



CANADA'S VOICE
IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE:

A CIVIL SOCIETY HANDBOOK

GROUP OF EIGHT -G8-

COORDINATED BY
FRIENDS OF THE EARTH CANADA

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Les Ami(e)s
de la Terre



Friends of
the Earth



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GORDON FOUNDATION

Overview and Acknowledgments

Welcome to *Canada's Voice in Global Governance: A Civil Society Handbook*. The handbook is a resource for civil society organizations (CSOs) interested in understanding and influencing Canada's role in some of the world's most important global institutions. Each section of the handbook answers key questions and provides important contact information on a particular international institution, including: the Group of Eight (G8); World Bank Group; the World Trade Organization (WTO); the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); the Organization of American States (OAS); the International Labour Organization (ILO); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). There is also a section that provides an overview of the key pillars of the Canadian Government's foreign policy-making process. See the www.foecanada.org/intl/handbook.htm for a complete list of the documents that make up the handbook.

Please note that this version of the handbook is a "Working Draft". We hope that it can be of immediate use to CSOs across Canada and beyond, but we are also seeking comments and suggestions in order to improve it and ensure that it is useful to the widest possible range of organizations (please send comments to gsaul@foecanada.org).

Also note that the HTML version of this document includes hyperlinks to additional information. These links are indicated in the PDF version by underlined text, but they can only be opened through the html version. The handbook will be updated regularly, so to benefit from the hyperlinks and ensure that you have the most up-to-date version, please check the website: www.foecanada.org/intl/handbook.htm.

The many sections of the handbook represent the collective effort and input of a wide range of human rights, labour, environment and development organizations from across Canada and beyond. The process of bringing this information together was coordinated by Friends of the Earth Canada and advised by a steering committee that included representatives from the Halifax Initiative Coalition, the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), and Kairos: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives. We would like to thank the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation for their generous support. While Friends of the Earth deeply appreciates the support of all of the organizations and individuals involved in the development of this project, we take sole responsibility for any inaccuracies or mischaracterizations that may have survived the editing process.

We are still in the process of compiling individual acknowledgements and will include them in the re-edited First Edition that will follow soon.

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Canada's Voice in Global Governance: A Civil Society Handbook:

The Group of Eight (G8)

Introduction

The countries that make up the Group of Eight (G8) dominate both the global economy and most of the world's international institutions. Combined, G8 members account for almost two-thirds of world economic activity, more than 45 percent of the votes at the World Bank and the International Monetary

Fund (IMF), and four of the five vetoes on the United Nations Security Council. While the G8 has no formal standing under international law, no constitution, no founding charter or articles of agreement, and no permanent secretariat or headquarters, its decisions often shape global policy and determine the direction of key international institutions. For this reason, civil society organizations often work together to influence the outcome of G8 deliberations.

Canada is the second smallest economy amongst the G8

countries, but it has been described as “the G8 member that attaches the most importance to and invests the greatest degree of strategic thinking in the G8 process.”¹ Canada is also host to the [G8 Information](#)

Box 1: Background on the G7/G8

Roy Culpeper, “Systemic Reform at a Standstill: A Flock of ‘Gs’ in Search of Global Financial Stability,” North-South Institute, 2000.
www.nsi-ins.ca/english/pdf/flock_of_Gs_eng.pdf

Sylvia Ostry, *Globalization and the G8: Could Kananaskis Set a New Direction?*, O.D. Skelton Memorial Lecture, 2002
www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/department/skelton/ostry-en.asp

Ashgate Publishing's [G8 and Global Governance](#) Book Series, including:

Nicholas Bayne, *Staying Together: The G8 Summit Confronts the 21st Century*, 2005.

John J. Kirton and Junichi Takase (eds.), *New Directions in Global Political Governance: The G8 and International Order in the Twenty-First Century*, 2002.

John J. Kirton and George M. Von Furstenberg (eds.), *New Directions in Global Economic Governance: Managing Globalisation in the Twenty-First Century*, 2001.

Jonathan Neale, *You Are G8, We Are 6 Billion : The Truth Behind the Genoa Protests*, Vision, 2003.

Tom Barry, “G8: Failing Model of Global Governance,” *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Vol. 7:9, July 2002, www.fpif.org/briefs/vol7/v7n09g8.html.

