



Press Statement: 20 March 2015

The Royal Commonwealth Society expresses its condolences to family and friends of the former Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser who was an honorary Vice President of the Royal Commonwealth Society, and a great supporter of the Commonwealth and its potential in improving lives across the 53-nation family.

The former Prime Minister died today following a short illness. He was 84.

Malcolm Fraser has been a long-standing Vice President of the RCS, amongst other eminent supporters including HH The Aga Khan, Sir Shridath Ramphal GCMG QC and the current Secretary General HE Kamallesh Sharma.

Malcolm Fraser was very active in foreign affairs and a huge supporter of the Commonwealth and he used his role as a founding member of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group to campaign relentlessly against apartheid in South Africa and for the sporting boycotts against South Africa. He also played a leading role in gaining support from the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, to bring about majority rule in Zimbabwe.

He chaired the Sixth Commonwealth Heads of government meeting (CHOGM) in Melbourne in 1981 in which the Melbourne Declaration was issued “to extend the Commonwealth commitment to a fair international economic and financial system, and support for struggling poor countries”.

The Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society, Michael Lake said today. “Malcolm Fraser was one of the greatest supporters of the Commonwealth while he was Australian Prime Minister and more active still on Commonwealth issues since he retired. He believed the Commonwealth family could be a force for good and he campaigned for democracy and improvement in the lives of Commonwealth citizens.

The Royal Commonwealth Society would like to express its sadness at Mr Fraser’s death, and also to acknowledge his enormous contribution to the role and relevance of the Commonwealth internationally.

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