



## **Submission No 51**

### **Review of Australia's Relationship with the Countries of Africa**

**Name:** Professor Anthony Low  
Convenor

**Organisation:** Commonwealth Round Table in Australia

**Supplementary Submission**  
**Please refer to Submission 11**

Attachment

## Commonwealth Round Table in Australia

The Round Table international community, whilst based in the United Kingdom, is a worldwide network of influential individuals involved in international affairs, drawn from academic, political, bureaucratic and non-governmental spheres. It provides a focal point for deliberation and activity in support of the values, objectives and programmes of the Commonwealth of Nations.

The principal function of the London group is the production of its quarterly journal, *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*. First published in 1910 the journal remains a highly reputable source of analysis and commentary on all aspects of world affairs, especially on the role of the contemporary Commonwealth of Nations.

### **The Commonwealth Round Table in Australia**

The Round Table was active in Australia in the first half of last century. After a gap of over a quarter century it was revived following the Coolom CHOGM in 2002 as *The Commonwealth Round Table in Australia (CRTA)*. The re-formation of an Australian chapter represents the coming together of a group of individuals interested in promoting the Commonwealth and Australia's role in it, as a founding member of the association.

The Hon Malcolm Fraser AC, CH is Patron of the CRTA.

The CRTA believes there is a need to maintain an active place in the thinking of those who formulate policy and who shape political opinion in Australia as to the positive value of the Commonwealth, its contribution to global peace and security and the betterment of humankind.

### *Objectives*

The principal objective of the CRTA is to promote the Commonwealth of Nations in Australia by:

- Providing a focal point for serious review and consideration of current Commonwealth issues;
- encouraging academic research in Australian institutions on Commonwealth history and contemporary political and developmental issues;
- engaging politicians and policy-makers on current and contentious issues of importance to the Commonwealth;
- promoting the modern Commonwealth in public fora;

### *Activities*

These objectives are pursued through a modest range of activities including seminars, representations, publications, media liaison and sponsorship of an annual Commonwealth Lecture in Australia. The CRTA works with other Commonwealth bodies in Canberra (RCS, CDCC), in collaboration with other institutions e.g. the Australian Institute of International Affairs, the ANU and with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other agencies in seeking a higher profile for the Commonwealth in Australia.

Successful events convened by the CRTA include the following:

- annual Commonwealth Lectures by the Hon John Howard (2003 in Canberra); Justice Michael Kirby (2005 in Canberra); the Hon Don McKinnon (2006 in Melbourne); the Hon Malcolm Fraser (2007 in Canberra); Justice Nicholas Hasluck (2008 in Perth).
- Pre CHOGM briefings by senior DFAT officers;
- former Senator Margaret Reid's report on the Sri Lanka election observer group in 2008;
- public briefings by senior Commonwealth figures visiting Canberra;
- public lectures (with ANU) by HE Olara Otunnu on UN Report on Children and Armed Conflict; and Archbishop Pius Neube of Bulawayo on Today's Zimbabwe.

### ***CRTA Membership /Steering Group***

The *CRTA* is a not-for-profit voluntary group of individuals; it has no formal membership or organisational structures, including no fees. *CRTA* activities are open to the public and are organised and resourced as collaborative projects with like-minded bodies.

The *CRTA* aims to form a loose Commonwealth 'coalition' across the country. To this end individuals in some states have been identified as associates and *CRTA* activities have taken place in Melbourne and Perth.

**Members of the Canberra-based *CRTA* Steering Group** (with short biographical notes) are as follows:

**Professor Anthony Low AO (Convener)**

- Former Vice Chancellor of the Australian National University; former Smuts Professor of Commonwealth History, Cambridge University.

**Dr. Hugh Craft (Co-Convener)**

- Former Head CHOGM Task Force Coolum 2002; former DFAT officer (postings Athens, Suva, London – Commonwealth Secretariat).

**Mr. Tony Eggleton AO, CVO**

- Former Director of the Liberal Party of Australia; former CEO CARE International and CARE Australia; CEO of the Bicentennial Celebration Committee; Chair, Commonwealth Day Celebration Committee.

**Mr. Stephen Ethridge (Secretary)**

- DFAT officer (postings Pretoria, Jakarta)

**Mr Matthew Neuhaus**

- DFAT officer (postings Nairobi, Port Moresby, UN New York, Nigeria, London – Commonwealth Secretariat)

**Mr Colin Milner**

- DFAT officer (postings Pretoria, Brussels, Nauru)

**Mr. Terry Walls**

- DIMIA officer; former Media officer CHOGM Coolum Task Force.

Dr Denis Blight AO

- Director Crawford Fund; former DFAT officer (postings Ankara, Nairobi, London); former CEO IDP, Australia and CEO CABI International, UK.

Professor David Lucas

- Adjunct Associate Professor, ANU's Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute; before ANU he worked in Lesotho, Kenya and Nigeria; immediate past President of the African Studies Association (AFSAAP).

Mr Jolyon Ford

- PhD student ANU, former Human Rights Unit, Commonwealth Secretariat, London

Dr Alex Maroya

- Policy Officer Universities Australia

Ms Di Stafford

- Former Director Legal Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

Ms Sanyu Mugambwa

- Serving DFAT officer (postings Nairobi)

For further information on the CRTA and its activities see [www.crt.a.org.au](http://www.crt.a.org.au)

Canberra.

April, 2010.