




Message from  
HE Abdou Diouf  
Secretary General of  
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The theme of this year's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago: 'Partnering for a More Equitable and Sustainable Future' coincides fully with the concerns of La Francophonie, which has also made sustainable and equitably shared development the focus of its missions. The challenge is enormous. It calls for active solidarity and innovative partnering, notably with organisations belonging to other linguistic and cultural groups.

It was this belief that led La Francophonie to conclude a cooperation agreement with the Commonwealth Secretariat as long as 17 years ago. I am proud of the trusting relations that have developed since then between our two Organisations and their respective Secretary Generals, who meet every year. I had the pleasure of welcoming His Excellency Mr Kamalesh Sharma in Paris in March 2009.

In addition, La Francophonie and the Commonwealth boast ten countries from Africa, the Indian Ocean, Europe, the Pacific, the Caribbean and America that are members of both Organisations. These countries are true mediators and actively contribute to the dialogue and the sharing of experiences between our two communities.

What is more, our two Organisations share universal values which incite us to work towards the same goals, whether they are establishing enduring democracy, the rule of law and human rights; preventing, managing and solving conflicts to serve peace; encouraging connections between peoples through cross-cultural dialogue, or strengthening solidarity through cooperative action to improve the welfare of populations, achieve Education for All and develop economies.

In this respect, our two Organisations are particularly sensitive to the challenges of globalisation and to the effects of the financial, food, energy and environmental crises which affect all countries, without exception. For this reason, prior to the London G20 meeting, Secretary General Sharma and I made a joint appeal in support of addressing the urgent needs of developing countries, meeting the Millennium Development Goals' commitments and reforming the international financial institutions so they meet the requirements of the 21st century. The same concerns drive the International Organisation of La Francophonie and the Commonwealth Secretariat 

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