manufacture the vaccines. “I think we need to work on both in parallel,” says Wouters. “We need to make sure that COVAX is able to get its hands on doses and deliver them where needed. And in the meanwhile, governments need to figure how to get companies to license their products more widely to manufacturers across the globe to expand supply.”

Even if the goal of getting Covid vaccine doses to every country is reached, another hurdle that must be urgently addressed is vaccine hesitancy. “It’s not enough to have vaccines developed and produced at scale, priced affordably and allocated globally so that they’re available where needed,” says Wouters. “If people don’t take them, it’s all for nothing.” Vaccine hesitancy occurs in all countries – rich and poor. But a report from the World Bank found that only around a quarter (27%) of low- and middle-income countries are planning public information campaigns to encourage people to get the Covid jab. Failing to invest in this area could undermine efforts to get the pandemic under control.

Effective vaccines offer the world a

glimpse at the light at the end of the tunnel. But to truly expunge the pandemic, the coronavirus must be eradicated in every country.

Since the beginning of the crisis, WHO has stressed that a global pandemic requires the whole world to end it, frequently quoting the mantra that “no one is safe until everyone is safe”. International solidarity may be forged yet. Several world leaders have called for a new global settlement to help the world prepare for future pandemics. But whether unity will form in time to stop the current crisis remains to be seen. Fallah says: “We need to find the means and the will to ensure that poor countries are not left poorer and the rich do not become richer after Covid-19 comes to an end.”



NEWS & EVENTS

The latest from our clubhouse; branches; and art, music, and education projects

Literacy and the pandemic

Education where literacy rates are low has an additional challenge - in some areas ROSL bursary alumni and project personnel are helping communities understand Covid and where possible obtain vaccinations. Margaret Adrian-Vallance reports

Despite the steady rise in literacy rates over the past 50 years, there are still 773 million illiterate adults around the world.

"In the Commonwealth, only one third of children in developing countries have access to early childhood education, approximately 17 million primary children remain out of school, and more than 400 million adults are illiterate," said Patricia Scotland, the Commonwealth's Secretary-General in 2018.

And, in a somewhat prophetic statement, she went on to say, "The stark reality facing many of our Commonwealth member countries is that they are having to find funds to maintain and improve education services on shoestring budgets and sometimes after having their entire economy wiped out by a natural disaster".

In 2020, one of these disasters became the Covid pandemic, and our in-country education project monitors have been highlighting how illiteracy presents additional difficulties during this pandemic and what steps they are taking to improve the situation.

At Sreepur Village in Bangladesh, ROSL helps fund classes from reading and writing to natural science for over 300 single mothers and their children. In a



recent update, Melanie Wolfson wrote, "I wanted to let ROSL know that Sreepur Village, Bangladesh is making great efforts to ensure the health and safety of our vulnerable beneficiaries and staff during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are pleased to say that 80% of our single mothers, staff members and their spouses have now received their first Covid-19 vaccine. This was not a simple task as vaccination appointments are only available in Bangladesh via a government app and not all the single mothers have smartphones, and many cannot read and write.

"Our team will continue to work hard to ensure the remaining mothers and staff receive their vaccines and we hope to assist the surrounding community too."

Challenging terrain also exists in Namibia's northern Kalahari Desert and the Nyae Nyae Conservancy where ROSL

“
Our in-country monitors have been highlighting how illiteracy presents additional difficulties during this pandemic

bursary alumnus Cwisa Cwi is Principal of six bush schools.

Here, most of the schools are linked by sunken sand tracks along which vehicles may have to reverse due to elephants blocking the way and the only tourist lodge is renowned for its midnight leopards which come in to drink from the shower pipes when water holes are dry.

Cwisa says, "The schools have started again and we are working hard with them at educating learners and parents of Covid-19. So all the schools must have sanitisers, they must always wash

their hands after eating or visiting of toilets, observe distancing of one meter, and wear masks when they are coughing or sneezing."

