

Press release: UK Commonwealth Minister visits Scotland ahead of April's summit

The UK's Minister for the Commonwealth has visited Edinburgh today (Tuesday 6 March) to explore the historical and present-day links between Scotland and other Commonwealth nations ahead of the [Commonwealth Summit](#).

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister of State Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon met students from Kelvin College, Glasgow and heard about their textile design project, run in collaboration with students at a women's community college in Guntur, India. The project centred around the history of the famous Paisley Pattern, which originated in India, and culminated in joint fashion shows in both Paisley and Guntur.

Lord Ahmad visited the Scottish Youth Parliament to meet young people active in their communities, including individuals who will attend the Commonwealth Youth Forum during the summit. They discussed issues facing young people in Scotland, and how the summit can best capture the voices and interests of young people across the world.

He also attended a lunch with diaspora members and faith representatives to hear about how different communities will be involved with the Summit and to uncover more about the international relationships that act as living bridges between Scotland and other Commonwealth countries today.

In April, the UK will host the annual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting with world leaders travelling in to take part in a week-long programme of activities.

Lord Ahmad said:

My father arrived in Glasgow from the Indian subcontinent in the 1950s and made a home in the UK. For this and many other reasons, Scotland, and its Commonwealth ties, is very important to me.

The Commonwealth is a unique family of nations and its members account for two and a half billion people. The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April will focus on young people as we strive to meet the aspirations of the one billion people in Commonwealth countries under the age of 25. I want to see Scotland, especially its young people, involved in shaping decisions that affect their future.

I am incredibly confident in the future of the Commonwealth and the role Scotland has to play in it.

Lord Ahmad met Fiona Hyslop, the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, to discuss the key role that the Scottish Government has in the run up to the Commonwealth Summit, including through hosting Commonwealth 'Big Lunches' and engaging young people.

Further information