



THE JOHN MCKAY REPORT

Member of Parliament Scarborough-Guildwood

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A GLOBAL NETWORKS STRATEGY : PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA

It is time to reverse the slide away from Africa. The Global Networks Strategy will extend the hand of partnership to those most in need. That means focusing first where extreme poverty - not short-term political opportunity - exists. It also means encouraging private investment, and building capacity of African states to serve their people. At a time when a renewed commitment to the Millennium Development Goals is more essential than ever, the developed world must engage with Africans at all levels.

A SHAMEFUL DECISION WITH NO PUBLIC DISCUSSION

In 2009 the Harper government changed Canada's international aid targets dramatically, with virtually no public or Parliamentary discussion. It shifted aid away from sub-Saharan Africa countries to middle-income Latin American countries. The government removed eight African countries from the list of priority aid recipients. This followed a previous reduction in African aid by \$700 million in June 2007. And now, overseas development assistance has been frozen by the government for the foreseeable future.

RETURNING TO A FOCUS ON AFRICA

A Liberal government will return Africa to the top of our aid priorities, matching Canadian resources, capacities, and economic interests with the greatest needs. The continent is the location of a disproportionate number of the world's poor, the world's conflicts, and diseases like HIV -AIDS and malaria. It will also bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change. These facts make the Harper government's slide away from Africa short-sighted at best.

AFRICA IS CHANGING - NEW OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE

But Africa is also a continent of change. Opportunities exist to build partnerships and make progress on issues not thought possible in the past. At the same time, we must move beyond stale debates about the necessary amounts of foreign aid. Although more money for the poorest countries may help, experts are increasingly looking at new ideas and alternative methods of supporting growth in the developing world.

NEWS WAYS TO EMPOWER PEOPLE

The key is not how much money to spend, rather how to empower people. Canada must be a leader in advancing innovative new ways of assisting African states that are developing their economies, attracting private investment, and delivering services to their citizens. Micro-finance has proven effective in many circumstances, and there is potential for encouraging more private investment on larger scales in Africa, thus leveraging private sector potential rather than injecting Canadian taxpayers' money into dysfunctional states.

Canada will need to focus sharply on where its partnership and interventions can really make a difference in Africa.



This is the sixth in a series of twelve articles on the Global Networks Strategy which is part of the Liberal platform. Other articles in the series are available on request from my Constituency Office.

- 1 - Why change is needed
- 2 - What and how to change
- 3 - Agreements with China and India
- 4 - Partnerships in North America
- 5 - The Arctic region
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A GLOBAL NETWORKS STRATEGY: OPENNESS TO THE WORLD

Canadians embrace the world with confidence, optimism and a blend of new-world idealism and old-fashioned practicality. Doing well in the world, and *with* the world is part of who we are. We want to contribute to progress, leave things better for our children, and right wrongs where we can. A modest population spread across a vast geography, Canadians understand those ambitions require working with others, beyond our borders. Blessed with the prosperity of a developed, Western economy, but unburdened by any history of conquest, we are welcomed by many, often envied, but seldom resented.

This is what we tell ourselves. We see ourselves this way because of our past. But in a rapidly changing world, it is now essential that Canadians re-examine our role, our manner of contributing, our way of pursuing our interests and applying our values.

WE NEED TO ADAPT TO CHANGE

The world has changed in ways to which we have not yet adapted, and at a pace that we have yet to confront. It is not that our history in international affairs, of which we are justifiably proud, is irrelevant. But it is the past, and its lessons must now be applied to the future with fresh thinking to move beyond old debates and answer the next decade's questions.

CANADA AND PEACEKEEPING

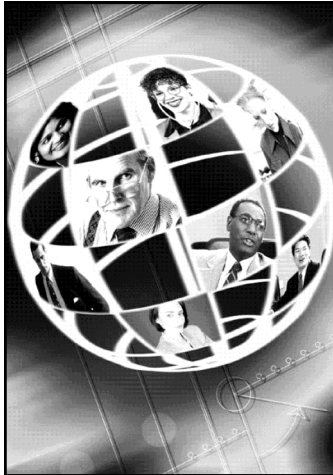
Lester B. Pearson invented United Nations peacekeeping. But we have gone from its leading practitioner to the world's 56th ranked contributor to peace operations today. During that shift, the practice has become vastly more complex – and dangerous - than in its earlier decades. Is Canada a peacemaker and conflict preventer of the future? If so, how should we go about it in the years ahead?

CANADA AND CHINA

Pierre Trudeau led the world's opening to China, with Canada crafting a careful diplomatic recognition in 1970 that was emulated by other countries in subsequent years. Since that time, China has gone from an isolated, backward economy to a global powerhouse, forecast to become the world's largest economy in the next two decades. Will Canada again be a leader in innovative engagement with China, or continue sliding off the radar screen of Asia's emerging giants?

CANADA AND APARTHEID

Brian Mulroney put Canadian values into practice when he played a leading role in the



Commonwealth to end Apartheid in South Africa. Those efforts contributed to the high regard many Africans have for Canada, and yet the current government has removed a number of African nations from among its priorities, reduced commitments to African development assistance, and shifted its limited attention elsewhere.

CANADA AND THE WORLD'S POOREST

Does Canada still care enough to stand with the world's poorest in the years ahead, and partner with a changing Africa? If so, should the debate be

about the right amount of money to devote to aid, or is it about finding innovative new ways to build capacity and eradicate poverty?

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

These are the kind of questions to be answered as Canada looks to the future, and rethinks its objectives, interests, values, challenges and advantages in an ever more complex world. Canada was once a credible player in the world's debates, a source of knowledge and fresh thinking. Canadians want to play such roles again, and we can.

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