

A nuclear-free world and Korea

Non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy are the goals being worked toward by the US. And as host of the next Nuclear Security Summit, Korea is in the spotlight

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The first nuclear security summit was held in Washington DC on 12-13 April 2010. Topping the agenda was how to prevent nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism. Leaders from 47 countries and three international organisations, including the United Nations, expressed the international community's resolve to build a "nuclear-free world".

The international community's efforts to mitigate the danger of nuclear proliferation while enabling the peaceful use of nuclear energy began in January 1946, when the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution

to establish the UN Atomic Energy Commission. The initiative was never realised, but US president Dwight Eisenhower's 1953 'Atoms for Peace' speech resulted in the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1957 and the launch of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968. The Nuclear Suppliers Group launched in 1974 has also contributed to international non-proliferation efforts by operating as a nuclear-related export control mechanism.

While such continued non-proliferation endeavours have succeeded in limiting the number of states with nuclear weapons, the threat of nuclear proliferation has



increased since the end of the Cold War. This increase can be ascribed to two changes. The first is the collapse of the Cold War structure and the ensuing multipolarisation. The Cold War was marked by a confrontation between two camps. The use of nuclear weapons was strictly controlled, which in turn made proliferation difficult. In contrast, multipolarity in the post-Cold War era has diluted these structural constraints. Feeling vulnerable because of changes in the post-Cold War international security environment, some countries have continued to pursue nuclear programmes, mistakenly believing that the possession of nuclear weapons will bolster their national security.

Second, rapid advances in information technology and in the means of transport have accelerated globalisation. Consequently, today's physical conditions facilitate the cross-border transit of and trade in equipment, materials and technologies that can be used for nuclear development. These developments call for an international control mechanism for non-proliferation. The new mobility brought by globalisation becomes much more serious when it joins up with terrorism, which has emerged as a security threat since the end of the Cold War.

The nuclear-free debate gained momentum in 2007 and 2008, when Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, William Perry and Sam Nunn contributed articles to the *Wall Street Journal* on the issue. It surfaced again as an urgent task after US president Barack Obama's speech in Prague in April 2009 and a UN Security Council meeting in September 2009. Against this backdrop, the United States hosted the First Nuclear Security Summit in April 2010 with four goals: 1) to lead a global effort to secure all nuclear weapons materials at vulnerable sites within

“As a top-ranking atomic energy state, Korea has operated nuclear power plants more safely and stably than any other country”

four years; 2) to set new standards and partnerships to lock down sensitive nuclear materials; 3) to turn ad-hoc efforts, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, into international institutions; and 4) to build on efforts to break up black markets, detect and intercept materials in transit, and use financial tools to disrupt dangerous trade.

US efforts to curb nuclear proliferation are also reflected in the recently issued 2010 Nuclear Posture Review. In the report, the US emphasises its resolve to prevent nuclear terrorism and attempts to reduce the possibility of nuclear development from threat perceptions by pledging “negative security assurances” to countries that adhere to non-proliferation obligations, which exclude Iran and North Korea.

US efforts toward non-proliferation and preventing nuclear terrorism ran in parallel with its nuclear reduction initiatives. On 8 April, a few days before the nuclear security summit, Washington concluded a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Moscow. As the US has the largest nuclear weapons arsenal, this

latest move will contribute substantially to reinforcing the NPT regime, which has three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The peaceful use of nuclear energy, along with non-proliferation, shows the dual nature of the nuclear issue. New emerging economies are often mentioned as the greatest change on the 21st-century international political and economic scene. Their rapid development is linked to the current global financial crisis. Furthermore, they are major players in global energy supply-and-demand and in the international response to climate change. These issues naturally give rise to calls for increased supplies of nuclear energy, which in turn raise the need to establish new global governance over the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The international community is thus faced with the twin challenges of non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The participants in the Washington Nuclear Security Summit decided to meet in Seoul for a second summit in 2012. Korea, which will also host the fifth G20 summit in November 2010, is emerging as an important focal point in efforts to manage international political and economic realities.

The fact that a follow-on nuclear summit will be held is itself significant for continuing efforts to build a nuclear-free world. However, it is even more remarkable that Korea was named the host of the next summit, for the following reasons.

