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## Britain proposes Sri Lanka to host CHOGM 2013

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Sri Lanka as the host for Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2013 was endorsed on a proposal made by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown at the CHOGM held in Trinidad & Tobago from 27 &ndash; 29 November 2009. Since Australia and Mauritius had also offered to be host, Prime Minister Brown had pointed out that all three countries are equally qualified and it was decided by the Commonwealth Heads of Government that they host the 2011 and 2015 CHOGMs respectively. The endorsement of Sri Lanka by the entire membership of the Commonwealth singularly demonstrates the recognition of Sri Lanka's adherence to the Commonwealth values and principles with the country being one of the most vibrant democracies.

Sri Lanka has been associated with the Commonwealth from its very inception by being a signatory to the London Declaration of 1949. Sri Lanka has been actively involved in the activities of the Commonwealth and therefore is no stranger to the hosting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Meetings and workshops. It would be recalled that in the recent past Sri Lanka has hosted the Commonwealth Ministerial Meetings on Finance and Youth. Sri Lanka was closely engaged with the process of compiling the final Communiqué. In this context, its contribution in the areas of terrorism, climate change, reform of international institutions, illegal migration, disarmament etc were adequately reflected in the final Communiqué. Sri Lanka has been a member of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) since 2003 unprecedentedly serving three terms. The primary objective of the CMAG is to ensure that member states uphold the Harare Commonwealth Principles. During Sri Lanka's tenure in CMAG the situation in Pakistan and Fiji were examined. Climate change received major focus of the CHOGM this year. With regard to climate change, Sri Lanka not being an emitter of green house gases advocated the need for additional incentives including financial flows for developing countries to make commitments to enhanced action on mitigation and adaptation based on common but differentiated responsibilities. Sri Lanka further emphasized the need for a proper financial mechanism to face the challenge as the fund under Kyoto Protocol is inadequate for the efforts of adaptation of developing countries. Sri Lanka's delegation to CHOGM 2009 was led by Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake and the pre-CHOGM Foreign Ministerial delegation by Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama. On the sidelines of the meetings the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister met a number of foreign heads of government which included Hon. Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, Hon. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, Hon. Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, Hon. John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand, Hon. Murray McCully, New Zealand Foreign Minister, Hon. Stephen Smith, Foreign Minister of Australia, Hon. David Miliband, Foreign Secretary of the UK and also the Hon. Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary General. They used the occasion to discuss issues of bilateral importance and on matters relating to the Commonwealth. This is in keeping with Sri Lanka's policy of maintaining and enhancing bilateral relations through extensive engagement. The Commonwealth provides a platform for networking both within and outside the Grouping. Ministry of foreign Affairs Colombo 30th November 2009