



The Prime Minister reaffirmed a commitment to work with committed African leaders to build and expand the new partnership in the NEPAD. Canada will play a leading role. The G8, under Canada's leadership, is now working on the development of a concrete Africa Action Plan for adoption at the summit this June in Kananaskis.

We must reverse the trends that are sinking Africa. Canada recognizes the staggering, long-term nature of this challenge, for both Africans and the developed world. However, all nations have a moral obligation, and an economic interest, to tackle these issues.

Canada brings to this endeavour many years of innovative international development assistance, and close ties with over 40 African countries through La Francophonie and the Commonwealth. Canada has been a leader in debt relief. We have forgiven over \$1 billion in foreign debt owed to us by developing countries. In January 2001, Canada stopped collecting debt payments from eleven Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). The Prime Minister announced in the recent budget that \$500 million will be set aside to support the NEPAD objectives through implementation of the G8 Africa Action Plan.

However, NEPAD asserts that debt relief and aid are not by themselves enough. Democracy, the rule of law, and transparent, predictable and enforced regulations create and sustain the conditions for economic growth. We also need to support Africa's efforts to create these conditions that will attract greater resources, both public and private, over the short and medium term. Also, in the developed world, we have to recognize that there will be little prospect of investment and trade if Africans are denied access to our markets.

There is much food for thought in NEPAD. I wish you good and productive work. I look forward to reading the final report of the National Forum.

The Honourable Denis Paradis, M.P.
Secretary of State
(Latin America and Africa) (La Francophonie)