First, the Korean peninsula is susceptible to global non-proliferation efforts due to North Korea's continued nuclear development programme. Although the parties to the Six-Party Talks have continued to work toward Pyongyang's denuclearisation, there are too many stumbling blocks for a positive outcome. That the second nuclear security summit will be held in Seoul under these circumstances indicates that the North Korean nuclear issue has surfaced as the core of global non-proliferation efforts. At the same time, it raises the expectation that the summit might exert international pressure in a positive way to expedite the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue.

In particular, a number of political events in neighbouring countries may create a security vacuum in 2012. It would not be an overstatement to say that the summit will contribute to peace and stability in this region, given the weight that the summit carries from an international security perspective.

Second, the second nuclear summit may reaffirm the international community's confidence in and expectation of Korea's peaceful use of nuclear energy. This stands in stark contrast to North Korea's moves to develop nuclear weapons. This is an easy conclusion to reach, considering that Seoul's hosting of the next nuclear summit would have been impossible without international confidence in Korea, which has faithfully observed the norms of major nuclear-related international regimes such as the NPT and the IAEA. As a top-ranking atomic energy state, Korea has operated nuclear power plants more safely and stably than any other country. Based on this experience, it has become a key exporter of nuclear-generating equipment and technologies. The Seoul nuclear summit will be an opportunity to give further publicity to these facts. All in all, the summit will enhance Korea's international status and bring it greater economic benefits. In addition, the Seoul nuclear summit will have positive implications for the resolution of nuclear-related issues in the 21st century – building a nuclear-free world for global security and attaining more free nuclear energy for the global economy.

In this vein, just as the G20 Seoul Summit will serve as the latitude for broadening the horizons of Korean diplomacy in the 21st century, the Seoul nuclear security summit in 2012 will provide the longitude for it. ♦

US president Barack Obama with Korea's president Lee Myung-bak at the nuclear security summit in Washington, DC, 12 April 2010

A bigger table, a broader agenda

The global financial crisis sparked action. It's time to apply that same urgency to political and security challenges

By David Shorr, program officer, The Stanley Foundation

The commitment by the G20 countries to hold regular meetings of their heads of state and government – after the first three G20 summits were convened ad hoc – was a watershed moment for global diplomacy. The move signalled that a new set of global and regional powers had now arrived as members of the exclusive ‘in crowd’ of international policy making. The West and the rest (some of them, at least) would now share closer quarters. The meetings where leading countries consult and coordinate had been thoroughly retooled to reflect 21st-century power realities. Or had they?

In fact, the key passage of the communiqué issued by the leaders at Pittsburgh in September 2009 was tailored more narrowly, designating the G20 as the “premier forum for international economic cooperation”. In other words, there would be more seats at the high table dealing with a portion of the global agenda, albeit an extremely important one. The established powers’ traditional G8 club would remain the venue for addressing political and security matters such as fragile states, nuclear proliferation and terrorism.

This division of diplomatic labour is an important backdrop not only for the items that G8 leaders will discuss in Muskoka, but also more broadly for the political and security agenda that confronts the world community. As the G20 brings a broad spectrum of countries together to promote global economic stability, the more closely aligned G8 countries are also combining efforts to help reduce sources of conflict and boost political and social conditions.

Whatever the issue or goal, in assessing the groupings’ multilateral efforts, the same basic calculus applies as in any collective endeavour: what a given group can accomplish depends on who is at the table. The major political challenges of today – fragile states, poverty reduction, and the terrorist and nuclear threats – need to be tackled in multiple dimensions. A like-minded group of western powers (plus Russia) such as the G8 is well suited to tackle these problems at some levels. But to deal with the politically sensitive dimensions, a more diverse group such as the G20 is needed.

To a great extent, the G8 countries approach political and security affairs as development assistance donors – a natural focus for a group of the world’s wealthiest



A US soldier talks to children in Afghanistan during a patrol. Strengthening immigration controls at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border will be a key security focus at the Canadian summit

countries. The July 2009 summit in L'Aquila, Italy, launched a major food security initiative to support long-term agricultural development, good nutrition and systems to respond to sudden spikes in food prices. This year, the Canadian host government has given maternal and children's health, supporting two of the Millennium Development Goals, a prominent place on the agenda. Haiti and its recovery from the January earthquake will be another development topic.

