

AFRICA

- Africa is a vast and diverse continent. Much progress has been made by African states, since their independence, in overcoming the colonial era's legacy of political instability, ethnic animosities and poverty.
- Africa is critically dependent on its environment. In the Sahel, soils are easily eroded and droughts are a frequent occurrence. Physical conditions there and in parts of Southern Africa are unlikely to improve for many years.
- The continent has the highest population growth rate in the world.
- The global recession affected Africa more severely than most regions, and its terms of trade have deteriorated significantly. While some countries are making progress, the general economic picture is worrisome.
- Apartheid and South Africa's reluctance to cede its control over Namibia have been principal causes of strife in the southern half of the continent.

Canadian Dimensions

- The largest feature in Canada's relations with Africa has been development assistance. Canada has spent \$2 billion on bilateral aid to sub-Saharan states during the last 20 years.
 - While this sum represents only a small portion of the total invested by the Africans themselves or spent by industrialized countries, its local impact has been substantial — not least because it has concentrated on the priority sectors of transportation, agriculture, education, energy and communications.
 - More recently, providing emergency relief for famine-stricken areas in Ethiopia and elsewhere has also become a major preoccupation of the Canadian people and government.
 - Canada's economic and commercial exchanges with Africa have been modest. Development of trade with many parts of the continent is inhibited by local conditions, and depends on the availability of concessional financing.
 - Canada continues to pressure the government of South Africa to abandon its policy of racial discrimination.
 - Distaste for colonialism and concern for the security of the region account for the leading role Canada has played in efforts to bring about agreement on a date for the independence of Namibia.
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- We have 18 diplomatic, trade and consular offices in Africa.