

Leaders' discussions at Birmingham in 1998 centred on globalization and the growing interdependence of nations. The agenda also included growth, employability and social inclusion; international crime and drugs; and global economic issues, including development, climate change, trade, and the Asian financial situation and its implications for the international system. Leaders also discussed timely regional and political issues, the most significant being nuclear testing by India and Pakistan. Foreign and finance ministers met in advance in London to discuss a range of ongoing global, financial and human security issues.

Canada's Place at the Summit Table

Canada enjoys the benefits of having a seat at the table with the world's most advanced economies, and Canada also assumes the responsibilities that flow from this. Membership enables Canada to pursue its broad foreign, trade and economic policy agenda and interests and to help shape global developments on a range of issues.

Canada brings to the summit table intellectual capital and value far greater than its relatively modest economic strength. Canada is also a member of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the Commonwealth, la Francophonie and the Organization of American States. This affords Canada a wide range of diplomatic tools and opportunities to pursue its foreign policy agenda.

Globalization brings with it new opportunities but it also creates new challenges. The summit process allows members of the G-8 to work together to meet these challenges, at home and abroad. Canada has used the summit to advance economic, trade and political issues of importance to Canadians. Since 1976, Canada has worked with its summit partners to develop common strategies in response to these issues as well to regional situations such as the Middle East peace process, the conflict in and reconstruction of Bosnia, and the Asian financial situation.