Much of the rest of the G8's political and security agenda has the leaders work in a related development assistance mode: supporting governmental capacity building. This is entirely appropriate, since the world needs national governments to be capable of carrying out key security functions, dealing with sources of vulnerability and, in the extreme, keeping their territory from devolving into ungoverned spaces.

On the Muskoka agenda, and more broadly, Afghanistan is the quintessential case. Tracing the past 30 years of Afghanistan's history is like reading a kind of medical text on the pathology of chronic instability. Beginning with the 1979 Soviet invasion, Afghanistan has been beset by a proxy war between Cold War rivals, a civil war, misrule by religious fanatics, a major training and operational base for a global terror network, another invasion and civil war, competition between traditional and modern forms of political authority, economic



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The intensive statecraft surrounding the Iranian and North Korean nuclear programmes stems from deeper divisions

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dependence on opium poppies as a cash crop and government corruption – with many of these afflictions feeding one another.

While the US-led coalition in Afghanistan ‘talks the talk’ of patiently cultivating legitimate and capable governance, its day-to-day effort to stabilise the country often opts for dubious partnerships of convenience. As the G8’s potential contribution, the planners of the Canadian summit have focused on strengthening customs and immigration controls at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Given how important cross-border movement is for the Afghan Taliban and its Pakistani supporters – and how remote the region is geographically – this is clearly much more than a typical capacity-building project. It involves just the sort of diplomatic heavy lifting that demands a broader set of stakeholders than the G8.

Therein lies the essential question for the future G8 role in political and security affairs. As a group that represents just a slice of the global political spectrum, will it be confined mainly to sponsoring work that, while valuable, is essentially technical and relatively uncontroversial? What contribution can a group of like-minded countries make toward the really sensitive and polarising challenges on the international agenda?

The nuclear proliferation agenda further illustrates the problem. US president Barack Obama’s Nuclear Security Summit in April brought together leaders from more

than 45 countries to deal with one of the most urgent security challenges of our time: keeping key nuclear components and ingredients safely locked away and out of reach of terror networks. It was an impressive display of international cooperation and will contribute palpably to a safer world.

Sure enough, two important operational elements in this area are creatures of the G8: the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. But while the global community shares a near universal commitment to keeping dangerous material and technology away from non-state actors, there is no such consensus about measures to keep more nation-states from acquiring nuclear weapons. The intensive statecraft surrounding the Iranian and North Korean nuclear programmes stems from deeper divisions regarding whether and how to enforce non-proliferation, despite its being a basic norm of the international system. The question for the G8 is whether it will work at just one or both of these diplomatic levels.

World leaders shifted to focus on the G20 as an economic policy forum once they realised that more key international players were needed to deal with the challenges. This raises the question: don’t the political problems on the global agenda also need to have the rising powers at the table? ♦



G20 Research Group

In the rapidly globalizing world of the 21st century, the Group of Twenty systemically significant countries, created at the level of finance ministers and central bank governors in 1999 and elevated to the leaders' level in 2008, seeks to serve as the premier permanent centre of international economic cooperation. Its members, consisting of the Group of Eight, emerging countries and the European Union, work to provide financial stability, sustainable growth and openness that benefit all.

The G20 Research Group is a global network of scholars, students and professionals in the academic, research, business, non-governmental and other communities who follow the work of the G20 leaders, finance ministers and central bank governors. It is directed from the Munk School of Global Affairs at Trinity College in the University of Toronto, also the home of the G8 Research Group.

Our mission is to serve as the world's leading independent source of information and analysis on the G20. As **scholars**, we accurately describe, parsimoniously explain and reflectively interpret what the G20 and its members do, and, on this basis, responsibly predict what they will do. As **teachers and public educators**, we present to the global community and G20 governments the results of our research as well as others' research, ways to learn about the G20 and information about the G20. As **citizens**, we foster transparency and accountability in G20 governance, and the connection between civil society and G20 governors. And as **professionals**, we offer policy advice about G20 governance, but do not engage in advocacy for or about the G20 or the issues it might address.

The G20 Information Centre (www.g20.utoronto.ca)

The G20 Information Centre is a multilingual, comprehensive permanent collection of information and analysis on the G20 available online at no charge. It complements the G8 Information Centre, which houses publicly available archives on the G20 as well as the G7 and G8.

