

Press release: PM celebrates Queen's Young Leaders at Downing Street reception

The remarkable achievements of 61 young global leaders were celebrated on Monday (25 June) at a Downing Street reception hosted by Prime Minister Theresa May.

Hailing from 38 Commonwealth countries including Ghana, Malawi, New Zealand, Canada and Dominica, the inspirational group of young people, aged between 18 and 29, have all completed the Queen's Young Leaders Programme which aims to celebrate and support young people who are leading the way in transforming their local communities.

They spoke to the Prime Minister about their pioneering work across a broad range of fields including healthcare, women's rights and equality, STEM and climate change, and Theresa May reiterated her continuing commitment to the Commonwealth and to delivering a fairer, more sustainable, and more prosperous future.

Among the leaders were 21 year-old Ghanaian Derick Omari, founder of Tech Era, a programme which introduces underprivileged children in Ghana to technology; 24 year-old Malawian Chikondi Mlozi, whose counselling service Youth Net helps to free girls from forced marriages; 20 year-old New Zealander Ezekial Raui, who set up a peer-support programme offering information to young people about mental health in their local area; and 19 year-old Dominican Lakeyia Joseph, who was named Dominica's Youth Champion last year for her work to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The inspirational young people I met this week show what a powerful force for good our Commonwealth can be.

I was delighted to hear about the wonderful work these future leaders are doing, serving their communities, helping others and improving the life chances of other young people.

The UK is committed to a fairer, more sustainable and more prosperous Commonwealth, and at the heart of that vision must be its young people.

That's why the voices of youth representatives were given such a high priority when the Heads of Governments met earlier this year; and why I will continue to ensure young people take centre stage as we shape the Commonwealth of the future.

Schools Minister Nick Gibb said:

The common thread which binds together all the young people I've met is a deep desire to help others. There is a strand of altruism that runs through all of them and I hope they build on the opportunities they've been given, and go on to inspire a new generation of young leaders.