



Press Release

EMBARGOED UNTIL 4TH MARCH 2019

FLY A FLAG FOR THE COMMONWEALTH - 11TH MARCH 2019

Lord Mayors and Mayors, Lord Provosts, town and parish councils, local authorities and local communities, school children and college students, members of Girlguiding and the Scouts from around the UK and Commonwealth, Sea and Air Cadets, charities and community groups, Commonwealth Ex-Servicemen and training ships crewed by disabled crewman people, and many others around the world will raise more than ONE THOUSAND Commonwealth flags at 10.00hrs local time on Monday 11 March – Commonwealth Day 2019, in a shared celebration of this amazing family of nations that encompasses the globe.

The Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth initiative, now in its 5th year, is again catching the imagination of thousands of participants from all walks of life, inspiring them to join with others throughout the Commonwealth. As a collective public expression of commitment to the Commonwealth, it enables participants to show appreciation for the values the Commonwealth upholds, and the opportunities offered for friendship and cooperation with fellow Commonwealth citizens of all ages around the world.

Scouts in The Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Malaysia, Maldives, Republic of Malta, Mauritius, New Zealand, Samoa, Sri Lanka, and Trinidad and Tobago will also be raising the Commonwealth flag at 10.00hrs local time on 11 March, joining thousands of other young people around the world in committing themselves to the values of the Commonwealth Charter and the 2019 Commonwealth theme: '**A Connected Commonwealth**'. This year's theme explores how the Commonwealth can address global challenges and work to create a better future for all citizens based on foundations of sustainability, safety, prosperity and fairness, in accordance with the priorities of the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in London.

At each ceremony, before the raising of the Commonwealth flag at 10.00hrs, messages from Her Majesty The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, and the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations,

will be read, followed by a Commonwealth Affirmation. This common act of witness renews the commitment of people in Commonwealth countries to work together inclusively and in a spirit of goodwill to towards democracy and development in which all can share.

Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR – Originator and Commonwealth Pageantmaster, of 'Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth', said: "I am amazed how quickly this event has caught the public imagination in the UK and around the Commonwealth. We are only in our fifth year, and the participation of so many people of all ages and from all walks of life shows the enormous potential of this project and of the Commonwealth. It is a positive and uplifting way for people to link with and assist fellow citizens of the Commonwealth in a family that spans across oceans and continents. There is a real sense of promise, and hope for the future in this current troubled world of ours.

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, The Right Honourable Patricia Scotland QC, said: ***“Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth has swiftly become well-established as an imaginative annual demonstration of Commonwealth connection. It provides a splendid opportunity every year for people from all walks of life to join with others in their local community to celebrate Commonwealth Day in association with fellow citizens throughout our worldwide family.*”**

***“Together we number over 2.4 billion people, a third of the world’s population. Each of us has something very special to offer, and as Commonwealth citizens we gain and draw benefit from vast interconnected networks of mutual support and collaboration.*”**

“Our 2019 is ‘A Connected Commonwealth’, and it has particular significance as we mark the 70th anniversary of the 1949 London Declaration which brought into being the Commonwealth we know today – a family of nations ‘freely co-operating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress’”

- ENDS -

NOTE TO EDITORS

Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth
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