

By Jeje Muhinde;

Rwandan President Paul Kagame has urged fellow members of the Commonwealth to ensure that no small or developing nation is left behind.

Rwanda is hosting this year's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (Chogm), and President Kagame made the comments while speaking on a panel at Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF 2022) in the capital, Kigali on Tuesday.

The Rwandan President said, "We must ensure nobody is left behind such as small and developing nations-and uplift everyone to move towards and fulfill that obligation to the 'common-ness' we aspire to in this family of nations"

"There is already the understanding that we must work for a common future. We have to work towards that and make sure we get it. It's a work in progress and we're moving towards it - and I am optimistic." President Kagame said.

He added that with the Commonwealth, we already have many things in common indeed. Be it the language, be it the different systems, financial systems that would enable us to make investments, trade with each other altogether

The three-day forum will address the CHOGM theme - 'Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming', with a focus on "A Global Reset", dealing with the impact of the pandemic and the Commonwealth's role in rebuilding and reinvigorating the global economy.

Investment flows between the Commonwealth countries average 27% higher than those between other country pairs, almost tripling since 2015.

The combined GDP of Commonwealth countries is \$13 trillion and is estimated to reach \$19.5 trillion in 2027.

According to the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda report, widespread acceptance of digital trade paperwork could generate an additional US\$1.2 trillion in trade by Commonwealth countries by 2026.

Commonwealth leaders have already committed themselves to the goal of increasing Commonwealth trade to US\$2 trillion by 2030.