“Where's the Money? G8 Promises, G8 Failures,” Oxfam International Briefing Paper, 2001.
http://www.oxfam.org/eng/pdfs/pp0107_G8_Where_is_the_money.pdf

Marguerite Pigeon, “The G-8: A protester's view.”
www.cbc.ca/news/viewpoint/diaries_pigeon/index.html

The Role of the G8 in International Peace and Security (Adelphi Papers, 355) International Institute for Strategic Studies, June 2003.

[Centre](#), a clearing-house for information on the G8 based out of the University of Toronto.

This handbook begins by describing what the G8 is, what it does, how it is structured, how it works, and how it is financed. This is followed by an explanation of who speaks for Canada at the G8 and who the key governmental players are in determining what Canada says at the institution. Finally, the handbook ends with tips for civil society activists that are interested in better understanding and influencing the G8. The information that follows will be periodically updated and we welcome your comments and suggestions.

What is the G8?

The G8 is a group of powerful countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Canada, and the Russian Federation) that come together on a regular basis to develop common approaches to managing world affairs. It can be understood as an exclusive club – or forum – whose member countries have developed a relatively formal set of procedures for debating policy issues and for developing strategies that advance their economic and political interests.

The G8 is not a formal, free-standing institution like the World Bank. Instead, its member countries collaborate through an annual cycle of conferences and meetings. While the G8 has gradually expanded its agenda over the years to take on a range of social, political, and environmental issues, its principal function has always been to provide a forum for the world's richest countries to debate, coordinate, and advance their global *economic* interests.

What Does the G8 Do?

The G8 acts as a forum for meetings between representatives of its eight member countries, and produces statements and communiqués describing areas of common agreement among these members. Since it is often difficult for the G8 members to arrive at a consensus, G8 statements sometimes appear to be hollow compromises devoid of any real substance. However, when G8 countries do agree on a particular course of action they often set the direction of global policy, and have a profound influence over other international organizations such as the World Bank.

The most important type of G8 meeting is the Leaders' Summit (described in more detail below). The statements that come out of a given Summit vary depending on the preferences of the Chair.

Traditionally, however, there have been two main [documents associated with the annual Summit](#): a lengthy communiqué outlining the consensus of the members on economic issues; and a separate statement on political matters, sometimes called a “statement of the chair” or “chairperson’s summary”.² In some years there is no central communiqué, but rather a brief summary of what was discussed and a number of separate documents relating to single issues.

The G8 process also involves a wide range of meetings between various ministers from G8 countries, most notably the ministers of finance and the ministers of foreign affairs. Much like the Leaders’ Summit, these [ministerial meetings](#) tend to produce general statements summarizing ministerial discussions and announcing any agreements that have been reached. These statements are often accompanied by additional reports on specific issues. In 2005, for example, the G8 foreign affairs ministers issued a “[Chairman’s Statement](#)” that summarized G8 thinking on, among other things, the Middle East, the Western Balkans, international trade in conventional arms, Sudan, UN reform, and Haiti. The Ministers also issued a separate [statement on Afghanistan](#).

Finally, the G8 has also set up a variety of [commissions and task forces](#) on specific issues that vary in how they function and what they produce. They are usually established for the purpose of producing a single report that is then discussed at an upcoming Leaders’ Summit. Sometimes the commissions continue for a number of years, while in other cases they “spin off” and take on a life of their own that involves a wider group of participating countries. For instance, the G8 has launched a number of programs or initiatives, such as the [Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria](#).

For an extensive archive of G8 statements and reports going back more than a decade, see the website of the [G8 Information Center](#).

How is the G8 Structured?

As mentioned above, the G8 is not a formal institution with its own permanent secretariat and staff, an office complex, a founding charter, and a clearly defined role under international law. Instead, it is a group of countries that hold a series of meetings each year to develop common approaches to key policy issues. These meetings can be loosely divided into three different types.

Box 2: The annual G8 Leaders’ Summit
The annual G8 Leaders’ Summit is hosted by a different G8 member every year on a rotating eight year cycle. The official websites of several Summits remain online for archival purposes:

2006 – Saint Petersburg, Russia
<http://en.g8russia.ru/>

2005 – Gleneagles, Scotland
www.g8.gov.uk

2003 – Evian, France
www.g8.fr/evian/english/

First, the most important type of G8 meeting is the annual Leaders' [Summit](#) between member countries' heads of state. The G8 members take turns hosting the Summit and the host country acts as the "Chair" of the G8 for that year. Apart from the G8 leaders, the President of the European Commission and the leader of the country holding the European Union Presidency attend the Summit. A variety of other leaders are also usually invited to attend a portion of the event, including the heads of the World Bank, the IMF, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the United Nations, as well as the leaders of countries such as China, India, and Brazil.