In spite of the Namibian Government's continued efforts to bring education to the area, there are still older family members who did not have the opportunity to become literate, and so Covid awareness in the 30 plus Nyae Nyae village communities is greatly enhanced by the teachers and pupils in the area.

From Swakopmund, Vera Leech reports that tourist and related industries have been hard hit in this seaside town, and that many of the hospitality workers from the surrounding townships who were near the breadline before the pandemic are becoming reliant on Rotary and other organisations providing food parcels. "However, in spite of difficult conditions, the Mondesa Youth Opportunities centre continues to do well," she says. "Our exam pass rate has settled at 100% for some years now and we really try to uplift our students in a moral and responsible way too". Indeed, some individual students here have been foregoing help with food because other families need this more.

Maxine Hurley of the Commonwealth Girls Education Fund (CGEF) has also had a challenging last few months with internet connections being shut down in one country during elections and late returns to schools in others. She reports that the six girls supported in Namibia are doing well and that at a school in Belize, which has had to be paper based, teachers were distributing lessons for the day by hand to individual homes so that students did not miss out. Distance learning, usually via radio, has come to the fore, and the fact that UNESCO has been giving away laptops and tablets has been much appreciated. "Sadly, we are also seeing an increase in abuse and unintended pregnancies during these lockdown conditions," she says. "Overall, girls in many countries have been having a very difficult time indeed."



Incognito

2020 was a challenging year but the generous spirit of many people in these difficult times provided hope for us all. This generosity was illustrated by our Charity postcard exhibition, not only with the 162 donated artworks but the astonishing sales that raised



£4,300. Thank you so much to all the creatives who donated and all the generous buyers who have helped us raise money to continue our education projects. The next Incognito exhibition will take place in 2022.

AUSTRALIAN PRINT EXHIBITION

Ecologies of change: Grief and hope in a changing world

Ecologies of change is a ROSL-hosted collaboration between artists from Australia and the Printmakers Council UK



The exhibition invites artists for the different countries to visualise their response to a shift in consciousness as we recognise the impact and consequences of human activity on Earth's ecosystems. The exhibition is looking to explore the creative response to the consequences of human-led ecological change. The exhibition is taking place in the same year that the International Commission on Stratigraphy is set to formally define a new slice of geologic record, the Anthropocene, to mark the profound ways in which

humans have altered the planet. The Anthropocene identifies a new period in which humans have become the dominant bio-geo-physical force shaping the world.

At a time of profound change, Ecologies of Change forms a conversation across the hemispheres. The project brings together artists and invites them to take stock of the Anthropocene and to share visions of both loss and hope for change.

The exhibition will be on at ROSL in Autumn 2021.

Introducing ROSL's new catering team

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Serge Pradier as ROSL's Food & Beverage Manager and Elliot Plimmer as ROSL's Executive Chef. In April, they sat down with *Overseas* to discuss their plans

Read on to find out more about their careers, how they came to ROSL, and what plans they have for food and drink at the clubhouse from our reopening on 17 May. Keep an eye out for more news from Serge and Elliot, as new menus are devised, food and drinks events are added to the calendar and more!

Serge Pradier, Food & Beverage Manager, brings to ROSL extensive experience of Food & Beverage operations and members clubs having most recently worked as Director of Food & Beverage at the RAF Club. Prior to that, he was General Manager at the Institute of Directors, where he led the team bringing catering back in house after a number of years with an external provider. Previous experience includes restaurant management positions at the Hurlingham

Club and in 4* and 5* restaurants in the UK and France.

Elliot Plimmer, Executive Chef, began his career with Gordon Ramsay at the Savoy Grill working his way up from Commis Chef to Sous Chef within five years. He was headhunted into contract catering at a large bank where he was tasked with producing a new menu, of a Michelin standard for the bank's client dining. His first Head Chef role was at Hoi Polloi at the ACE Hotel and most recently he led a large team at Harrods where he was Head Chef of three of their own inhouse restaurants.

What interested you about joining the Royal Over-Seas League?

