

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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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

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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