

SUBJECT



PRIME MINISTER
INDIA

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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 33^B/83

New Delhi
March 22, 1983

Dear Prime Minister,

In a few months I shall have the pleasure of welcoming you to the CHOGM.

We all remember the circumstances and the spirit in which the Commonwealth was reshaped after our Independence, enabling us to put our relationship on a footing more relevant to the contemporary world. The Commonwealth has been unlike any other international organisation because of its informality and fellow feeling, in spite of the many differences of opinion amongst us on several vital political and economic issues. We always try to reconcile views to arrive at a common approach or at least to stress the common problems which face us all. Emphasis on points of divergence will weaken the Commonwealth. This is why we have had a convention that bilateral issues between members of the Commonwealth should not be raised at our meetings.

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Recently we had a meeting of Non-Aligned nations. Several members of the Commonwealth were present. Some delegates expressed views contrary to ours, as is expected in such a large gathering. But I should like to draw your attention to the speech circulated by the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore as also the pamphlet issued by the Foreign Ministry of Singapore. Some of the words used can hardly be described as becoming or appropriate for delegations led by Heads of State/Government. I hope that the forthcoming Commonwealth meeting will not be brought down to this level by any member. The smooth functioning of the Commonwealth, in fact its very survival depends on mutual respect and goodwill and the observance of certain norms.

My normal reaction is to ignore such remarks but I am writing because I do want our forthcoming meeting of CHOGM to be a success.

With warm regards & good wishes

Yours sincerely

Indira Gandhi

The Rt. Hon'ble Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister of Great Britain,
London.