



33FIFTY

33Fifty: The Commonwealth Youth Leadership Programme

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33Fifty Baton Book finishes African Tour

The tremendous tour began in the West African country of Sierra Leone, moving on to Ghana and Nigeria. The QBR stopped off in Cameroon on Friday 10th January where 25-year-old Anne Hiom Takow, a laureate of the Cameroon Women's Scholarship scheme added her message to the Baton Book. It then journeyed to East Africa where it was signed by 19-year-old Kenyan Ezra Mururu on Sunday 12th January. Ezra has overcome obstacles as a former resident of Kandara Children's Home, making him an inspiration for other disadvantaged young people.

In Uganda, the Baton Book was signed by Akampurira Davis, a youth leader and the Secretary for External Relations of the National Youth Council of Uganda. He wrote an insightful message about the challenge of youth unemployment in the Commonwealth, which is a major issue in Uganda with over 50% of the population under 16.

In Tanzania, a reception was held by the British High Commissioner in Dar es Salaam on Saturday 18th January. UNICEF child advocate Abu Bakar spoke about the violence he has witnessed against children and the need for more awareness in communities. At 15, he's already done a significant amount of work to educate parents on the importance of protecting children against violence. His message to Commonwealth citizens was: "I urge the Commonwealth to use its power to end violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children across the world and especially in Africa! All children have the rights to be protected from all forms of violence and must be given a platform to speak and air out their views. If children are cared for and protected, they will grow up and become good citizens of their countries."

Other signatories included Edith Wong, Best Student graduate from the recently created University of Seychelles, budding young writer Jaya Devin Gobin on the island of Mauritius as well as Sharonice Busch, current Secretary General of NANSO, Namibia National Student Organisation. In Malawi, the Baton Book was signed by Monica Dzonzi, a UNICEF Youth Ambassador. Monica is a former child labourer who funded her way through education after the death of her father left her family in financial difficulty. Today, Monica is a coordinator at a youth centre in Malawi where she teaches other young people IT skills.

Emerson da Conceição Manso, 22, born and raised in Maputo, was the signatory in Mozambique. He has been considered a role model to his peers for the past eight years, and has gone on to be a young leader under the International Inspiration Programme, a London 2012 Olympics legacy programme. He is a Law student in Maputo, as well as an accomplished athlete and coach. Emerson wrote, "To all youth in this Commonwealth circle, I wish that the three values of respect, understanding and tolerance are respected and implemented in their daily life, especially on sports policy."

In Swaziland, Sibusiso Maseko, a sports coach working at the Olympafrica centre signed the Baton Book. The Olympafrica centre works to get young people in Swaziland involved and active in sports.

In Southern Africa, the Baton Book was signed by Godfrey Mwisha in Zambia, also a member of International Inspirations. Godfrey is currently the president of the mental health club at Chainama College of Health Sciences where he is a student of Psychiatry.

In Lesotho, Lerato Sechele, the Lesotho Triple Jump athlete and 2013 IAAF African Champion on Youth



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Triple Jump signed the Baton Book. The final stop in the Africa tour was South Africa where Moegamat Shahim Rogers, an 18-year-old student from Cape Town and South African Torch Bearer for the 2012 London Olympics signed the Baton Book on Thursday 13th February.

The Baton Book's voyage throughout Commonwealth countries in Africa has been an amazing experience for all involved, giving the younger and older generations of the Commonwealth a platform to unite and highlight key challenges to be discussed and resolved.

33% of the world's population lives in the Commonwealth and 50% of those are under 25. The Baton Book, specially produced by De La Rue, is part of 33Fifty, a leadership programme for Commonwealth citizens aged between 18 and 25 run by the Royal Commonwealth Society and Common Purpose. It aims to develop young leaders who bring people together, reconcile difference and lead change.

The Baton Book is an opportunity for one young person from each country or territory the baton visits to send a message to Glasgow 2014, in particular to the participants of the 33Fifty programme that will take place prior to the Games. Applications for 33Fifty opened on Wednesday 16 October and 100 participants will be chosen from across the Commonwealth. See www.33fifty.org.

Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society, Michael Lake, said: *"On its return to Glasgow, having travelled 190,000 kilometres across the Commonwealth, the Baton Book will contain messages from 70 young people spanning six continents. Not only is the book a wonderful expression of Commonwealth citizenship, but it's an opportunity for young people to highlight the issues that are important to them as part of the most high profile event in the Commonwealth calendar – the Commonwealth Games."*

CEO of Common Purpose Charitable Trust, Julia Middleton, said: *"If fifty percent of the Commonwealth's population is under 25, that's over 1 billion people. I sometimes wonder what proportion of the Commonwealth's leaders are over 55. I hope that this book - as it travels across the Commonwealth with the Queen's Baton - will give that younger fifty percent more of a voice for people like me to hear."*

Group Director of Communications at De La Rue, Robert Hutchison, said: *"At the completion of its journey, this unique, handmade document will carry the inspirational words and messages of the Commonwealth's young people to the leaders of the future. De La Rue is proud to be part of 33Fifty's Baton Book initiative and looks forward to seeing the book's pages filled by the young signatories as it travels the world."*

Notes to Editors

33Fifty will form part of the official programme of cultural and educational events which runs parallel to the Games. It will be delivered by the Royal Commonwealth Society and Common Purpose, with half of the overall funding provided by the Scottish Government and further sponsorship provided by The Weir Group PLC.

The Royal Commonwealth Society is the oldest and largest civil society organisation devoted to the Commonwealth. Founded in 1868, it conducts a range of events, research and activities aimed at promoting international understanding. The RCS has a global membership and a presence in over 40



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Commonwealth countries through a network of branches and Commonwealth societies. The RCS is a registered charity in England and Wales. (226748). Website: www.thercs.org Twitter: [@TheRCSLondon](https://twitter.com/TheRCSLondon)

Common Purpose: Common Purpose is an independent, international leadership development organisation. We give people from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors the inspiration, skills and connections to become better leaders at work and in society. We develop their ability to work together, innovate and to thrive in different cultures - this helps people, organisations, cities and regions to succeed.

Founded in 1989 as a not-for-profit social enterprise, Common Purpose is both local and global. We run local courses for leaders in 35 cities (and growing) across the world and global programmes for leaders from over 100 countries across six continents. 4,000 leaders each year become Common Purpose alumni. Website: www.commonpurpose.org Twitter: [@CommonPurpose](https://twitter.com/CommonPurpose)

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