

Closing address
by Mr. Maurice Lubrano

Ministry of Commonwealth and Foreign Affairs, Malta

Mr Chairman, Hon. Minister, Friends,

I feel quite safe in calling you freinds, not just because we have been physically together for the past three days, but more so because we have been together in a communion of ideas.

What we have done in this Seminar is to set the stage and open the curtain. The show is on. We are all in the same boat, because whatever may be the nature of the social, political or economic background, the young people of our Islands face the same problems - the problems of youth in a developing country, in a developing world.

The Government of Malta is fully conscious of the needs of our Youth. And it was in this context that, in association with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Commonwealth and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Welfare, undertook this seminar to look deeper into these needs and expectations. Changes do not come overnight, but one thing I am certain of, changes there will be. It is now up to us all to continue where this Seminar leaves off. Let us not wait for others to do what we can and should be doing ourselves.

In passing a vote of thanks, on behalf of the Ministry of Commonwealth and Foreign Affairs and on behalf of the inter-Ministerial Committee, I would like to express the confidence that I have in a better future. And this confidence I have further strengthened in these last few days which have witnessed a close collaboration between the various member countries of the Commonwealth, visible through the presence of the delegates from the Commonwealth Secretariat. With the coming into being of the Commonwealth Secretariat, a new Commonwealth has been born - a Commonwealth in which all members are equal, in which one and all strive to face the problems of a changing world - a world in which it is increasingly recognised that national problems depend for their solution on international action.

And what better proof on this new Commonwealth than we have here with us today: Dr Maraj from Trinidad, Mr Eedle from Britain, Mr Rabukawaqa from Fiji, Mr Kihumba from Kenya.

Dr Maraj - who was not only the initiator, but also the brains behind the whole organisation, the man who came, saw and conquered; Mr Eedle - the man behind the scenes, who when things go wrong, very humbly puts his head on the chopping block; Mr Rabukawaqa - the gentleman with a smile, otherwise known as the gentleman who found the secret of perennial youth; Mr Kihumba - the young jovial and good-humoured cavalier.

Gentlemen, thank you all for the great interest you have in our problems and for the unbounded cooperation which you have extended to us.