

**The New Africa
Redrawing the Blueprint for the Canada-Africa Partnership
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Speaking notes
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Well, I would like to thank the Canadian Council for Africa for its kind invitation. I'm very pleased to be here to share in these reflections about re-drawing the blueprint for the Canada-Africa partnership.

Les défis auxquels nous devons faire face sont nombreux, dans le monde en général et particulièrement en Afrique. Il est important de nous poser des questions suivantes : le Canada est-il prêt à faire sa part? Va-t-il contribuer à réformer les politiques internationales en matière de commerce et d'investissement? Va-t-il aider à établir des normes pour le secteur privé canadien afin que les pays africains profitent aussi des investissements? Et que penser de la contribution du Canada en matière d'aide au développement ? : est-ce que nous allons faire preuve d'engagement et maintenir notre contribution ou est-ce que nous allons baisser les bras et abandonner?

Le Canada peut faire beaucoup et pas seulement à titre de donateur. Nous serons les hôtes du G8 en juin 2010 – et nous allons aussi partager la coprésidence de la réunion du G20. De nombreuses discussions vont porter sur l'adaptation aux changements climatiques et sur la gestion de la crise des systèmes financiers, ainsi que sur le commerce et la sécurité alimentaire. Il y aura des conférences sur tous les sujets importants, et le Canada présidera ou coprésidera ces deux rencontres. Que ferons-nous pour assurer que les débats sont bien ciblés? Le Canada va-t-il aider à définir un ordre du jour qui intègre l'Afrique, ses préoccupations et ses intérêts ?

Many people now say – and I think they are right – that there is a triple crisis stalking the world; finance, food-security and climate change. These are truly global problems which will affect everyone but they will certainly not affect everyone equally. Africa stands to pay a heavy price for the neglect and excesses that have put us all on this path to crisis.

Financial Crisis

Financial crisis in Africa has meant falling demand and falling prices for Africa's commodities. It has meant reduced capital flows... reduced remittances... reduced aid. Modest and hard won progress in social indicators in some countries has been eroded.

UNESCO estimates the poorest 390 million working people in Africa will see their incomes drop by about 20% - far more than G8 countries.

Child malnutrition is expected to cause an additional 200,000 to 400,000 infant deaths a year in Africa.

Setbacks in universal primary education are expected to affect numerous countries, including Mozambique, Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal, and Rwanda, all of which have made substantial progress in recent years.

African income as a whole is expected to fall by 13%, or US\$49 billion, between the start of the crisis and the end of this year.

Food Security

And there is a continuing food price crisis in Africa (exacerbated – of course - by climate change impacts) which now creates major risk for millions facing drought and privation in East Africa.

One out of every three people in sub Saharan Africa generally are chronically hungry.

And it is self evident, isn't it (?) – that as incomes and family assets melt away with the financial crisis (and as food prices remain out of reach and rising) those poorest citizens who spend over 60 percent of their income on food will suffer first and worst.

Aid – does it work?

At the same time that all these challenges are becoming more and more articulated and pronounced there is an emerging and increasingly robust debate about whether aid works. The cynic in me (of course asks) why is it that the effectiveness debate starts boiling every time donors are feeling the heat on aid levels generally?

But, of course – it is an important debate – and one that needs attention.

We have been hearing from Dambissa Moyo and her book *Dead Aid* about aid being the problem rather than the solution to African development.

Those who spend time here in Ottawa will remember a choleric 2007 Senate Committee Report castigating Canadian aid for its “40 years of failure” in Sub-Saharan Africa.

At CCIC we think that Njongonkulu Ndungane (the head of the African Monitor) is right. Cutting aid to Africa is not a solution to its current problems. Aid needs to be used effectively - to support African solutions to Africa's problems. But it is all part of a package that has to go along with higher economic growth, and reduced inequalities, the mobilization of domestic resources and remittances, effective measures to discourage capital flight, and an attention to ending conflict and building the basis for peace it all has to be there.

So as we think about the new Canada/Africa Partnership we should be thinking in package terms—i.e. that Canada Africa relations need re-vamping on a number of fronts for example:
We need:

- Greater priority and attention to Canada's role in supporting peace processes and peace keeping on the continent. Canada's declining presence on this file in Africa – including in UN peacekeeping missions - has reduced our credibility on the continent.

Canada should rebuild its role in supporting peace processes and must ensure women are included in all levels of peace making and peace keeping.

- Greater attention to the too often damaging human rights and environmental impacts of Canadian companies in Africa. We must ensure that policies and laws are in place in Canada that calls for the highest standards for corporate behaviour. There is currently a Bill before Parliament (Bill C-300) that could address some of these concerns in the extractive sector, and it needs all of our support.
- We need Canada to work harder with African governments to ensure trade rules reflect poorest countries' concerns for more stable prices for basic commodities --whether through basic tariffs or more complex international supply management arrangements--, not just market access for advanced exporters like Canada.
- And we need to support African efforts to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

Le Canada est-il un donateur constant?

Cela dit, nous devons quand même nous pencher sur la question de l'aide. Est-ce que le Canada saura être constant? Dans quelle mesure va-t-il s'engager?

