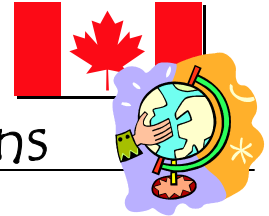


Canada and International Organizations



Canada promotes commonly shared values such as equality and democracy through its participation in many international organizations, including the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and *La Francophonie*.

Canada and the United Nations

The United Nations is the only multilateral organization whose membership approaches universality and whose agenda encompasses all areas of human activity, in every region of the world. It is, in effect, the marketplace at which much of the world's multilateral diplomacy is conducted, the mechanism through which the views of the international community are given expression, and the forum in which grievances are aired and, when Member States are so inclined, resolved. The UN's ability to live up to its founders' ideals, and to its potential, is almost exclusively determined by the 191 countries which, collectively, constitute the United Nations. Our successes are its successes; our failures, its failures. This organization can accomplish only that which its Member States allow.

Canada has been an active and committed participant in the United Nations since its founding in 1945 in San Francisco, where Canada played a key role in the drafting of the Charter. Individual Canadians have served vital roles within the United Nations, and many of the Organization's great accomplishments have had a Canadian dimension. For example, fifty years ago, John Humphrey was the principal author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Lester Pearson helped to invent the concept of peacekeeping, winning the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to resolve the Suez Crisis of 1956; and Maurice Strong chaired both the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, in Stockholm, and the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in Rio de Janeiro, and also served as founding Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. Canadians have occupied key positions within the United Nations System, including the Presidency of the General Assembly (Lester Pearson, in 1952-53) and Canada served on the Security Council in 1948-49, 1958-59, 1967-68, 1977-78 and 1989-90. In January 1998, a Canadian, Louise Fréchette, was appointed the first-ever UN Deputy Secretary-General.

As set out in the Charter, the purposes of the United Nations are:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations; and,
- to co-operate internationally in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting better standards of living and respect for human rights.

These and other objectives underlying the United Nations have animated Canadian foreign and defence policy from the outset. Over the past fifty years, Canada has made a significant, constructive and sustained contribution in all areas of UN activity: peace and security, development assistance, human rights, and social, economic and environmental affairs.

As the cornerstone of a rules-based international system, the UN has remained throughout a vital forum through which we have sought to influence world affairs, to defend our

security and sovereignty within a stable global framework, to promote our trade and economic interests, and to protect and project Canadian values such as fairness, equal opportunity, and respect for human rights. Living, as Canada does, in the shadow of the most powerful and influential nation on earth, the UN has been of prime importance in our efforts to counterbalance continental attractions, to establish a clear, independent identity and to have a sustained and long-term impact on the evolution of world affairs. But to describe the UN merely in terms of counterbalance is to greatly understate its importance to Canada. Quite simply, the international political and social issues that matter most to Canadians are those that individual countries, acting on their own, are powerless to address effectively. The promotion of human rights and justice, the prevention and reduction of environmental degradation, the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of development and human security on a global basis -- these can only be achieved through multilateral discussion and negotiation. The only global forum available is the UN. It is therefore no surprise that support for the UN is deeply entrenched throughout Canadian society. The UN remains as relevant to Canada today as it was in 1945. Possibly more so. The 1995 Foreign Policy White Paper, *Canada and the World*, stated unambiguously that

The UN continues to be the key vehicle for pursuing Canada's global security objectives. Canada can best move forward its global security priorities by working with other member states. The success of the UN is fundamental, therefore, to Canada's future security.

Canada has participated in virtually every major UN peacekeeping operation. The Organization remains a vital instrument through which Canadians and others are working to achieve and bolster "human security", by ridding the world of antipersonnel mines, by halting traffic in small arms, by putting an end to the conscription of children as soldiers and, most recently, by helping to end impunity for war criminals, by chairing the negotiations leading to the creation of an International Criminal Court.

Canada is investing particular effort in the ongoing process of UN reform, in order to help to ensure that the Organization remains responsive to the interests and concerns of its membership and remains capable of dealing with threats to global security. To this end, Canada is pledged to work to strengthen the UN's capacity for preventive action, to enhance the UN's rapid reaction capability, to improve the functioning of the UN's decision-making bodies, and to restore the UN to a sound financial basis.