Second, there are [ministerial meetings](#) between G8 ministers who share a particular portfolio. For example, the ministers of finance (who still call themselves the [G7 Finance Ministers](#) because Russia is not a full participant) meet at least four times a year. Two of these gatherings coincide with the [semi-annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF](#). Other ministers meet with their G8 counterparts at least once a year, including the ministers of [foreign affairs](#), [trade](#), [justice/internal affairs](#), [employment/labour](#), [environment](#), and [energy](#). As described below, there are also a host of more frequent meetings between officials within the various ministries who prepare for, and follow-up on, the ministerial meetings.

Finally, there are also a number of [G8 commissions, task forces, and working groups](#) set up to address specific issues of particular importance, such as the Counter-Terrorism Action Group, the Chemical Action Task Force, the Expert Group on Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Senior Group on Weapons of Mass Destruction. Decisions to establish such groups are made at annual G8 Leaders' Summits.

How Does the G8 Work?

The best way to understand how the G8 works is to imagine an annual cycle of meetings that gradually builds to a climax at the Leaders' Summit. As soon as one Summit ends, preparations for the next one begin to take shape and the cycle starts all over again.

The Chair of the G8 is the engine behind the annual cycle. Each year, a new member country assumes control of the Chair and takes responsibility for organizing the ministerial and preparatory meetings, proposing the agenda, hosting the annual Summit, managing G8 communications, and paying most of the bills. This puts the Chair (or "[host country](#)") in a position to influence the priorities for the upcoming Summit and determine the issues that will receive the most attention. Canada last hosted the Summit in 2002, and will next host in 2010.

Developing consensus among G8 ministers, presidents, and prime ministers is a complicated task. While the Chair is responsible for making sure that the meetings happen, a small army of bureaucrats from the relevant G8 ministries work behind the scenes to prepare the high-level meetings and build consensus. By the time the ministers and leaders sit down together, many of the most important decisions will already have been made.

In order to manage this small army of bureaucrats and cope with the range of issues under discussion at any given time, each G8 government appoints a senior official to coordinate its involvement in the G8 process. This person is called the “Sherpa”.

Sherpas Lead the Way to the Summit:

A Sherpa is a member of the Himalayan ethnic group that inhabits the mountainous region surrounding Mount Everest in Nepal and Tibet. When foreigners first started travelling to this area to climb the world’s highest mountains, they often relied on Sherpas to act as aides, guides, and porters. Foreigners became famous in their home countries for their mountaineering accomplishments, but behind the scenes the Sherpas did most of the work by carrying supplies and leading the expeditions to the top.

Similarly, the G8 relies on “Sherpas”. Each member appoints a senior bureaucrat to act as its Sherpa, and this person is responsible for leading his or her country to the Summit (only in the case of the G8, the Summit is a high-level political meeting rather than a mountain peak). The Sherpa is usually a senior government official, such as a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Each Sherpa acts as the personal representative of his or her head of state/government and is expected to speak on this person’s behalf.

Each G8 Sherpa is supported by three other senior officials from his or her government, who act as “Sub-” or “Sous-Sherpas” for specific policy areas, including:

Box 3: Other Guides to the G8

G8 Information Centre/G8 Online

www.g7.utoronto.ca/
www.g7.utoronto.ca/g8online/

Two Guides prepared by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC) and the Halifax Initiative Coalition

www.web.net/acgc/issues/g8.htm#g8guide
www.halifaxinitiative.org/index.php/All_FactSheets/304

“The G8 Is Not Our Fate”

Eleven fact sheets on different issues related to the G8

“The G8, Globalization and Human Security”

An Education Kit and Facilitator’s Guide

Christophe Aguiton, An Activist’s Guide to the G8

(translated by Barbara and David Forbes)
www.focusweb.org/popups/articleswindow.php?id=323

Global Policy Forum

www.globalpolicy.org/socecon/bwi-wto/indexg7.htm

- the “Finance Sous-Sherpa,” who helps to prepare the financial/economic agenda for both the leaders’ Summit and the meetings of the finance ministers;
- the “Political Director” or “Political Affairs Director,” who helps prepare policy positions on regional and security issues for both the leaders’ Summit and the meetings of the foreign ministers; and
- the “Foreign Affairs Sous-Sherpa,” who is responsible for developing a range of cross-cutting themes for the Summit and reviewing progress on previous initiatives.

