



33FIFTY

33Fifty: The Commonwealth Youth Leadership Programme

**PRESS RELEASE: 24 October 2013**

## **Winner of 2012 Commonwealth Essay Competition signs Baton Book as part of Queen's Baton Relay celebrations in Colombo**

On Saturday, Shenuka Corea added her message to the 33Fifty Baton Book that is accompanying the Queen's Baton Relay across the 70 countries and territories taking part in the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Corea, a student at Ladies College, Colombo, was chosen to sign the book in recognition of winning the top prize in last year's Commonwealth Essay Competition – the world's oldest and largest essay contest. Her winning essay spoke to the unique ability of sport – cricket in her case – to unify a nation. Shenuka had the special honour of being included in the Diamond Jubilee Collection, one of the projects put on by the Royal Commonwealth Society last year to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee.

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](http://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."*



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## 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. Website: <http://www.33fifty.org/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/33Fifty>

**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 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](http://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](http://www.commonpurpose.org) Twitter: [@CommonPurpose](https://twitter.com/CommonPurpose)

**De La Rue PLC:** As the world's largest integrated commercial banknote printer, De La Rue is a trusted partner of governments, central banks, issuing authorities and commercial organisations around the world. The Group has in recent years been involved in the design or production of over 150 national currencies. De La Rue also produces a wide range of security documents including passports, driving licences, authentication labels and tax stamps. In addition, the Group manufactures sophisticated, high speed cash sorting and inspection equipment. De La Rue also offers a range of specialist services and software solutions including government identity schemes, product authentication systems and cash management processing solutions. De La Rue employs approximately 4,000 people worldwide and is listed on the London Stock Exchange. Website: [www.delarue.com](http://www.delarue.com)

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