



The Commonwealth and a Kiwi Head of State

- A New Zealand republic, with its own independent Head of State, will remain a member of the Commonwealth.
- Commonwealth membership does not require New Zealand have the British monarch as our Head of State.
- The Commonwealth has 53 member states:
 - 32 are Commonwealth republics;
 - 5 are monarchies, with their own monarch as Head of State;
 - 16 are Commonwealth realms with the British monarch as their Head of State.
- The criteria for Commonwealth membership requires:
 - acceptance of the Commonwealth's fundamental values, principles, and priorities;
 - a commitment to democracy, rule of law, judicial independence, good governance, and protection of human rights;
 - acceptance of Commonwealth conventions for inter-Commonwealth relations;
 - a historic constitutional Commonwealth association;
 - acknowledgement of the Queen Elizabeth II as the 'Head of the Commonwealth' (a symbolic and non-hereditary position).

(Report of the Committee on Commonwealth Membership, 2007)

- Becoming a republic will not affect New Zealand's Commonwealth membership because Member states have agreed that membership will continue when a state changes its constitutional arrangements:

[W]here an existing member changes its formal constitutional status, it should not have to reapply for Commonwealth membership provided that it continues to meet all the criteria for membership.

(Final Communiqué - CHOGM 2007)

- 18 former Commonwealth realms have become republics and are still members of the Commonwealth (including India and South Africa).

Commonwealth Republics		Commonwealth Realms	Monarchies (with own monarch)
 Bangladesh	 Namibia	 Antigua and Barbuda	 Brunei
 Botswana	 Nauru	 Australia	 Lesotho
 Cameroon	 Nigeria *	 The Bahamas	 Malaysia
 Cyprus	 Pakistan *	 Barbados	 Swaziland
 Dominica	 Rwanda	 Belize	 Tonga
 Fiji (suspended)	 Samoa	 Canada	
 Ghana *	 Seychelles	 Grenada	
 Guyana *	 Sierra Leone *	 Jamaica	
 India *	 Singapore	 New Zealand	
 Kenya *	 South Africa *	 Papua New Guinea	
 Kiribati	 Sri Lanka	 Saint Kitts and Nevis	
 Malawi *	 Tanzania	 Saint Lucia	
 Maldives	 Trinidad and Tobago *	 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	
 Malta *	 Uganda *	 Solomon Islands	
 Mauritius *	 Vanuatu	 Tuvalu	
 Mozambique	 Zambia	 Great Britain	
* Former Commonwealth realm			