Elliot: It's a really exciting opportunity to be the first people in 16 years to take the catering in-house. It's going to be a long journey, it won't be an easy task, but we'll be able to please the members and introduce things that have never been done before.
Serge: For me, it was a simple decision. I've brought catering in-house before at the Institute of Directors. It is such an exciting time, it gives you ownership of your future. I've already started work on a new wine list with a Commonwealth theme!



Do you think there is a difference in the food and drink in a club environment compared with restaurants?

Serge: Clubs have in the past tended to be different in terms of their food offering, but that's changed quite a lot in the past few years. The thing I like about Clubland is you know the members well and you really get to have a good relationship, by developing something new with them. But at the end of the day, professional, passionate delivery of food is the same wherever you are: really good food, good wines, and good staff. It will take a bit of time to get everything in place, but as we gradually build, it will get there.

Have you already started thinking about what you would like to do with the food and drink at ROSL?

Serge: It will be great to sit down with Elliot properly when we start because everyone has their own idea of what makes great food. In my view, any food is good as long as it's done amazingly well. As simple as that. It could be from anywhere in the world as long as it's something that is delivered well. That comes from the skills of the chef.
Elliot: I think the way to start is to take what the menu already is and turn it into something that works. We don't want to shock the members too much and have them come in and not recognise a single thing on the menu! Starting with the Brabourne Room, we'll look at what dishes work and grow it from there. It will be nice to have some home club classics, home comforts, and more new things. For me, I'm all about ingredients and trying to keep it super simple.



Support Us

To allow ROSL to continue funding this and other education projects around the Commonwealth, please consider donating at www.rosl.org.uk/supportus

Artistic Director Geoff Parkin reports on our musical output during lockdown

In the summer of 2019 we installed a new audio-visual system in the Princess Alexandra Hall as the existing one from 2006 was at the end of its working life and was in need of replacement. Alongside a new raised screen, brighter projector, and improved sound for voice support, we included in the brief professional grade microphones for sound recording, and HD cameras for filming and live-streaming to be able to broadcast concerts and events online.

Little did we know then how essential this equipment would prove to be as we adjusted to concert life without live audiences. We have been pleased to be able to continue offering performance opportunities for our alumni during the Covid lockdowns, in 2020 with our "ROSL At Home" series, and more recently with our live-streamed concerts from ROSL.

To date we have broadcast 12 concerts from the Princess Alexandra Hall, including recitals from guitarist Sean Shibe, saxophonist Huw Wiggin with pianist Noriko Ogawa and violinist Emily Sun with Ashley Fripp on piano. The concerts have been viewed over 4,500 times in all corners of the globe.

In many cases our performers had not performed a concert for quite a while, and were grateful for the opportunity to leave home for a concert engagement, even if the only person in the live audience was me! The pandemic has been particularly hard for the arts community and like so many, musicians have suffered from both severe loss of income, and the worry of how and when the industry will be able to recover.

I would like to express my thanks to all those who have donated to help us keep these concerts going. These donations have directly supported the modest fees for these young musicians and have given them a boost exactly when they needed it in these times. We look forward to continuing to broadcast these wonderful young musicians to our members in the future.



ROSL Searches for its First Artist-in-Residence

ROSL's longstanding commitment to the arts and education are being combined in a new role at ROSL and Riverley Primary School, which is generously funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Splitting their time between Over-Seas House and Riverley Primary School in Leyton, East London, the Artist-in-Residence will spend 10-12 weeks exploring the history and heritage of ROSL's clubhouse while also working with pupils from Riverley, supporting them to reflect on their own differing community experiences of heritage alongside that of Over-Seas House.

With the pupils visiting the clubhouse, the Artist-in-Residence will create workshops on themes of heritage, community and home, with both the artist and pupils creating artworks that will be showcased at ROSL and at the school as part of their Annual Griffin Arts Festival.

Many of the pupils have rarely left their own part of East London or discovered the exceptional heritage of Central London. They may not feel that buildings such as Over-Seas House have a connection to their own lives, and we wish to share our heritage with the pupils to enable them to gain information on these buildings, increase confidence in their knowledge over the histories and purposes of these types of buildings, and to increase their skills in making creative responses to Over-Seas House and the purpose of ROSL in Central London.