Research and Publications

Among the material available on the G20 Information Centre is a document detailing the **Plans and Prospects** for the G20's agenda, updated frequently. Also available are compliance reports and performance assessments, as well as online publications such as *Growth, Innovation, Inclusion: The G20 at Ten*, *The G20 London Summit: Growth, Stability, Jobs* and *The G20 Pittsburgh Summit 2009*, edited by John Kirton and Madeline Koch.

Key Publications

- *Making Global Economic Governance Effective*, John Kirton, Marina Larionova and Paolo Savona, eds. (Ashgate Publishing)
- *Rising States, Rising Institutions*, Alan S. Alexandroff and Andrew F. Cooper, eds. (Brookings Institution)
- *The G8 against Transnational Organized Crime*, Amandine Scherrer (Ashgate Publishing)
- *Elements of the Euro Area*, Jesper Berg, Mauro Grande and Francesco Paolo Mongelli (Ashgate Publishing)
- *Global Financial Crime*, Donato Masciandaro (Ashgate Publishing)
- *The G8 System and the G20*, Peter I. Hajnal (Ashgate Publishing)
- *Governing Global Banking*, Duncan Wood (Ashgate Publishing)
- *Governing Global Derivatives*, Chiara Oldani (Ashgate Publishing)
- *Reforming from the Top*, John English, Ramesh Thakur and Andrew F. Cooper, eds. (Wilfrid Laurier University Press)

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Hosting successful summits: the Muskoka model

The Muskoka Summit model takes into account the environment and aims to make a positive impact on the community

By Ella Kokotsis, director of external relations, G8 and G20 Research Groups

When the government of Canada announced in June 2008 that Muskoka would host the 2010 G8, community inclusion and stakeholder engagement immediately became integral components of summit preparations. Recognising that open and transparent lines of communication were key to ensuring a successful G8 summit, Canada made a concerted effort to strengthen partnerships with local residents, community organisations, businesses and municipal government agencies. Summit planners undertook innovative measures to ensure that the views and values of all stakeholders across the region of Parry Sound–Muskoka and surrounding areas were taken into account in developing their environmental, security and community engagement strategies for the 2010 G8.

As one of Canada's iconic tourist destinations, Muskoka boasts a rich natural heritage, with unparalleled freshwater and wilderness areas. Maintaining the region's environmental equilibrium was a top priority, with community partners and experts involved at every stage in planning ways to preserve and protect this delicate ecosystem. The end result will be a carbon-neutral summit with a strong environmental legacy that builds on best practices from past host countries including Canada's own successfully green summit at Kananaskis in 2002. The centrepiece is the establishment of a world-class ecological research facility in the town of Huntsville.

But this project will go one step further. Used to support summit initiatives during the G8 summit itself, this research facility will be ready for full-time student and researcher occupancy by the University of Waterloo in the fall of 2010.

Recognising the value of community inclusion, summit planners developed a robust outreach programme aimed at fostering local ownership and pride in the Muskoka Summit. It included local town hall meetings and an innovative youth engagement strategy (involving a multimedia competition and a model G8). The Investment/Branding Advisory Board – consisting of federal, provincial, regional and local stakeholders – partnered to create a unique strategy to leverage the summit for the benefit of regional tourism and potential investment opportunities. Based on consensus decision-making, this



group is collaborating on novel ideas to further promote the Parry Sound–Muskoka brand.

On the security front, provincial and regional outreach as well as protestor engagement became a key element of the work of the Community Relations Group. Dedicated to providing open dialogue with the public, local businesses and activist groups, this partnership between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Canadian Forces and other security and law enforcement experts established from the outset a consultation process crucial to ensuring that the community's views were taken into account in planning security. All security planning and operational responses have been done with careful consideration of the region's environmental sensitivities, in addition to protecting the safety of people and property.

A lasting legacy

Leaving a lasting summit legacy in Muskoka is the cornerstone of Canada's \$50 million G8 Infrastructure Fund, which aims to encourage short-term economic growth. The fund provided strategic investments in a variety of local infrastructure projects with a clear, long-term gain to the community. The expansion of the Huntsville community centre is just one example of how government-community partnerships can encourage input from diverse community groups to work together to build a multi-purpose, cross-generational sports complex and recreational facility for use long after the G8 leaders have left. The construction of the building used the latest green technologies and practices, contributing to the Muskoka Summit's small carbon footprint.

