



The New Africa

Redrawing the Blueprint for the Canada-Africa Partnership

Conference - October 2nd and 3rd 2009, Ottawa

The context: For many Canadians, including many in government, Africa is seen primarily as an aid and humanitarian challenge. While there is undoubtedly much to be done in these areas, Canadians need urgently to develop a much clearer understanding of the realities of a dynamic Africa, a continent of 53 countries where democratic institutions and economic development are accelerating. In many African countries significant, world-class infrastructures are (and infrastructure opportunities) emerging. China, India and Europe are rushing to create partnerships to participate in African development and to tap vast largely undeveloped African mineral, petroleum, power and human resources. These nascent trends in governance and the economy require more broadly-based partnership and engagement to ensure they continue in a manner which brings lasting benefits to Africans. Canadians need to know more about the considerable presence of Canadian companies, NGOs, educational institutions, Diaspora linkages, etc. in African countries and about the work they do which benefits both Canada and Africa.

Africa as a continent is at a critical juncture particularly given the current global economic malaise. But by any measure, today for sustainable economic growth Africa needs Canada and offers Canadians more opportunities than at any other period. To realize this potential Canada needs an articulated and coherent policy to promote partnership with Africa.

CCAfrica's goal through this conference is to begin a process of drawing a new blueprint for Canada-Africa partnership.

Major Elements of the Conference:

There are four pillars to the conference:

- 1- **Presenting the New Africa:** A snapshot of the real trends defining the “New Africa,” including economic growth trends; democracy, its progress and challenges; infrastructure - new airports, major ongoing projects, gaps & requirements to deepen economic and social development; human resources and potential; natural resources; AU & regional organization evolution; etc.
- 2- **How are others partnering with the New Africa:** China and Africa; the EU and Africa; the US and Africa; etc. From strategies to implementation.
- 3- **Rethinking the Canada-Africa Partnership:** How important is Africa to Canada, and vice versa (realities versus myths), and what are the implications for Canadian foreign policy? How has the relationship changed since the 1960s? How does Canada coordinate “3D+” (i.e., DFAIT, development, defence, NGOs and Provinces) coherence at the upper levels of policy, allocation of adequate resources, and at the same time improve its mechanisms for executing policy in a complex, dynamic environment that mobilizes and supports Canadian private sector/NGO/Institutional/Diaspora involvement in Africa? Workshops will examine the details of current and potential Canadian engagement in Africa.
- 4- **Drawing the Blueprint:** Work towards stimulating a process that fairly quickly (within weeks) can produce a “blueprint” framework that stakeholders can present to Canadians, Africans and their governments, which will raise the level of knowledge and debate about Canada’s future engagement with Africa.

Expected Conference Participants & Logistics: NGOs, the African Diplomatic Corps, businesses, government officials (federal, provincial), political parties, academics, Diaspora, etc. In total 200-250 participants. There is also an expectation to have the participation of senior African leaders and various experts. The venue for the conference will be the Chateau Laurier in the national capital, Ottawa. The conference will be chaired by two prominent Canadian public figures. CCAfrica will seek partners to organize and facilitate the conference.

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