

# Release



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## MYCOMMONWEALTH HOSTS THE QUEEN'S BATON RELAY ON PARLIAMENT HILL

*Students "Run, Jump and Throw" in front of the Peace Tower as Canadian and UK and Scottish Ministers welcome the Queen's Baton*

**OTTAWA** – MYCommonwealth (MYC) today hosted hundreds of Ottawa students on Parliament Hill to welcome the Queen's Baton Relay (QBR) and learn about the Commonwealth and the Games from Canada's Minister of State (Sport) Bal Gosal; the Right Honourable Alistair Carmichael, Secretary of State for Scotland; Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Commonwealth Games, Sport, Equalities and Pensioners' Rights, emcee MP John Weston and MYCommonwealth.

"MYC is excited to see so many young people getting active," said MYC's Co-founder and National Director, Alicia Swinamer. "Our mandate is to educate and represent young people under 30 in Canada to the Commonwealth; reaching out to students through sport and the visit of the Queen's Baton is a perfect way to do this."

Students took part in sports activities organized by Run, Jump, Throw of Athletics Canada and participated in a section of the Baton relay before the speeches began.

"As the largest Commonwealth country, Canada is proud to be part of this unique event celebrating the arrival of the Queen's Baton in our country," said Minister Gosal. "Sport has always been an important part of our culture, and the Commonwealth Games have played a significant role in our sport heritage since they began more than 80 years ago. Our government

knows what an enormous source of pride and inspiration our athletes are for all Canadians, and we look forward to celebrating their successes this summer in Glasgow.”

The Queen’s Baton arrived in Canada on Monday April 28<sup>th</sup> as part of its Commonwealth wide relay in advance of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow Scotland this July.

“We are only weeks away from the Queens Baton returning to Scotland,” said Minister Carmichael. “All those who follow it on its journey to Glasgow will find a dynamic, friendly city ready to welcome them with open arms and a nation ready to get behind its athletes. The UK Government is committed to working closely with Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government to deliver a safe and successful event with a lasting legacy for Glasgow.”

“The baton carries the call to your athletes,” added Minister Robison. “Scotland looks forward to welcoming athletes and supporters from Canada as we host the greatest sporting and cultural spectacle ever seen in our country”.

The Baton travelled over 175,000 kilometres and visited sixty countries prior to arriving in Canada this week. “Just months away from the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games”, said Dr. Andrew Pipe, President of Commonwealth Games Canada, “the Queen’s Baton coming to Canada really brings the Games to life for Canadians and members of our Team. And to see the Baton right here in Ottawa, in the shadow of the Peace Tower is a proud moment indeed.”

MYCommonwealth is a youth run and led organization that represents young people under 30 in Canada to the Commonwealth, and ensures that they are active and engaged on the issues that matter to them.

A backgrounder follows.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

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## **BACKGROUNDER**

### **ABOUT MYCOMMONWEALTH**

MYCommonwealth (MYC) is Canada’s official youth representative body to the Commonwealth. MYC is democratic, youth-run and led, and is the single source for the views of Canadian youth

on Commonwealth issues. As an active participant in the Commonwealth system of national youth representation, MYC advocates for the interests of youth in the Commonwealth, paying special attention to leadership, democracy and youth involvement in decision making. MYC's mandate is recognized by the Canadian Government and the Commonwealth.

To achieve this mandate MYC engages in three main ways: consultations and representation, education and advocacy and through special projects and partnerships. For more information visit [www.mycommonwealth.org](http://www.mycommonwealth.org).

### **ABOUT THE QUEEN'S BATON RELAY**

The Queen's Baton Relay was launched at Buckingham Palace on October 9th 2013, when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth, placed her message to the Commonwealth into the baton.

Over its 288 day journey, the baton will cover close to 190,000 kilometres, averaging one to four days in each nation or territory. The first region the baton travelled to was Asia; from there the baton travelled to Oceania, Africa, Americas (south) and is now in the Caribbean, before coming to North America and returning to Europe. It will finish its journey at the Opening Ceremony of the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland on July 23, 2014.

### **ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES**

The Commonwealth is an association of independent sovereign states spread over every continent and ocean. From Africa to Asia, the Pacific shores to the Caribbean, the Commonwealth's 2 billion people make up 30% of the world's population and are of many faiths, races, languages, cultures and traditions.

The Commonwealth Games is a unique, world class, multi-sports event which is held once every four years. It is often referred to as the 'Friendly Games'.

The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) is the organisation that is responsible for the direction and control of the Commonwealth Games.

As a means of improving society and the general well being of the people of the Commonwealth, the CGF also encourages and assists education via sport development and physical recreation.

Underlying every decision made by the CGF are three core values: - HUMANITY - EQUALITY - DESTINY. These values help to inspire and unite millions of people and symbolise the broad mandate of the CGF within the Commonwealth.

### **ABOUT COMMONWEALTH GAMES CANADA**

Commonwealth Games Canada (CGC) is the franchise holder for the Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth movement in Canada, and an active, contributing member of the Canadian sport community. The mission of CGC is to strengthen sport within Canada and throughout the Commonwealth by participating in the Commonwealth Games and by using sport as a development tool. Visit [www.commonwealthgames.ca](http://www.commonwealthgames.ca) for information.

### **ABOUT RUN, JUMP, THROW (RJT)**

Run, Jump, Throw (RJT) is Athletics Canada's introductory program for the development of physical literacy, with adaptations for children with disabilities. Through track and field inspired

activities and games, participants are taught the fundamentals of running, jumping, throwing and wheeling in a fun and active learning environment. RJT provides a foundation for all sports, teaches children to move efficiently, and engage with confidence in a healthy and active lifestyle.