What lessons might the Muskoka model hold for future summits? The value and importance of open, two-way communications strategies and active engagement with all community levels through every aspect of summit preparation are key. Future summit planners will look to Muskoka as a first-rate example of how stakeholder engagement and government-community partnerships can ensure a successful summit legacy. ♦

The G8-G20 partnership

A new form of partnership is evolving between the G20 and the G8 that offers both institutions opportunities for cooperative interaction

By Andrew F. Cooper, associate director and distinguished fellow, The Centre for International Governance Innovation, professor of political science, University of Waterloo

The stage is now set for the back-to-back Muskoka G8 Summit and Toronto G20 Summit. While this duality allows for some rationalisation of the process and scheduling, it also amplifies gaps in the G8 and G20 relationship and underscores the need to settle the evolving global architecture.

The relationship between the G8 and the G20 can be seen from a few angles. From one point of view, by their institutional nature, the two forums are bound to be highly distinct and competitive. This view highlights the very different compositional character that separates them. The G8 has many cultural attributes of a like-minded club with a shared history, identity and method of doing things. Although the agenda has become increasingly stretched, the G8's style continues to be informal, with some considerable space for unscripted policy discussions. By way of contrast, the core of the G20's personality rests on the image of crisis readiness and of enhanced legitimacy via representation including both the traditional world powers and a cluster of 'rising' states from the global South.

From the other point of view, the G8 and G20 can be seen as being, at least to some measure, complementary. This interpretation places great emphasis on the functional niches of the two forums. The importance of the G20 is attributed to its ascendancy since the Pittsburgh Summit in September 2009 as the premier institution for international economic cooperation. The champions of the G8 point to the smaller group's ability to multi-task on a much wider array of issues. It can bridge the security and social dimensions, deal with geopolitical stalemates on the same day as cancelling debt and pushing global vaccine initiatives.

Although both of these perspectives retain some credence, it is unlikely that either configuration will be sustained over the long term. It is possible that the G20 summit could fade away, reverting in shape back to a forum of finance ministers and supplementary experts. After all, the G20's elevation to the leaders' level in November 2008 was due to a highly complex and startling series of economic shocks. Much of its work continues to be highly technical in nature. Such an agenda grabs the attention of leaders only under crisis conditions. But with a return to normalcy, the basic instinct of leaders will be to widen the parameters of discussion, to sustain their interest and leave the technicalities to others. It may be a question then – at least at the leadership level – for the G20 to either go big or go away.

'Going big' on the agenda, at first glance, would appear to exacerbate the tensions between the G20 and the G8. Certainly the privileging of like-mindedness would be eroded by any expansion of the G20's ambit into areas of hard security, or even climate change.

Yet, if contentious and difficult, the logic of moving in this direction appears to be unassailable. No less than on sensitive economic issues the core countries from the global South – China, India, Brazil – need to be at the

table when a wider agenda is discussed. And the G8's own experience with the entry of Russia demonstrates that additions to the club need not make it dysfunctional.

Moreover, there are signs that the institutionalisation of a broader concert of powers could allow for some forms of flexibility and consensus building. The months leading up to the Canadian summits have revealed an escalation between the United States and China on a number of specific issues such as climate change and currency valuation. Yet, on other issues – such as Iran and nuclear issues – there equally appears to be some room for cooperation. Dealing with an expanded agenda formally – or on the sidelines – in one hub summit may, therefore, speed up the possibility of such agreements.

Such a move would downgrade the G8 from its traditional role as a putative steering committee. It does not, nevertheless, inevitably mean that the G8 is



Africa Action protesters dressed as bankers in Washington, DC, urge G20 ministers to enact a financial speculation tax

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The G8 countries still project the major voices and responsibilities on the G20's technical agenda

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obsolete. In both function and form, the G8 continues to have some degree of collective salience and resilience. The G8 countries still project the major voices and responsibilities on the G20's technical agenda. This is in part due to the fact that the 2008-09 shocks originated at the core of the neo-liberal economic system, but also because the G8 countries remain the pivots of the financial and regulatory system.