ROSL has a strong relationship with Riverley Primary School through its recent work with The Griffin Schools Trust in supporting music education.

ROSL around the world

AUSTRALIA

Tasmania

Tasmanian Pianist Luke Frost has been awarded the \$1,000 ROSL Tasmania Branch Prize in Classical Piano.



Luke has performed in concert series in Kettering, Swansea, and the Huon Valley. In 2020, Luke was invited to record Chopin's Etude op.10 no.4 at the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra Studio, which featured in their Daily Dose online concert series. The same year, he performed works for solo piano and piano four-hands alongside Jennifer Marten-Smith in a pair of concerts.

In 2017, Luke performed alongside Fraser Reynolds in a series of three concerts organised by Virtuosi Tasmania featuring works for both solo piano and piano four-hands. He is currently studying piano privately under Jennifer Marten-Smith, and undertaking a Bachelor of Music with the University of Tasmania at the Hedberg under pianist and lecturer in piano, Shan Deng.

Book Group

The Branch Book Group meets each month, usually on a Thursday to discuss books shared by members around an agreed theme. The discussions are very social events and afternoon tea is served.

Queen's Birthday Luncheon

To celebrate the Queen's 95th birthday and in conjunction with the United Commonwealth Societies of Tasmania, a luncheon will be held on Tuesday 15 June at 12pm, at the Black Buffalo Hotel in North Hobart. The Governor HE Professor Honourable Kate Warner AC AM will be the guest speaker.

Please RSVP to Stephen Jones.

Victoria

On Thursday 10 June, Victorian State Governor and Branch Patron Linda Desau AC will join us as our guest for dinner to celebrate the life of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh 1921 – 2021. Please RSVP to Keir Starmer.

We also held a luncheon event on 30 March for 50 members at the Angliss Restaurant. The restaurant is attached to the William Angliss Institute, which is a government endorsed specialist training provider (foods, tourism, hospitality and events) and gives students the opportunity to put the skills for which they are training for, a 'live' testing environment. This was a great post Covid-19 event, getting back to the 'new normal.'

Our guest speaker was Beverley Moss and she presented a most entertaining speech about her life experiences, travelling to Ireland, Scotland and finally London at the age of 60. Beverley's purpose to travel was to work as a social worker, which she did but also worked at various Royal residences. Her catch phrase 'Buckingham Palace in My Underwear' related to her being sent to Buckingham Palace for a uniform fitting.

The luncheon also gave us the opportunity to present an Honoray Life Membership to centenarian Frances Nichols, who was recently awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to the community.

Western Australia

Queen's Birthday Gala Dinner

12 June – The Weld Club, Barrack Street, Perth, from 5.30 pm Sparkling Wine reception, followed by dinner. Guest Speaker, The Governor of Western Australia, the Hon. Kim Beazley AC. Music by senior staff and students, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts.



Special Guest, Sir William Heseltine GCB GCVO AC QSO, former Private Secretary to HM the Queen.

Young Musicians Recital with RSMC

13 June, 2.30pm, Calloway Auditorium, University of WA.

Piano recitalists' Concert with RSMC

10 July, 2.30pm, Calloway Auditorium, UWA.

ROSL awards heat: Bach Competition

3 August, 1.10 pm, Richard Gill Auditorium, Western Australian Academy of the Performing Arts.

ROSL awards heat: Art Song Competition

10 August, 1.10 pm, Richard Gill Auditorium, WAAPA.

ROSL Singing Competition with RSMC

15 August, 2.30, Calloway Auditorium, UWA.

ROSL Awards heat: Chamber Music Competition

24 & 31 August, 1.10 pm, Richard Gill Auditorium. WAAPA.



Clockwise from top left: Frances Nichols receiving her honorary life membership, The Christchurch branch bidding farewell to Lyn Milne, Judith Leckie with musician Lixin Zhang, lunch at the Angliss Restaurant.

will last two hours. Please see the ROSL Events calendar for details on how to book.