The Road to the Summit:

Technically, the G8 Chair changes hands on January 1st of each year. In practice, however, a country will begin making preparations and developing its priorities well before it formally takes control of the Chair. For instance, as early as October 2004, it was an open secret that the UK intended to prioritize climate change and Africa during the [July 2005 G8 Summit](#) in Gleneagles, Scotland. Similarly, Russia launched the official website of the [2006 G8 Summit](#) in St. Petersburg before the Gleneagles Summit had even ended. In this sense, the annual cycle of the G8 begins as soon as one Summit ends and runs through to the completion of the next Summit in May, June, or July of the following year.

One way to determine the priorities for an upcoming Summit is to check whether the communiqués and statements released at the last Summit contained any “remit mandates,” which are formal instructions that indicate that the leaders intend to deal with a specific issue at the following Summit or in subsequent years.

By September or October of each year, the likely priorities of the incoming Chair will probably be common knowledge within relevant government circles. However, discussions won’t formally begin until the Chair changes hands in January.

Each country will naturally have a set of priority issues that it would like to see included in the G8 agenda, and during the first few months of the calendar year, the Sherpas meet and put these specific ideas and policy proposals forward for consideration. The Sherpas continue to meet over the next few months to negotiate common language and reject proposals that do not enjoy consensus. By the time the Summit takes place, the general shape of the G8 communiqués and other Summit statements will be decided, and the leaders will come together to debate any outstanding issues of concern.

As mentioned above, there are also a number of ministerial meetings that take place throughout the year. For instance, the Finance Ministers meet four times over the course of the year and the Finance Sous-Sherpas meet ten or twelve times to prepare for the Finance Ministers' meetings. The ministerial meetings are designed to feed into and inform the Summit process, and they can be seen as laying the basis for discussion during the Summit. For instance, the meetings of the Finance Ministers and the Foreign Affairs Ministers are often instrumental in reaching consensus at the Summit. At the same time, however, the ministerial meetings are important in and of themselves, and the agreements that emerge from these meetings can have important implications regardless of whether or not they are fully included in the Summit's final communiqués, statements, and reports.

It is also important to note that economic recommendations made at the Summit often closely resemble those set out in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) ministerial meeting communiqué. The

Box 4: A good way to get a sense of the G8's economic priorities is to look at what the OECD is doing. There is an extensive explanation of the "[Partnership between the G8 and the OECD](#)" on the OECD's website.

OECD meeting is usually held about a month before the Summit. The similarity between OECD and G8 communiqués reflects the close relationship that these groups enjoy, as well as the dominant role exercised by the G8 countries within the OECD.³ For more on the OECD, see the corresponding Civil Society Handbook on the OECD.

Where Does the G8 Get its Money?

The host country covers the costs of both the Summit and the preparatory meetings. Summit costs have skyrocketed in recent years due to increased security concerns. The [2002 Summit in Kananaskis](#), Alberta, was estimated to cost around \$300 million, compared to \$25 million when Halifax hosted the [Summit in 1995](#). The cost of the [2000 Summit in Okinawa](#), Japan, was reported to be US\$750 million.⁴ Funding for specific G8 initiatives, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, is based on agreed contributions from the member countries and any other governments that are involved.

Who Speaks for Canada at the G8?

Because the G8 is not a formal international institution, Canada is not represented by an Executive Director or Ambassador at the Group's meetings. Instead, a wide range of people represent Canada in the various multilateral meetings that make up the G8 negotiations.