The common and sustained interests of the G8 countries signal a new configuration of caucuses, or negotiation blocs, within the G20. There is an emerging debate about whether there should be established an Asian caucus to develop united positions. Indeed, a similar caucus system has developed informally through the South African initiative via the regional 'Committee of Ten' finance ministers to allow a cluster of African countries at least indirect access to the G20. This creative approach overlaps with the system of outreach developed through the G8 for many years.

Such an evolution facilitates a new form of partnership between the G20 and the G8 based not on avoidance (with respect to overlap) but on constructive engagement. The G8 brings a wealth of experience and expertise that can be tapped into now and into the future. These embedded sources of strength come out not only on security and economic issues, but also on the social agenda. An especially good example is global health. Although pushed to do more by non-governmental organisations, the G8 deserves credit for its efforts in a variety of areas such as the initiatives through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation.

What is more, the benefits of such focused efforts spill over into other dimensions. Procedurally, they

facilitate the establishment of a rich and deep 'partnership' group within civil society. Amid the heavy criticism, a deep connection between the G8 process and civil society has been established. Such ties have not been evident in the G20, although Korea as host for the November 2010 summit is initiating plans for heavier links between state and non-state actors. One highlight is to have Bill Gates chair a G20 business forum on corporate social responsibility.

Another benefit could be a push for greater accountability. In recent years, the G8 countries have developed a process for monitoring their commitments and reporting progress at successive meetings. Carrying this framework into the G20 will not only firm up its efficiency but its legitimacy. Such monitoring allows for sharing best practices not only by the traditional G8 countries, but also the rising countries from the global South. A system for compliance monitoring will also encourage greater transparency from the entrant countries and bolster the G20's mutual assessment experiment.

All of this leaves an uneven and perhaps awkward design for the future of the G20-G8 interactive process. Rather than some decisive new form of global settlement, the evolution of summit processes will proceed through improvised dynamics. In such an environment, there is ample opportunity for tensions. What is striking, nonetheless, are the opportunities for cooperative interaction between the G20 and the G8. On some issues the G8 will provide a valuable sounding board. On other issues, it will act as a model and a catalyst for setting out innovative paths for the G20 in its long moment of transition from a crisis committee to a new, more comprehensive, steering committee. ♦



Inspired leadership

Civil society's contribution to G8 and G20 summitry



By The Reverend Doctor Karen Hamilton, chair, 2010 InterFaith Partnership, general secretary, Canadian Council of Churches

To be or not to be an integral part of civil society: that is sometimes both a question posed by members of faith communities and a lens through which sectors of civil society view faith communities.

It is, however, a question that is disconnected from historical and theological realities. The faith communities of Canada and of the world, be they Hindu, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Baha'i or First Nations traditions, are not only a part of civil society but are also grounded in divine imperatives to be so for the sake of the world's peoples and indeed for the sake of the globe itself.

Throughout millennia, particularly in recent years, faith communities have been engaged as leaders and on the ground working on poverty relief, debt cancellation for developing countries, broad and just access to healthcare, the implementation of universal education and the care of creation. Given the global realities of governance, this work has, in recent decades, meant engagement with the G8. One example of this engagement – and many could be named – is the letter published in June 2008 by the Catholic Episcopal Conferences of the G8 countries and sent to the G8 political leadership.

Since 2005, this engagement of faith communities with the G8 political leadership has taken on a new and very particular form. In parallel to the Gleneagles G8 political leaders' summit, a religious leaders' summit brought together faith leaders who then agreed upon a statement calling for substantive progress in such vital areas as the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In each subsequent year, there has been

an InterFaith Leaders' summit held prior to the G8 summit. Through consensus a statement on the dire need for addressing extreme global poverty, caring for creation and investing in peace and security has been issued by senior, accountable and representative faith leaders of the G8 countries and beyond, and then presented to the G8 leaders.

There has been significant, persistent and consistent engagement of the InterFaith Leaders' Summit with the Canadian G8 office. Since 2007 there has been ongoing dialogue on the content and imperative of the yearly InterFaith Leaders' statements.

