



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 July 1979

My dear Secretary - General.

Thank you very much for your letter of 19 June and enclosure on the style and format of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

I wholeheartedly endorse the objective of preserving the unique character of these meetings, and agree that everything possible should be done to maintain their traditional informality. I believe that the various proposals put forward by you are well suited to the purpose.

I have only one reservation, which relates to your comments on the communique. As a rule, I believe that communiqués are better for being short - and command more attention when they are. CHGM communiqués have in recent years tended to be overlong; and I am not at all sure that they should seek to embrace all subjects of interest and concern to Commonwealth leaders, whether or not these have been discussed. I would myself like to see our communiqués considerably shorter - and, as you yourself indicate, reflecting the actual discussions.

/I readily agree

289

I readily agree that your proposals might most usefully be discussed immediately after we have settled the agenda. I share your belief that there should be no press briefing on the substance of restricted sessions. Indeed I hope that the confidentiality of discussions will be preserved in all our meetings.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Shridath S. Ramphal, Kt, CMG, QC.