Wessex

Coffee mornings and Garden party

Our Thursday coffee mornings began again at the Mayfair Hotel in Bournemouth last month when they reopened. The first took place on Thursday 20 May and continue every Thursday at 10am.

We have a joint Garden Party with the ESU Salisbury and South Wilts Branch on Saturday 26 June In Blandford Forum. Contact Gordon Irving for more details.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Music and morning meeting

On Wednesday 9 June, we are having a musical afternoon with performers from NASDA at 2pm. Then on Wednesday 14 July, the speaker will be Andrea Kraus on "Floristry" for our morning meeting at 10am. We meet at our usual venue of Holly Lea Retirement Village, morning meetings cost \$5 and our afternoon concert is \$10 per person. Contact Judith Leckie to join in.

At the end of last year we held a Musical Concert at which four exceptionally talented New Zealand artists performed from different genres. William O'Brien, a bass baritone, who is involved in a Master of Voice at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Emma McClean, a soprano, completing her Honours in BMus in Classical Voice at University of Otago, Lixin Zhang, a concert pianist on a full scholarship at Coburn School Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles and Maria Shevchuk, a saxophonist, who was the recipient of our 2019 ROSL scholarship. We were lucky that two of these performers were stuck in NZ due to Covid-19 – a great gain for us! We took this opportunity at this well attended concert to farewell Lyn Milne as we had not has the opportunity to do so before this date.

CONTACTS

Alberta: Kenneth Munro

British Columbia: Liz Murray
evmurray@telus.net
+1 604 922 1564

Calgary: Madeleine King
madeleine.king@telus.net

Christchurch: Judith Leckie
jrleckie@xtra.co.nz

Ireland: Palmer Carter
palmercarter@eircom.net

New South Wales: Contact tba
membership@rosl.org.uk

Oamaru: Bruce Albiston
admin@burnsidehomestead.co.nz

Ontario: Ishrani Jaikaran
www.rosl-ontario-canada.ca
rosl.ont@sympatico.ca
+1 416 760 0309

Queensland: Contact tba
membership@rosl.org.uk.

South Australia: Graham Beckett
secretary@roslsa.org.au
www.roslsa.org.au

Southland: Ann Burnett
lindsay.anne@xtra.co.nz

Switzerland: Jo Brown
+334 5040 6631

Tasmania: Stephen Jones
stephenj1@primus.com.au
+61 (0)613 558 95

Taunton: Neil Milne
taunton@rosl.org.uk
+44 (0)1823 286732

Victoria: Keir Watt
www.rosl.org.au
rosl@alphalink.com.au
+61 (0)3 9654 8338

Sussex: David Kay
sussex.branch@rosl.org.uk

Wessex: Gordon Irving
gordon.irving43@gmail.com
+44 (0)1258 480887

Western Australia: Anthony Howes
+61 (0)8 9450 6050

AMC RESCHEDULED FOR 2021
We are so happy to announce that we have successfully rescheduled the AMC live section finals for 2021 to take place in September and October at Over-Seas House, in our beautiful Princess Alexandra Hall. We have pushed back the dates as far as possible, to make sure we can have as many audience members there as would like to attend. For those uninitiated, our Annual Music Competition, is one of cultural highlights of the year, celebrating the very best of young classical musicians. Commencing on 14 September, we will have a live final every Tuesday evening for seven weeks, starting with our solo sections, then onto our two ensemble sections and finally, ending with our Overseas Final, which is a celebration of musicians who have come through our competition, who are not from the UK. Tickets start at £15 for members, which includes a glass of wine during the judges deliberation. Season Tickets are also available.



