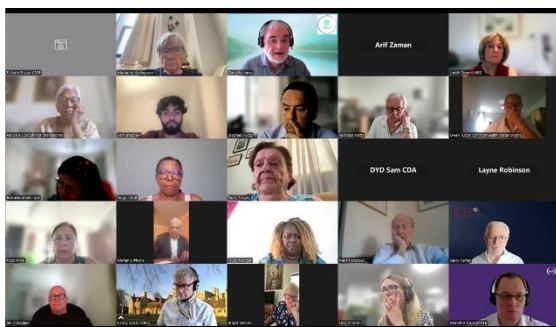




INDEPENDENT FORUM OF COMMONWEALTH ORGANISATIONS

A Partnership of Commonwealth Accredited Organisations

CHOGM AND EXCLUSION FROM THE PREPARATION COMMITTEE



Around 50 Accredited Organisations participated in the IFCO Conference online on 27 July or sent apologies. A hard-working meeting covered a wide range of items concerning the internal organisation of IFCO as well as strategic relationships with the Commonwealth ecosystem.

Participants expressed deep concern about the exclusion of Accredited Organisations (AOs) from the CHOGM 2026 Preparation Committee (PrepCom), despite sending clear signals that this would be problematic for AOs. AO presentations had been part of the formal process of CHOGM for more than 20 years and had become integral to it. AOs also noted that no formal communication about the decision had been received and no alternative proposed. Informal discussions with representatives of member states, the Secretariat and other stakeholders are underway or being planned.

After a reflective debate, the conference by consensus gave the IFCO Steering Committee a clear mandate to register this concern and seek constructive ways to raise it with the Secretariat and member states, while continuing to strengthen effective partnership working.

CHOGM [registration](#) is now open.

COMMONWEALTH PEOPLE'S FORUM: DELEGATE-LED SESSIONS



The Foundation has invited detailed proposals for delegate-led sessions at the Commonwealth People's Forum. The Forum will be held alongside CHOGM in Antigua and Barbuda from 2–4 November 2026. AOs are invited to design and run sessions outside the main CHOGM programme, during lunchtimes and late afternoons. Sessions should be grounded in the delegate organisation's work, highly engaging, and linked to one or more Forum themes: freedom of expression, climate and environmental justice, and economic inclusion. Further information, including the submission form, is available [here](#):

Applications are open until 5 August.

COMMONWEALTH SPORT TRIUMPH!



The Commonwealth Games, opened in Glasgow by King Charles III, Head of the Commonwealth on 16 July 2026 ended on 2 August 2026. The success was a triumph for Commonwealth Sport, the city of Glasgow and all those involved. The Friendly Games showcased a Commonwealth of peoples, with enthusiastic participation from 74 Commonwealth countries and territories. See the IFCO press release [here](#).



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MEETING WITH UK FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, 17 JUNE 2026



IFCO Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary represented IFCO at a meeting in the UK FCDO in June. The meeting explored how the Commonwealth's partnership language involving AOs could be translated into practical steps, including coordination and input on ministerial meeting agendas, the Secretary-General's dialogue agenda, and AO expertise feeding into CMAG discussions.

IFCO also raised concern about the apparent loss of the AO opportunity to present to PrepCom and the limited visibility of the process, including timing and communiqué drafts. It noted that this could signal limited progress on improving the partnership culture. There was a positive discussion about the need to better showcase AO impact across the Commonwealth.

This is one of a sequence of meetings with more anticipated. IFCO is also meeting with High Commissioners and representatives of other Commonwealth countries alongside the many contacts by AOs with partners in the Commonwealth ecosystem.

COMMONWEALTH COMMUNICATORS GROUP (CCG)

New AO representatives have joined the Executive of the CCG, hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat Communications Team.



Elizabeth (Libby) van der Valk (Chief Operating Officer, Royal Commonwealth Society) and Marcel le Roux, (Strategic Engagement Manager, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) are Vice Chair and General Secretary respectively. They are useful contacts for all AOs on things to do with publicity and communications across the Commonwealth.

ITUC GLOBAL RIGHTS INDEX



The International Trade Union Confederation has released the 2026 ITUC Global Rights Index. It found a 5% rise in violations of free speech and assembly, a 6% rise in violent attacks against workers, and a 3% rise in attacks on civil liberties, including a sharp rise in arrests and detentions of workers and their representatives.



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The Index also found that new technology is being used to monitor, discipline and silence workers, while fewer governments are consulting unions in good faith before amending or introducing labour laws. More details can be found [here](#).

BUCKING THE TREND: WORKERS' RIGHTS IN COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES



CTUG annual meeting in Geneva - June 2026

While workers' rights are deteriorating globally, the situation in Commonwealth countries has improved for the second year running. In 2026, the global average score was 3.70, while the Commonwealth average improved to 3.46 from 3.54 in 2025 (lower scores indicate better performance). Minor improvements in Commonwealth countries, combined with very poor performance elsewhere, have lifted the Commonwealth close to the top of the global rankings. However, two Commonwealth countries remain among the ten countries identified by the ITUC as the worst places in the world to be a trade unionist. Look [here](#) for more information.



WHATSAPP GROUP FOR CHOGM 2026 SIGN UP NOW

IFCO has set up a WhatsApp group for AOs participating in CHOGM 2026. The group will provide a practical space to share updates, coordinate engagement, and exchange information as

preparations develop. Contact ifco.cmw@gmail.com.

CHOGM RESPONSES NEEDED SOON

An IFCO **survey of AO CHOGM activity** is planned to help AOs connect and be more effective during the event. Please watch out for the online survey.

Commonwealth Youth Forum nominations by Commonwealth Accredited Organisations must be submitted [online](#) - deadline 31st August 2026.

IFCO NEWSLETTER FUTURE PLANS



IFCO is reviewing how it communicates with the AO network, with a particular focus on making the newsletter as useful and relevant as possible.

Please complete the short five-minute survey to share your views on the newsletter, including how you use it, what content and frequency would be most helpful, who else should receive it, and which other channels could help IFCO share information and stay connected with members. Your responses will help strengthen IFCO's communication with AOs. The survey can be found [here](#).



IFCO is the umbrella group for Commonwealth Accredited Organisations. For more information visit www.ifco.online

The IFCO Chair welcomes feedback on the Newsletter and IFCO activities.

To contact IFCO, please email ifco.cmw@gmail.com