At the Summit, the Prime Minister speaks for Canada, but during the negotiations and preparations that precede the Summit, it is the Canadian Sherpa who speaks on Canada's behalf. Similarly, at the ministerial meetings, the relevant minister is Canada's

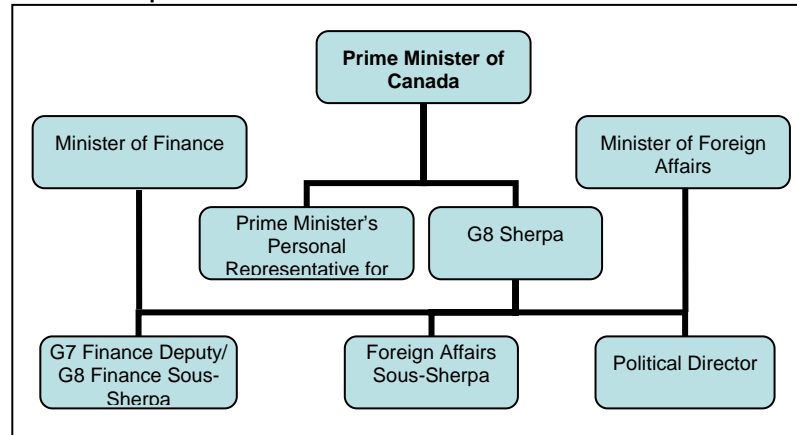
representative, but the Sous-Sherpas, the Political Director, or other senior officials speak for Canada during the gatherings that lead up to the ministerial meetings. Unlike most international bodies, the person sitting at the negotiating table and speaking for Canada at the G8 will vary significantly depending on the nature of the meeting.

Apart from the Prime Minister and the various ministers, the following people are Canada's principal representatives in the G8 process:

- Canada's G8 Sherpa is usually the [Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs](#).
- Canada's Foreign Affairs Sous-Sherpa is currently the [Director General of the Economic Policy Bureau](#) at the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- Canada's G8 Political Director has, in recent years, been the [Assistant Deputy Minister for International Security in Foreign Affairs](#).
- Canada's G7 Finance Sous-Sherpa is usually an [Associate Deputy Minister](#) in the Department of Finance.

The Prime Minister may also appoint representatives for specific initiatives, as when Robert Fowler was appointed the Prime Minister's personal G8 representative for Africa after being replaced as Canada's G8 Sherpa in 2002.

Box 5: Who Speaks for Canada at the G8?



Box 6: Canada and the G8

Government of Canada G8 webpage

www.g8.gc.ca/

The G8 and Africa: Foreign Affairs Canada

www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/africa/africa_action_plan-en.asp

Canada Fund for Africa: CIDA

Launched as part of the G8 Action Plan for Africa

www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/canadafundforafrica

Who Decides What Canada Says at the G8?

Since the G8 deals with such a wide range of issues and involves so many different departments and ministers, it's impossible to provide a simple answer to the question: "Who decides what Canada says at the G8?" In the case of meetings related to environmental issues, Environment Canada and/or Natural Resources Canada are most likely to take the lead in formulating policy. Similarly, if the ministers of finance meet to discuss monetary policy, then Finance Canada would be the driving force. When specific issues such as renewable energy, debt cancellation, or AIDS make their way onto the G8 agenda, the Government officials that have responsibility for these issues will be called on to develop Canada's position.

Significant coordination takes place between various departments to formulate policy on a given issue. For example, Finance Canada consulted extensively with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Natural Resources Canada, and International Trade Canada in relation to the UK-initiated [Commission for Africa](#) (the "Blair Commission"). The Commission drafted a report for the 2005 Summit. Foreign Affairs Canada also frequently consults these and other departments, such as Justice and Environment Canada.

Box 7: Contacting the Government:

To contact a person or office in the **Government of Canada**, check the Government Electronic Directory Services (GEDS), a searchable online database of government contact information. See: <http://direct.srv.gc.ca/cgi-bin/direct500/BE>

The **Parliament of Canada** website maintains contact information for Members of Parliament and records of parliamentary proceedings. See: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/>

In general, however, [Foreign Affairs Canada](#) is the lead department on the G8. Canada's Sherpa, Foreign Affairs Sous-Sherpa, and the Political Director can usually be found at Foreign Affairs. Within the Department, the most consistently engaged branch is the [International Economic Relations and Summit Division](#), which has several policy officers devoted to the G8.⁵ This division plays a coordinating role in generating policy advice related to the Leaders' Summit, drawing on the expertise of various other branches of Foreign Affairs, and consulting with other departments. *[See Appendix One on how the Department of Foreign Affairs is organized in relation to the G8.]*

Finance Canada is also a key player, since the G8's primary focus is economic. The Finance Sous-Sherpa coordinates Finance Canada's input into both the G8 process and the finance ministers meetings. *[See Appendix One for more information on the divisions and branches within*

the Department of Finance that are most active in coordinating and providing policy advice.]