ROSL GARDEN PARTIES - 28 JULY & 1 SEPTEMBER
Summer heralds the return of our ROSL Garden Parties. Join us for a sparkling wine and canapé reception, accompanied by live music before an hour-long concert in the Princess Alexandra Hall, given by ROSL prizewinners. Commonwealth wines and sweet canapés will be served afterwards in the Central Lounge. This is both a great social event and a true showcase of ROSL's renowned arts programme, which supports young classical musicians as they develop their careers. **Friends of ROSL ARTS are entitled to one free ticket to one of the Garden Parties. Tickets cost £30 for members, £40 for non-members.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST – 1 JULY
From the creators of The HandleBards, witness the entirety of Oscar Wilde's classic play of manners, affairs and handbags being performed by just two rather dashing entertainers. In the tranquility of ROSL's garden you can savour a drink and a bite to eat, while enjoying this fantastically wild(e) new outdoor theatre production, ripping up the recipe book and celebrating silliness. Seating will be provided, but do dress for the weather!

EVELYN WRENCH SUPPER - 2 JULY
Shadow State: Murder Mayhem and Russia's Remaking of the West Luke Harding, journalist, writer and award-winning correspondent with The Guardian, will talk about his new book. A gripping non-fiction thriller, Shadow State begins with the poisoning of Sergei Skripal in Salisbury and describes how the Kremlin has used spies, hackers, and hit squads to subvert our democracy. "Dazzling and meticulous", according to the Observer columnist Nick Cohen.

MEMBER-LED EVENTS

ROSL BOOK GROUP
The ROSL Book Group meets on Wednesdays, once a month, to discuss primarily novels. The discussion starts at 6pm, but we meet beforehand for a drink and afterwards for dinner (optional) at 7.30pm. The June meetings will be on Zoom, but we will be back at the clubhouse on 14 July. However, we hope to continue with Zoom for our overseas members and those not able to meet in person.

UPCOMING BOOKS
16 June *The Liar* by Stephen Fry
14 July *Charles Dickens. A Life* by Claire Tomalin
18 Aug *The Odyssey* by Homer
15 Sept *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

ROSL BRIDGE CLUB
Meets on Mondays, 2-4pm, for supervised play with professional Tutor Ingar Kofoed Hansen. The cost is £10 payable to the tutor on the day.

ROSL BACKGAMMON CLUB
The ROSL Backgammon Club meets on Wednesdays, 2-4pm. The tables have specially designed Covid screens.
GET INVOLVED
To find out more and sign up to these clubs and groups, please contact Eve at e.mitleton-kelly@mitleton-kelly.org.uk if you wish to join. Spaces are limited. Some members meet for lunch beforehand and tea afterwards.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

ROSL ART TALK & PROSECCO: FRENCH IMPRESSIONISTS IN LONDON
8 June

BOOK TALK: THE BUILDINGS OF GREEN PARK BY ANDREW JONES
15 June

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERIES: TOM TUGENDHAT MP
17 June

LINOS PIANO TRIO CONCERT
22 June

ROSL COMEDY NIGHT
24 June

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
1 July

ROSL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
30 June

ROSL GARDEN PARTY
28 July

ROSL BRINGS THE fringe TO LONDON
Three concerts a day at 11am, 3pm, and 6pm
11-15 August

