

ODA spending declines the leverage decreases even more.

The issues for Conflict Prevention identified were:

1. Horizontal inequality (occurs when power and resources are unequally distributed between groups that are differentiated in other ways than just wealth and income – for instance by religion or language) leading to group-group conflicts
2. UN reaction capabilities (information, diplomatic, resources)
3. International Criminal Court
4. Civil-military relations
5. Operationalising human security
6. Resource commitments
7. Galvanising regional leaders/states
8. Developing an early warning system
9. UN rapid reaction forces (note: Canada's proposal for Rapid Reaction Capacity at the UN)
10. The need to examine "what works" (i.e., leadership, national interest, morality, institutional capacity)
11. ODA as a Conflict Prevention tool

The importance of expert consultations feeding the Conflict Prevention agenda was stressed in the context of the G-8 upcoming expert meeting and other Canadian/G-8 activities. NGOs, research institutions, experts, academics and others should be invited to share their expertise. There is a recognised need for the Department/high level officials to include civil society in this area of foreign policy development. Another issue identified during the roundtable was the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation among government Departments (i.e., DND, CIDA, DFAIT, and others), among and between governments, NGOs, experts and others.

The procedural "apparent" imperatives notwithstanding, the "what" question still remains a key problem, especially given the fact that Canadian officials are themselves offering a catalogue of 49 issues for Conflict Prevention views/approaches by the G-8.

Steve Lee closed the discussion by noting that there needs to be more discussion on the role of the G-8, on the nature of Conflict Prevention, and on the specific value and focus of Canadian ideas. This discussion needs to include government officials, probably from several Departments, and civil society experts, especially universities and NGOs. The discussion group today was invited to serve as a contact group for a growing discussion.

If the G-8 is to play a role in thinking about or acting in Conflict Prevention there needs to be a detailed exploration of specifics and the link to the UN. References in the G-8 communiqués and vague statements of concern/interests are not enough and in fact could contribute to "flavour of the month" cynicism.