For calendar year 2003, we are the seventh largest contributor to the UN regular budget, at approximately US\$34.5 million, or 2.558% of the UN's budget, after the U.S., Japan, Germany, France, the U.K., and Italy. Canada always pays its annual assessed contributions in full, on time, and without conditions.

Canada is a member of all the UN Specialized Agencies and major programs and is actively engaged throughout the United Nations System. We have seven diplomatic missions accredited to the United Nations, in New York (Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations), Geneva (Permanent Mission of Canada to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva, to the Conference on Disarmament and to the World Trade Organization), Montreal (Permanent Mission of Canada to the International Civil Aviation Organization), Nairobi (Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the United Nations

Environment Program), Paris (Permanent Delegation of Canada to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), Rome (Permanent Mission of Canada to the Food and Agriculture Organization) and Vienna (Permanent Mission of Canada to the International Organizations in Vienna).

The broad support for the UN that is manifest across Canada is well warranted. The Organization is not perfect; indeed, as noted previously, it is only as efficient and relevant as its 191 Member States allow it to be. The UN has, however, demonstrated the ability to adapt, institutionally and operationally, as new issues have emerged and as relations among countries continue to evolve. The United Nations remains crucial to Canada and, we believe, essential to the conduct of diplomacy in an ever-more globalized world. As such, it constitutes a precious resource which we are committed to preserving and protecting.

G8 Summits

The G8 is an informal group of eight countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The European Union also participates and is represented by the President of the European Commission and by the leader of the country that holds the presidency of the European Council at the time of the G8 Summit. At Kananaskis, this leader was the President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain. This year in Evian, the leader will be the Prime Minister of Greece.

The Chair of the G8 rotates on a calendar-year basis among the seven original members in the following order: France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada. Although the European Union participates in discussions, they are not part of this rotation. At Kananaskis, it was announced that Russia will host a G8 Summit for the first time in 2006.

The country holding the Chair – currently France – is responsible for hosting and organizing the Summit. This annual meeting of Leaders provides an opportunity for face-to-face discussions on key issues. The Chair also bears the responsibility of speaking on behalf of the G8 and of engaging non-G8 countries, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations.

The host country usually organizes several meetings in advance of the Summit, where personal representatives of the Leaders, known as "Sherpas" (after the Himalayan porters who help others to climb mountain summits), come together to discuss potential agenda issues. Their discussions help Leaders focus attention on key subjects. The Sherpas, who often work as advisors in Leaders' offices, correspond directly with each other throughout the year concerning ongoing issues. After the Summit, they also oversee the implementation of Leaders' commitments made at the Summit. The Sherpas are supported by networks of other senior officials who focus on major economic, financial and political issues. Prime Minister Chrétien's Sherpa for the Evian-les-Bains Summit is Mr. Claude Laverdure.

In addition to the Sherpa process, again this year there will also be a dedicated network of African Personal Representatives. Announced at the Genoa Summit in 2001, this group worked

with representatives of African Leaders to develop a G8 action plan in response to the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The Prime Minister asked Ambassador Robert R. Fowler to be continue as his Personal Representative for Africa.

Canada and the Commonwealth

A founding member in 1931, Canada is one of the Commonwealth's strongest supporters and promoters.

The Commonwealth furthers Canada's foreign policy through numerous programs that support common principles and values. Good governance and the promotion of fundamental political values are at the heart of the Commonwealth's activities. These were articulated in the Harare Declaration at the 1991 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Zimbabwe. In a world confronted with many challenges to peace and security, the Commonwealth's ongoing interest in conflict identification, its unique experience with preventive measures, and its success with peaceful conflict resolution, place it high among organizations capable of resolving such threats.

Canada played a leading role in the Commonwealth's efforts to peacefully dismantle apartheid. It chaired the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, which was established at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1987 in Vancouver. Until it was disbanded in 1993, the committee co-ordinated Commonwealth actions to encourage a peaceful transition to a non-racial democracy. Canada welcomed South Africa's readmittance to the Commonwealth in 1994 following the election of a multi-racial government in South Africa.

Canada was a member of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) from its establishment in 1995 to March 2002 and played a key role in encouraging a return to democracy in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Sierra Leone.

The Commonwealth's activities complement those of the United Nations. Canada believes that the Commonwealth can help strengthen international institutions by using its co-operative and consensus-building abilities to deal with major issues and to contribute to negotiating and implementing agreements.