As the Prime Minister is directly involved in the G8 Summits, the [Prime Minister's Office \(PMO\)](#) and the Privy Council Office (PCO) are also heavily involved in the G8 process. The PMO primarily focuses on the potential political gains and losses for the Prime Minister and the governing party that are associated with the G8. The PCO takes the lead in advising the Prime Minister on all foreign policy issues, including those discussed at the G8 Summit. The lead advisor is the [Prime Minister's Foreign Policy Advisor](#), a senior official in the PCO who works closely with the G8 Sherpa and other officials involved in the preparatory meetings leading up to the G8 Summit.⁶ The Foreign Policy Advisor is supported by analysts in the Global Affairs Secretariat of the PCO, who often work on G8 agenda issues in other forums.

Tips for Civil Society:

In many ways, the G8 is an inappropriate forum for global decision-making, since it excludes the vast majority of the world's countries and serves to advance the economic interests of a small group of rich countries. For this reason, many organizations refuse to engage in the G8 process, or limit their involvement to media work or public demonstrations. Other organizations are more engaged in the process and seek to influence specific G8 communiqués and statements. Regardless of the approach that your organization takes, if you prioritize global economic, environmental, or social justice issues, the G8 is probably influencing your work. What follows are some of the things that you may want to keep in mind if you choose to take action around the G8.

Organizations working on the G8:

Few civil society organizations are permanently engaged in work related to the G8. Instead, levels of interest seem to rise and fall depending on the agenda of G8 meetings. In Canada, the [Halifax Initiative](#) is a coalition of development, environment, labour, human rights, and faith groups deeply concerned about the international financial system and its institutions. The Halifax Initiative draws its name from the 1995 G8 Summit in Halifax, and it has been working on G8-related issues off and on over the past ten years. [KAIROS](#) (Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives) and the [Canadian Council for International Cooperation](#) (CCIC) also work on issues that are relevant to the G8 agenda. You may want to contact these organizations for more information on civil society initiatives in Canada.

Canada is also home to the world's most active academic research centre on the G8: the University of Toronto's [G8 Information Centre](#). The Centre's website provides a wealth of information on the G8. The Centre has recently attempted to take a more active role in facilitating interaction between civil society and the G8. For example, the Centre hosted a meeting for civil society groups with the Canadian and UK Sherpas in 2005.

While very few organizations are permanently engaged in G8-related work, civil society coalitions almost always come together to take action around G8 Summits. The nature of the coalitions and the lead organizations will vary each year, depending on where the Summit is held and what issues are scheduled to be discussed.

Directly engaging in the G8 process:

If you want to influence the specific wording of G8 communiqués and statements, keep in mind that you need to start early – most of the important decisions are made well before the ministers or leaders sit down to talk. Assume that as soon as one Summit ends, the incoming Chair will begin to elaborate its objectives for the next year's Summit. In January, when the Chair officially changes hands, negotiations will begin in earnest.

You might want to begin by reviewing the [communiqués and statements](#) that emerged from previous summits or relevant ministerial meetings. This will help you to get a better idea of whether the issues that are important to you have been discussed in the past or are scheduled to be considered in the future. These statements can be found on the web – through the G8 Information Centre, the various G8 governments, or the official websites of previous Summits.

You might also want to talk to the government officials who are responsible for the international issues that are important to you. Ask them if they know of any G8 discussions that directly relate to your priority issues.

Most importantly, however, contact the office of the Sherpa and the Sous-Sherpas. As described above, these officials are responsible for negotiating G8 communiqués and statements. It is important to meet with the Sherpas and other relevant government officials early in the process in order to find out how the issues that you are concerned about are being addressed (if at all). You should request copies of draft communiqués and statements. This will allow you to work with allies and other decision-makers to influence the final documents. The Sherpa

and Sous-Sherpa meetings are held behind closed doors, but government officials in many countries meet with groups to discuss specific issues and sometimes share draft communiqués.

The best way to approach G8-related work is in coordination with groups in other countries that share your concerns. By working together and sharing information, you stand the best chance of understanding the negotiations and influencing their outcome.