Le gouvernement du Canada a fait la promotion du *Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de l'Afrique (NPDA)* au G8 de Kananaskis en 2002. Il a également promis d'augmenter régulièrement le budget de l'aide et de doubler la part de l'aide canadienne accordée au continent avant la fin de 2008-2009. Il s'agit là d'un engagement qui été tenu avec fermeté et qui a su résister aux divers changements de gouvernement. M. Harper a réaffirmé l'engagement de doubler l'aide à l'Afrique. Même si les statistiques officielles sur l'aide pour 2008-2009 n'ont toujours pas été rendues publiques, nous pensons que le Canada va atteindre son objectif avant la fin de l'année en cours.

Quant aux autres contributions annoncées, on est encore loin des objectifs. L'aide publique bilatérale au développement à l'intention de la partie au Sud du Sahara --sans compter l'allègement de la dette-- a augmenté de dix pour cent en termes absolus. Toutefois, selon l'African Monitor, les pays du G8 affichent, en moyenne, un déficit de 27 pour cent par rapport à l'objectif fixé pour 2010. Il y a encore beaucoup à faire.

Il faudra aussi se pencher sérieusement sur la question des politiques canadiennes à l'égard de l'Afrique, spécialement dans un contexte de partenariat renouvelé entre les deux pays.

Parmi les vingt pays prioritaires qui vont recevoir de l'aide canadienne, on compte seulement sept pays africains.

Auparavant, on en comptait quatorze. Maintenant, le Burkina Faso, le Rwanda, le Niger, le Bénin, le Malawi, la Zambie, le Cameroun et le Kenya ne sont plus du nombre des pays prioritaires.

Pourtant, ces derniers figurent parmi les pays qui ont le plus besoin d'aide en raison du niveau considérable de pauvreté et du faible indice de développement humain.

CCIC has been saying that Canada should

- renew its commitment to address growing poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa with
- increased resources at least equal each year to the growth of the budget's international assistance envelope, and with
- total resources for Sub-Saharan Africa equal to at least 50% of CIDA's bilateral and multilateral disbursements.

We are looking for a 10 year strategic plan for Canadian aid resources to reach the UN target of 0.7% of gross national income by 2019 (today we are just over 0.32%) so as to create the necessary space for Canada to play an effective role as a responsible donor state.

It is true that there is pressure on donor commitments with the financial crisis but many donors ---such as the UK-- are holding fast to the global target.

Canada rightly says it is weathering the financial storm better than many others in the international community.

What goes along with that? We can do better than others in our obligations to share a very small proportion of our wealth with the poorest countries and people.

At CCIC we think that continued commitment to Africa's development --from the point of view of Canada's aid performance-- and a commitment to robust performance as a donor state fits together well with a new Act of Parliament, the *Official Development Assistance Accountability Act*.

The Act references all Canadian ODA but it should be an essential consideration when we are thinking about the foundations for a renewed Canada-Africa partnership.

The Act clearly prescribes that all ministers responsible for aid allocations must be assured that these disbursements will:

- contribute to poverty reduction,
- take account of the perspectives of the poor, and
- be consistent with international human rights standards.

The new law calls for improved accountability through timely reporting to Parliament and Canadians, and also sets out a statutory responsibility for consultations with civil society and developing country partners when it comes to key choices and the implementation of programs.

This legislation sets up a human rights approach for international cooperation. Ownership and participation by those who are likely to be affected by aid programming are now built into the Canadian aid story as is the central target of poverty reduction.

Consultation with affected countries is a binding duty for Ministers who make future aid decisions and those are consultations that must be transparent and inclusive.

They must be, in short, consistent with Partnership and the mutual accountability that (in our view) partnership implies.

I can tell you that this is stirring up some interest.

Earlier this week CCIC co-organized a two days conference with colleagues from academia, the human rights community, government officials and media, where we explored the implication of the legislation for the future of Canadian ODA. I think most of us have come away persuaded that those implications are far reaching and extremely positive.

Ainsi, tout nouveau partenariat avec l’Afrique doit s’appuyer sur des réflexions relatives aux droits sociaux, économiques et culturels des pauvres et des populations marginalisées.

Pour terminer, un partenariat efficace avec l’Afrique exige du Canada qu’il rajuste le tir quant à ses priorités à l’égard de ce continent en assurant la cohérence de l’ensemble de ses politiques en matière d’aide, de commerce, d’investissement, de paix et de sécurité.

Si nous voulons prêter main-forte au développement de l'Afrique dans l'intérêt de tous, il nous faut une perspective du développement et du partenariat qui prenne en compte tous ces domaines.

C'est pourquoi je me réjouis de vous voir ici en si grand nombre aujourd'hui. Vous qui comprenez les politiques et les cultures complexes d'un grand continent et qui, en même temps, reconnaissez son étonnante diversité et la gamme prodigieuse de ses ressources.

There are people here today from academia and from the private sector. There are NGOs and advocates from civil society. There are parliamentarians and important members of the diplomatic community. There is something for us all to do, and "partnership" is a good way to frame it.

Thank you very much.