In 2010, Canada, through the new and unique national body of the 2010 InterFaith Partnership, will host the World Religions Summit 2010: InterFaith Leaders in the G8 Nations, the sixth such meeting. From 21-23 June the partnership and the University of Winnipeg will host the faith leaders of the G8 countries and the regions of the world, thus including the G20 members as well. Along with the statement of the faith leaders of all the world's religious traditions, a draft version of which has been available since October 2009 (at www.faithchallengeg8.com), the planning for the 2010 Canadian faith leaders summit has included a public engagement campaign. This campaign, both national and international, presents a petition on the themes of the statement – Addressing Extreme Poverty, Care for Creation and Investing in Peace – and encourages timely dialogue and engagement on those issues with parliamentarians.

Time is short. The MDGs are far from fulfilment. Lives hang in the balance. United, inspired leadership and action are both the call and the imperative. ♦

Are promises kept?

The G20 and G8 have made thousands of promises over the years, but what the global community really wants is accountability and higher compliance scores

By Jenilee Guebert, director of research, G8 and G20 Research Groups, and Erin Fitzgerald, student chair, G8 Research Group

Are the Group of Eight and Group of Twenty accountable? Measuring the effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and credibility of such groups is inextricably tied to this question. Accountability validates the existence of these compact centres of global governance. It keeps the work of the members transparent. It ensures that promises made are promises kept.

Since 1975 the G8 has made over 3,000 commitments. They have covered a wide range of issues including the economy, development, environment, non-proliferation and human rights. In less than two years, and in only three summits, the G20 leaders have also made hundreds of commitments. These pledges have focused mostly on tackling the economic and financial crisis, but they have also covered climate change, energy and development.

G8 and G20 accountability matters. It matters to the mothers and children around the world who are dying unnecessarily. It matters to those who are suffering with HIV/AIDS. It matters to the struggling countries and their citizens who depend on the clean water and food aid that they have been promised. And it matters to the emerging economies that have long been waiting for more voice and fairer representation in institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

The G8 and G20 know how much their accountability counts. Canada – host of the G8 summit and co-host of the G20 summit in June 2010 – promoted accountability back when it hosted the G7's Halifax Summit in 1995. The G8 issued an accountability report on its anti-corruption commitments in 2008 and on more subjects in 2009. At London and Pittsburgh, the G20 reconfirmed its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the importance of meeting them by their 2015 deadline. And at the 2009 L'Aquila Summit, G8 members declared: "We are determined to fully take on our responsibilities, and are committed to implementing

our decisions, and to adopting a full and comprehensive accountability mechanism by 2010 to monitor progress and strengthen the effectiveness of our actions."

The available evidence indicates that G8 and G20 members do keep their commitments to a significant degree. Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States have done the best. Commitments on terrorism and energy have scored higher compliance than those on economics and trade. Between 1997 and 2008, on a scale

“ Making substantial progress on pledges will be critical ”

ranging from –1 to +1, the G8 members complied with their commitments +0.49 of the time, or approximately 75 per cent on the more familiar 100-point scale. This score, while not disappointing, leaves room for needed improvement. And the newer G20 has even more room to improve.

Canada has identified accountability as the defining feature of the June 2010 summits. Making substantial progress on pledges will be critical if the world is to move closer to achieving the MDGs and preventing further economic disruption. But the institutional fate of the older G8 and newer G20 may itself also depend on their members' accountability – whether or not they can prove that their promises made are promises kept and thus that "G" summitry is working and worth doing.

More information about the G8, the G20 and their compliance records is available at the G8 Information Centre at www.g8.utoronto.ca and the G20 Information Centre www.g20.utoronto.ca ♦

G8 compliance from 1996 to 2009

Summit	Lyon 1996	Denver 1997	Birmingham 1998	Cologne 1999	Okinawa 2000	Genoa 2001	Kananaskis 2002	Evian 2003			
Report type	Final	Final	Final	Final	Final	Final	Interim Final	Interim Final			
G8 + EU	0.40	0.27	0.45	0.39	0.78	0.53	0.27 0.33	0.48 0.51			
No. of Commitments	19	6	7	6	12	9	13 11	12 12			
Summit	Sea Island 2004		Gleneagles 2005		St Petersburg 2006		Heiligendamm 2007		Hokkaido 2008		L'Aquila 2009
Report Type	Interim	Final	Interim	Final	Interim	Final	Interim	Final	Interim	Final	Interim
G8 + EU	0.39	0.54	0.47	0.65	0.35	0.47	0.33	0.51	0.16	0.48	0.34
No. of Commitments	18	18	21	21	20	20	23	23	20	20	24