Participating in G8 related demonstrations and events:

Public demonstrations and media work may be the best way to influence the G8 over the long term. In the country where the Summit is scheduled to be held, civil society coalitions always come together to influence or protest the G8, and parallel events and demonstrations in other countries usually take place prior to and during the Summit. Typically, groups will organize speaking tours, produce and distribute public education materials, organize teach-ins and mass demonstrations, and engage the media.

In order to insulate themselves from the massive protests that have accompanied G8 meetings in recent years, the Summits are being held in increasingly remote locations, and significant resources are dedicated to preventing protesters from disrupting the meetings. Groups often come from around the world to attend the civil society events that take place beyond the security perimeter, and to provide the media with an alternative interpretation of the G8 and its policies. If you are travelling to take part in events surrounding the G8, contact the in-country coalitions that are formed every year in the Summit host country. These

Box 8: Activist Sites Related to the G8

2005 Summit: Gleneagles, Scotland

Dissent! A Network of Resistance Against the G8
www.dissent.org.uk

G8 Alternatives
www.g8alternatives.org.uk

2004 Summit: Sea Island, Georgia, USA

TOES: The Other Economic Summit
www.toes-usa.org

Fighting the Octopus: Global action against Capitalism
 (anarchist site)
www.infoshop.org/octo/g8_2004.php

2002 Summit: Kananaskis, Alberta, Canada

G8 Activist
www.g8.activist.ca

Global Democracy Ottawa (example of a local initiative)
www.gdo.ca/events.html

Final Report, G6B (Group of Six Billion) People's Summit
 Written by the Halifax Initiative
www.halifaxinitiative.org/index.php/Past_Events/354

See also Stephen Lewis' G6B keynote address
www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/docs/20020721-G6B-Opening.html

General

Peoples' Global Action
 (Anti-globalization/anarchist site)
www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/en/

antig8.info
 (g8 related links page)
www.antig8.info

groups often set up meeting points, establish protest schedules, find locations for campsites, and sometimes try to set up meetings with G8 officials. They also keep close track of the security measures and restrictions that are established, and in some cases are involved in negotiations with authorities on these issues. These groups also usually set up websites that are updated until the end of the Summit. Several remain online for archival purposes, and can be an excellent tool for Summit preparation (see box entitled “Activist Sites Related to the G8). The official G8 sites are also an important archival resource.

For most NGOs, the primary purpose of attending the Summit is to get their message out to the media. Since there are so many groups trying to do this, you will need to do some advance work in order to be successful. Find out which Canadian journalists are covering the event and brief them before you go. Also, ask the relevant Canadian Government offices (identified above) how to get press credentials. G8 governments are making it increasingly difficult for alternative media to gain access, and these credentials are essential.