Canada's annual contribution of nearly \$27.3 million to Commonwealth institutions and programs is primarily designed to assist small states and developing countries. A large portion of this contribution -- \$12 million in 2002-03, goes to the Secretariat's Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation for programs ranging from assistance for democratic development, the defence of human rights to programs promoting women's equality and sustainable development.

Canada also contributes to the Commonwealth of Learning; the Commonwealth Foundation; and the Secretariat's Commonwealth Youth Program, Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, the Small States Facility and the Trade and Investment Access Facility (TIAF).

Canadians who work in senior positions at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, as well as Canadian experts in a variety of fields, have contributed to virtually all major Commonwealth special studies that have formed the basis of political and economic action. Canadian parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations, and private citizens are active year-round in Commonwealth conferences and programs and Canada often hosts Commonwealth meetings.

Cutting across regional blocs and specific interests, the Commonwealth is seen as a model of multilateralism, a useful instrument with which to broaden international understanding and consensus. Canada's association with the Commonwealth enriches and deepens our relations with the 53 other member countries. Commonwealth membership helps Canada play a constructive role in North-South issues and adds weight and credibility to Canadian foreign policy efforts in general.

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Canada in *La Francophonie*

La Francophonie is one of the main thrusts of Canada's foreign policy. From a domestic perspective, Canada's involvement in *La Francophonie* highlights the country's linguistic duality and supports and promotes Canada's French community. Internationally, *La Francophonie* is a natural sphere of influence for Canada, similar to the Organization of American States [OAS] and the Commonwealth. It is also a multilateral forum for cooperation and dialogue in which Canada can use its influence to promote the values its citizens wish to share.

Canada's main goal as a member of *La Francophonie* is to promote its democratic, cultural and economic values. In particular, Canada endeavours to further the development of democratic institutions, human rights, the rule of law, and peace and human security. It can also benefit from the political, cultural, scientific and other contributions made by its fellow members.

In addition to hosting the Moncton Summit, which consolidated recent gains and prepared the International Organization of *La Francophonie* [*Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*] for the third millennium, Canada intends to focus its efforts on raising the international profile of this young organization and making it a forum in which all Francophones throughout the world can come together and recognize their common bonds. The positive impact of globalization on the vitality and the dialogue of cultures makes such an approach all the more necessary. These major objectives will be achieved by focussing on specific goals at the political, economic and cooperative levels.

Political objectives

- * broaden the scope of political discussions within the different Francophonie institutions and promote increased cooperation with other international organizations working in the same fields;
- * develop flexible, speedy monitoring and intervention mechanisms to respond to sudden changes that disrupt the international climate; and
- * devote more effort to issues related to peace and human security, democratic development, human rights and conflict prevention.

Economic objectives

- * promote the integration of *La Francophonie's* most vulnerable members into the global economic system;
- * promote the principles of sound economic management and policies aimed at ensuring greater transparency in public administration;
- * promote the private sector's involvement with young people and encourage the spirit of entrepreneurship; and

Cooperation objectives

- * improve access to and command of new information technologies and support the production of French content;
- * strengthen and pursue Canadian cooperation initiatives and related to the protection and education of young people, notably in the area of human rights;
- * undertake new youth-centred initiatives in the areas of occupational training, social integration and access to new technology; and
- * encourage dialogue and cooperation within communities.

Canada's ultimate goal is to contribute to the development of a true community that will strengthen its members' interdependence and foster an atmosphere of solidarity. The political will generated by the Summits and the resources devoted to them will help to give la

Francophonie its definitive form as an international organization based on solidarity and effective action.

Canada and the World

Information on Canada's current and historical participation in international organizations, commissions, conferences and projects is available at **www.canadainternational.gc.ca** and clicking through to “Foreign Policy” then “Canada and International Organizations”.

Questions

1. How important do you think the Commonwealth is among international organizations?
2. Traditionally, what countries became Commonwealth members, and what was their relationship to the United Kingdom?
3. Identify some criticisms of the Commonwealth. Do you agree with them? Explain your views.
4. How important do you think *La Francophonie* is among international organizations?
5. Why do Quebec and New Brunswick have membership in *La Francophonie*? How is their role in the organization different from Canada's role?
6. Identify some criticisms of *La Francophonie*. Do you agree with them? Explain.
7. List the pros and cons of Canada's participation in the Commonwealth and *La Francophonie*.