



Mr. Chrétien has indicated that he is fully determined to see the discussions of the G8 leaders culminate in a concrete plan that will allow them to work in concert with African states to eliminate poverty and stimulate sustainable growth in Africa.

The Prime Minister feels that the action plan must encourage not only economic but also democratic development in Africa. "Africans have known far too much of war, of dispossession, of tyranny and of corruption," said Mr. Chrétien. "Many high hopes and noble ideals have been frustrated on African shores."

Canada's contribution

In its budget tabled in December 2001, the Government of Canada established a \$500 million Africa Fund to support the objectives of NEPAD through implementation of the action plan to be adopted in Kananaskis.

Further, over the past two decades Canada has forgiven over \$1 billion in foreign debt owed by developing countries. On January 1, 2001, the government stopped collecting debt payments from 11 heavily indebted poor countries that have undertaken reform. Assistance with debt reduction will continue to be one of the priorities of the Government of Canada.

But it is not enough to write off or reduce the debt of poor countries. Trade with Africa also has to be encouraged, along with investment there by the developed countries. In his speech in New York, Mr. Chrétien called on business leaders to join with Africans in a new partnership for development, growth and prosperity. "I do not issue this challenge lightly," he noted. "By any standard, reversing the decline of Africa will be a tall order."

Finally, Mr. Chrétien emphasized the concept of partnership: "Two years ago in Okinawa, Japan, I told my G8 colleagues that developing countries must be full partners in their own development. Accordingly, the G8 Africa Action Plan will be designed to help African governments that are committed to working with, and on behalf of, all of their citizens. To build durable peace and security. To address the crises in health and education. To strengthen democratic governance. And to open trade and investment." 

To learn more about the Kananaskis G8 Summit activities or to take part in electronic consultations, visit: www.g8.gc.ca

For questions or comments about the Summit, you can also telephone 1-888-316-2002 toll-free (within Canada only).

Kananaskis Village, Kananaskis Country, Alberta—the site for this year's two-day retreat-style G8 Summit in June

Alberta Economic Development