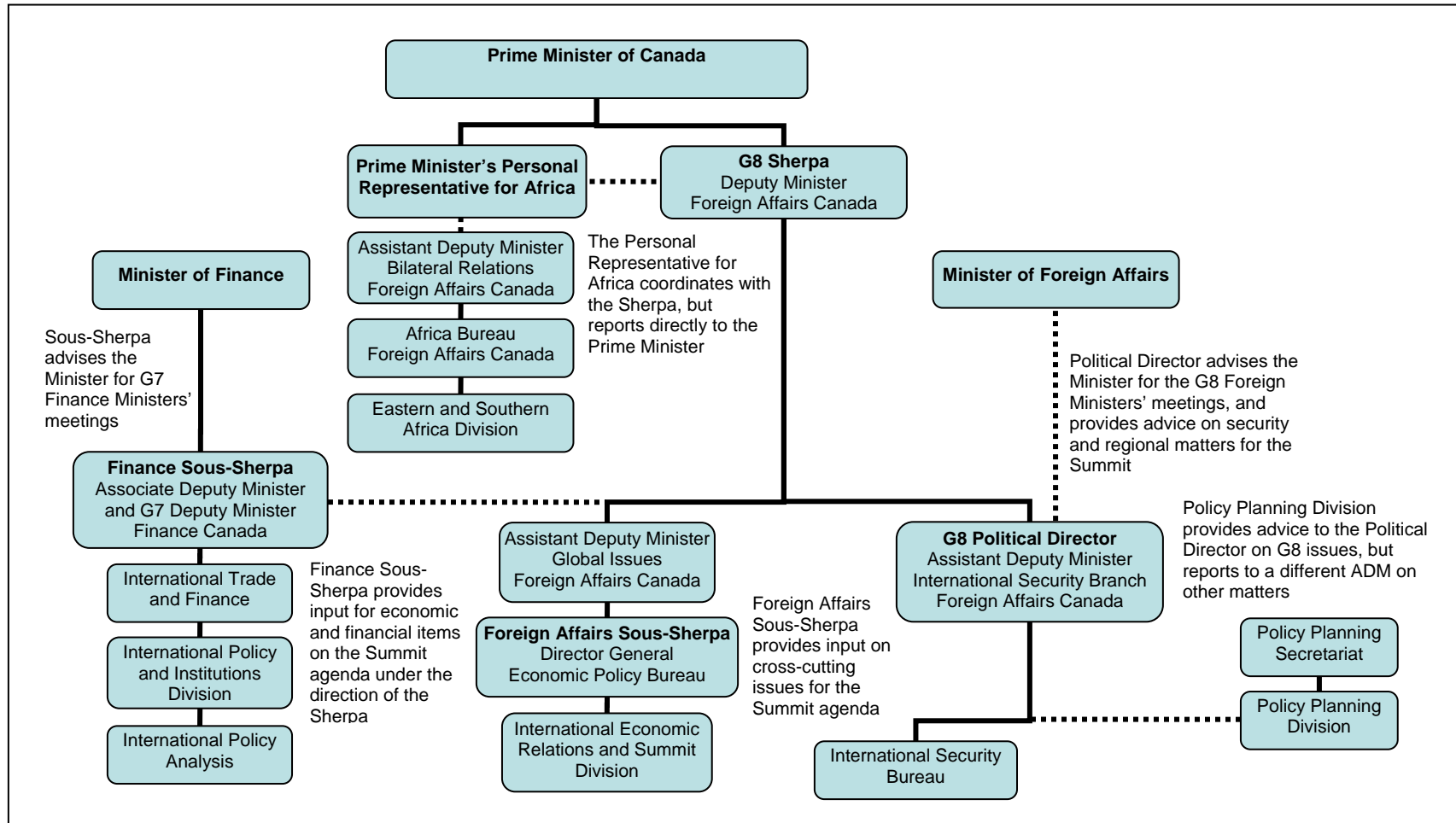
While the Summit is by far the most high-profile G8 meeting, keep in mind that the positions taken during the [ministerial meetings](#) can have important implications. For example, the G7 Finance Ministers use their regular meetings to shape World Bank and IMF policies. Globally, these policies are highly influential (see the corresponding Civil Society Handbook on the World Bank Group). Civil society organizations have helped promote policy reform by engaging in the ministerial process. In the past, for instance, the [Halifax Initiative](#) coalition has lobbied the Environment Minister on issues related to Export Credit Agencies (ECAs), a file on which Canada was dragging its feet. Similarly, the [Africa-Canada Forum](#) provided input to the Minister of Finance and his office during the Commission for Africa process. The G8 eventually instructed the OECD to develop common environmental guidelines for the ECAs in 2001, and the final Commission for Africa report broke new ground in recognizing the harmful effects of forcing economic liberalization on developing economies. These achievements are partly due to civil society engagement in the G8 process.

Conclusion

Friends of the Earth Canada hopes that this handbook will serve as a useful point of reference for organizations interested in better understanding and influencing the G8. This is a work-in-progress that will be periodically updated in order to better serve the needs of civil society organizations in Canada and abroad. We want to encourage

readers to provide feedback and advice on how to improve this working draft. Please send any questions and comments to gsaul@foecanada.org.

Appendix A: Who Decides What Canada Says at the G8?



¹ Peter I. Hajnal and John J. Kirton, “The Evolving Role and Agenda of the G7/G8: A North American Perspective,” *NIRA Review*, Spring 2000, 9.

² Peter Hajnal, The Documentation of the G7/G8 System.

³ See Partnership between the G8 and the OECD,
www.oecd.org/document/7/0,2340,en_2649_34487_2512391_1_1_1_1,00.html.

⁴ See www.g7.utoronto.ca/evaluations/factsheet/factsheet_costs.html.

⁵ This Division also coordinates policy preparation for Canada’s participation in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summits. It reports to the Assistant Deputy Minister for Global Issues (2005).

⁶ For more information on the role of the Foreign Policy Advisor, see the section of the guide on Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Canada.