ROSL GARDEN PARTY
1 September

AMC 2021 WIND & BRASS SECTION FINAL
14 September

AMC 2021 VOCAL SECTION FINAL
21 September

AMC 2021 KEYBOARD SECTION FINAL
28 September

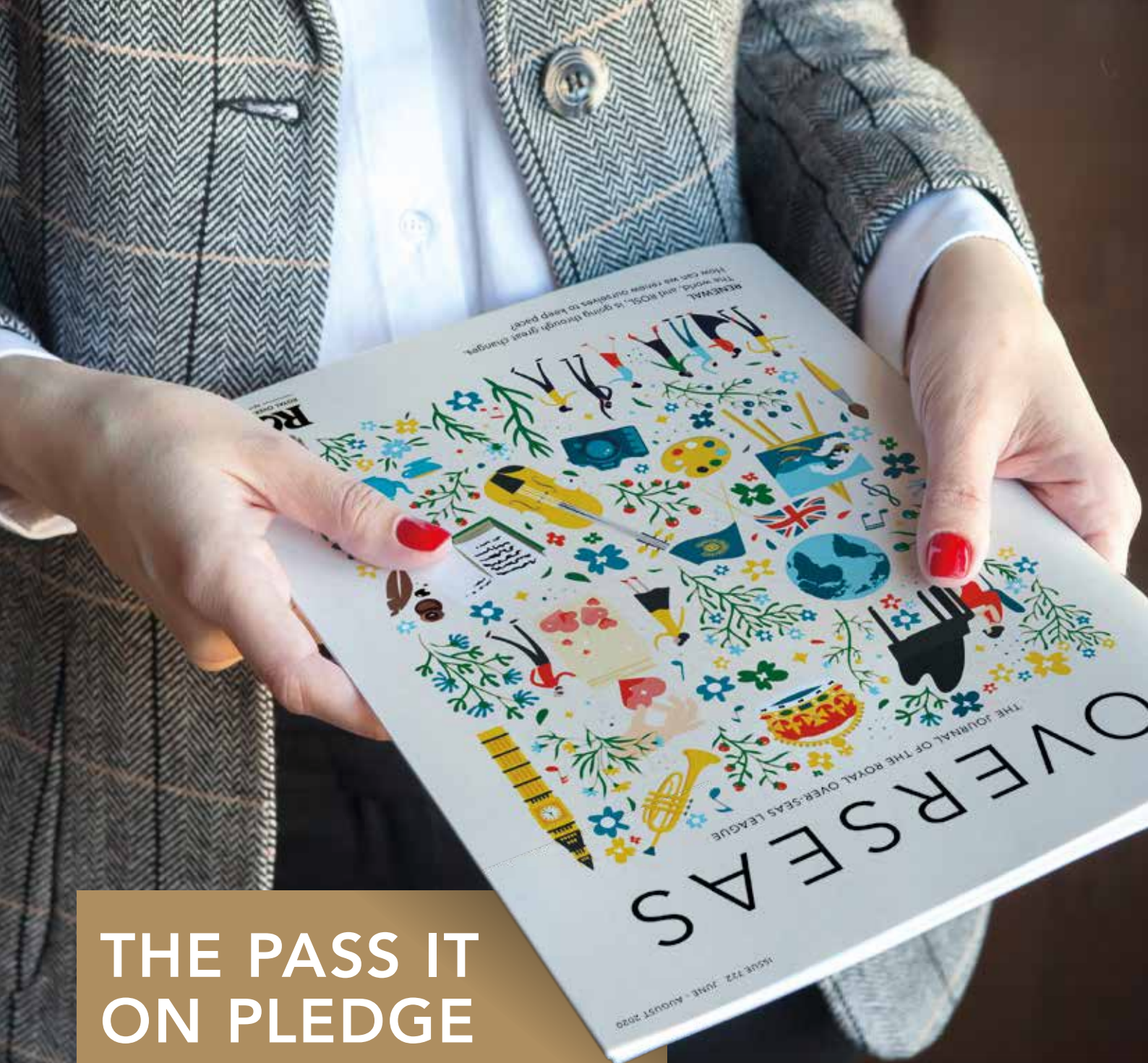
AMC 2021 STRINGS SECTION FINAL
5 October

AMC 2021 STRING ENSEMBLES SECTION FINAL
12 October

AMC 2021 MIXED ENSEMBLES SECTION FINAL
19 October

AMC 2021 OVERSEAS FINAL
26 October

BOOK ONLINE
Go online to get full details and book your next event at www.rosl.org.uk/events



THE PASS IT ON PLEDGE

When you're finished with your copy of *Overseas*, please don't throw it straight into the recycling, pass it on!

We're encouraging our members to spread the word, so if you know any non-members that might enjoy reading the articles and the great window they provide into the world of ROSL, please pass it on to them.

If they end up becoming a member, you could even be entered into our prize draw to win a hamper from Davy's if they mention you on their application, as part of our 'Propose a Friend' scheme.

www.rosl.org.uk/proposeafriend