



cpsu
Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit

Annual report for the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit, August 2004-July 2005

The Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit (CPSU) maintained its momentum during this year, as the only policy unit focused on the contemporary Commonwealth. It concluded a project on local democracy and the Commonwealth, commenced projects on how the Commonwealth and European Union can support the African development process, and on how the Commonwealth can strengthen the UN development system, and began a major programme for voluntary Commonwealth Clubs in secondary schools. Richard Bourne, stepped down as Head of the CPSU in July 2005.

1 Staffing

The staffing during the year, linked to projects, was as follows:

Richard Bourne, Head (accessible guide to the UK constitution, Department for Constitutional Affairs funding, and Commonwealth + EU support for the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development, Commonwealth Secretariat funding + teacher mobility study, Department for International Development)

Malaika Scott, local democracy project to December 2004 (Commonwealth Local Government Forum/Commonwealth Foundation funding)

Deryn Holland, two year project to research and promote Commonwealth Clubs in secondary schools in England, starting November 2004 (Department for Education and Skills funding)

Daisy Cooper, the Commonwealth and the UN development system, one year project from January 2005 (Department for International Development funding, following inception project)

Tunde Omilola, Indigenous land rights/resource management/ecological care inception project to February 2005 (London University/CPSU funding)

Omolara Akinyeye, Commonwealth Professional Fellow from the Centre for Constitutional Governance, Lagos, studying human rights, conflict resolution and

Commonwealth Clubs (three month 2005 fellowship funded by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission)

Mohammed Ibrahim, Commonwealth Professional Fellow from the Centre for Democracy and Development, Abuja, studying human rights, conflict resolution and Commonwealth Clubs (three month 2005 fellowship funded by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission)

Dr Amanda Sives, Associate Fellow, Teacher mobility study, based at Nottingham University (DFID-funded)

Dr Manisha Diedrich, Associate Fellow, continuation of Commonwealth Civil Society work

Dr Helena Whall, Associate Fellow, Indigenous women's and youth rights (re Commonwealth Secretariat conference, October 2005)

Will Baron, Intern on the Commonwealth Clubs project

Alex Simuyandi, Intern on the NEPAD project

Gamal Fahnbulleh, Intern organising the CPSU Summer Conference, July 2005

2 Projects

Accessible guide to the UK constitution

Richard Bourne coordinated the first phase of a project to write an accessible guide to the UK constitution, working with the Constitution Unit, University College, London and the Citizenship Foundation. Inspired by the pocket guide to the South African constitution of 1996 this will result in a website guide, and a pocket version serving teenagers taking Citizenship courses.

Commonwealth and Europe working to support NEPAD

Richard Bourne is conducting a one year study on how the Commonwealth and European Union can support the African development process (NEPAD) more effectively. This is in collaboration with the European Policy Centre, Brussels, the University of Malta as well as the Commonwealth Secretariat, European Commission and NEPAD Secretariat. A report will be presented to the Valletta CHOGM.

Local democracy project

Malaika Scott undertook a study on local democracy in the Commonwealth, backed up by ten brief country cases, which was published in the CLGF Handbook for the Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Aberdeen in March 2005.

Commonwealth Clubs in schools

Deryn Holland started a two year project in November 2004, designed to set up Commonwealth Clubs in secondary schools in England and research different models. The idea originated in West Africa, where there are Commonwealth Clubs in schools in Nigeria and Cameroon. The project is being supported by a steering committee chaired by Professor Jagdish Gundara, and the Royal Commonwealth Society has agreed in principle to maintain it at the end of the CPSU's pilot period.

The Commonwealth and the UN development system

Daisy Cooper, who carried out an inception project in 2004, has been working on how the Commonwealth can help strengthen the UN development system (with its varied agencies ranging from UNDP to UNIFEM and UNICEF). Her report, following a consultation with Commonwealth ambassadors in New York, will be available in time for the Millennium Review at the UN, and the Valletta CHOGM. An application has been made to the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission to see whether the Secretary-General of the Uganda UNA may join the CPSU in early 2006 to assist this project.

Land rights, resource management and Indigenous peoples

Tunde Omilola carried out an inception project for a sequel to the Indigenous Rights in the Commonwealth Project, and an application was lodged with the European Commission and DFID in May 2005. If the application is successful it will lead to a three year project focusing on Indigenous land rights, resource management and environmental stewardship in ten developing countries.

Other projects

Having received unspent funds from the Commonwealth Science Council for water policy work, the CPSU is developing a project in this field, aided by Dr Siyan Malomo and Dr Sandra Wint. Work has continued with partners on a gun culture project – looking at the role of civil society in countering gun crime in selected Commonwealth cities.

3 Conferences and workshops

These included:

In 2004:

The Commonwealth and media interest, address by Don McKinnon, CPSU with journalism faculty – City University, November

Future Commonwealth issues, CPSU special planning event – Canada House, November

In 2005:

Costs and benefits of a Commonwealth Heads' Meeting – ICS, January

Round table for Mozambican officials at Commonwealth Secretariat – ICS, February

Local democracy in the Commonwealth, with Young Fabians – Senate House, February

Launch meeting for Commonwealth Clubs – RCS, February

Third Diversity Matters Forum, co-organised by CPSU – Kolkata, February/March,

CPSU panel on spheres of governance at CFSP alumni conference – ICS, March

Teacher mobility findings, with Nottingham University – ICS, May

Commonwealth and European Union for NEPAD -- ICS, May

Commonwealth and the UN development system – New York, June

Commonwealth and G8 – CPA Room, Palace of Westminster, June

CPSU three day summer conference – ICS, July

Commonwealth and European Union for NEPAD – Brussels, July

Commonwealth and UN development system – ICS, July

4 Publications

The case for Commonwealth Select Committees to conduct simultaneous inquiries, *The Parliamentarian*, Richard Bourne

“The Commonwealth and human rights”, chapter by Richard Bourne in “The Essentials of Human Rights”, edited by Smith and van den Anker, Hodder Arnold, 2005

“Indigenous Peoples’ Rights in the Commonwealth, with a focus on Indigenous Women” by Helena Whall in Gender and Human Rights in the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004

“Indigenous Peoples and the Commonwealth: Reflections on the Abuja CHOGM, December 2003” by Helena Whall, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative News, New Delhi, 2004

“Indigenous Peoples and the Abuja CHOGM, 2003 – a Lost Opportunity” by Helena Whall, Human Rights Update no 4, 2004

“Managing the international recruitment of health workers and teachers: do the Commonwealth agreements provide an answer?”, article in April 2005 issue of The Round Table by W John Morgan, Amanda Sives and Simon Appleton

CPSU published two more Ministerial briefings in its Policy Briefs series – 2004 Commonwealth Finance Ministers, Barry Watson and George Watson; 2005 Commonwealth Tourism Ministers, Alan Fyall. The current request for pages from the CPSU website is running at just over 20,000 per month, slightly up on the previous year.

5 Advisory Board

The Advisory Board held the CPSU annual general meeting in December 2004, chaired by Professor James Manor. Advisory Board members were involved in choosing a second Head of the Unit.