



MAY 11 2001

MALAWI HIGH COMMISSION  
OTTAWA, CANADA

**NOTE NO. 32/2001**

The High Commission for the Republic of Malawi presents its compliments to the high Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education of the State of Montana and has the honour to seek consideration for Columbia Commonwealth University to be considered to operate in the State for the reasons outlined in the note enclosed.

The High Commission of the Republic of Malawi avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the High Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education of the State of Montana, the assurances of its highest consideration.

OTTAWA

May 10, 2001



THE HIGH OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION



May 10,2001

RE: COLUMBIA COMMONWEALTH  
UNIVERSITY

The High Commission of the Republic of Malawi in Ottawa, Canada was very concerned to learn that a very fine distance learning institution, the Columbia Commonwealth. University, which is fully accredited and valued by the Government of Malawi, might no longer be permitted to operate in the State of Montana. An administrative center of Columbia Commonwealth University is located in Missoula and employs Montana Citizens.

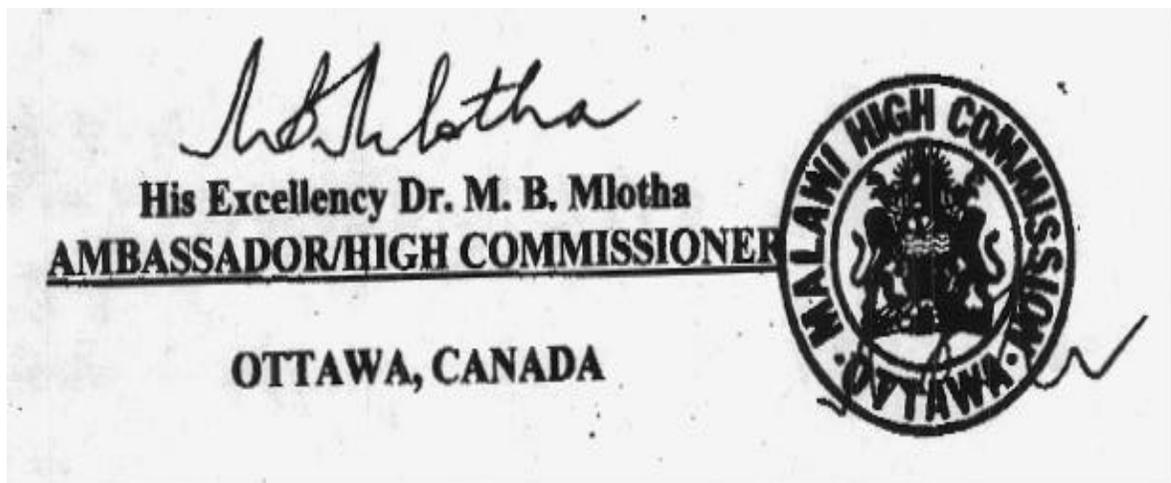
The Montana Board of Regents, due to meet next week, has a policy under consideration which would require such schools to be accredited by one of the six American recognized regional post~secondary accrediting agencies or not be permitted to operate in Montana. There is no provision made for including foreign government accreditation in this policy. Therefore, an institution like Columbia Commonwealth University that has full accreditation from the Government of the Republic of Malawi would not be permitted to operate in Montana. As you are aware, the Republic of Malawi is an active member of the COMmonwealth of Nations.

Kindly further note the contents of the attached regulations of the Wyoming Department of Education. Wyoming's regulations include accreditation by a foreign government as well as regional accp~editatlon for permitting an institution of higher education to operate in the State of Wyoming, (note attached). Following is a quote from the regulations; "If

the post secondary education institution originates in a foreign country, accreditation recognized and accepted by that country's Department of Education or equivalent agency is required."

Given that the Malawi High Commission is located in Canada, which is a neighbour of Montana, and Governor Judy Martz of Montana has championed Montana's expanding relationships with the global economy, it would be ideal for the Board of Regents to include a provision in its policy for "accreditation recognized and accepted by a foreign country's Department of Education or equivalent agency." This would permit an Administrative Office of the fully accredited University, Columbia Commonwealth University, to operate legally in the State of Montana.

Given the fact that the Montana Board Of Regents will vote on this policy next week, it would be greatly appreciated if a timely response would be considered regarding this matter of exclusion of foreign government accreditation. This is a serious concern of the Government of the Republic of Malawi and the High Commission of Malawi in Canada.



**JUDY CATCHPOLE**  
 Superintendent of Public Instruction



**Wyoming**  
 Department of Education

**Section 4. Definitions.**

(a) "Agent" means any person owning any interest in, employed by, or representing for remuneration or other consideration a post secondary education institution located within or without this state who enrolls or who, in places other than the principal school premises, offers or attempts to secure the enrollment of any person within this state for education in a post secondary education institution.

(b) "Attorney General" means the Attorney General of the State of Wyoming.

(c) "Degree" means any award, earned or honorary, conferred with the designation of associate, baccalaureate, master, professional, specialist or doctorate.

(d) "Post Secondary Education Institution" means any post secondary institution offering a degree, earned or honorary, conferred with the designation of associate, baccalaureate, master, professional, specialist or doctorate.

(e) "License" means a non-transferable document issued by the Wyoming Department of Education to a post secondary education institution located within this state or located outside the state, but whose agent solicits students from within the state in the name of such institution, which permits the institution to solicit, offer, and maintain a course(s) of instruction or study in compliance with the provision of the Private School Licensing Act and the rules of the Wyoming State Board of Education promulgated pursuant to the Act.

(f) "Recognized and Accepted Accreditation Agency" includes those agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education through National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility. If the post secondary education institution originates in a foreign country, accreditation recognized and accepted by that country's Department of Education or equivalent agency is required.

(g) "Department" means Wyoming Department of Education.

(h) "Board" means Wyoming State Board of Education.

(i) "Licensing year" is from July 1 through June 30 of the following calendar year.

**Section 5. Granting, Refusing or Revoking Licenses.**

Denial, suspensions, or revocations of a license may occur when it is found that a school has failed to comply with Wyoming Post Secondary Education Institution Licensing statutes and the Post Secondary Education Institution rules adopted by the Board. Such action will be governed by the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act (W.S. 16-3-101 through 16-3-115). Licensure is not