

Assembly notes on The Commonwealth

Intro – The Queen and other royals marked Commonwealth Day at a special service in Westminster Abbey this week. But is the Commonwealth still relevant?

Slide two – What is this picture about?

- It shows the Queen, massed ranks of the royal family and other dignitaries on Monday this week at Westminster Abbey for Commonwealth Day.
- It was a historic occasion for another reason too: it was Harry and Meghan's last official engagement as working royals. Meghan is easy to spot in a green dress behind Prince Charles.
- They listened to a speech by World champion boxer Anthony Joshua who spoke eloquently about his Nigerian and British heritage and how his background reflected many in the Commonwealth.

Slide three – Why is the Commonwealth said to be the Queen's favourite club?

- Partly just history. She has been at its head for 68 years and has been served by over 180 prime ministers — an astonishing record!
- She enjoys being a woman in a club dominated by men and she often speaks warmly of it as a family in which people can all be different and disagree and yet still get along.
- This week she spoke warmly about how much members of the "family" can learn from each other when it comes to protecting the Earth.

Slide four – Some key facts about the Commonwealth.

Slide five – What is this poster about?

- It is an original vintage World War Two propaganda poster featuring flags of the Allied nations forming a V for victory in the centre with troops in their national military uniform and holding rifles on both sides.

Slide six – Video explainer about the story of the Commonwealth (5:00)

Slide seven – Is the Commonwealth still relevant today?

- It has become much more relevant since Brexit in January. The current secretary-general has been talking about turbo-charging trade with Commonwealth countries such as India, Canada and Australia next year.

Slide eight – Winston Churchill's wish was widely shared by world leaders in 1944 but it turned out to be a different organisation that embodied it — NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, was founded in 1949 as a military alliance between 29 countries.