

## Statement by the Delegation of Canada to the Sixteenth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

**Friday, May 9 2008, 3:00 pm – International Development Cooperation**

Mr./Madame Chairperson:

Canada is committed to fostering positive change in Africa. The Government's 2008 Budget confirmed our intention of meeting our 2005 Gleneagles target to double aid to Africa by 2008-09.

While increased resources are important, these must be accompanied by efforts to improve their effectiveness. The Government of Canada's 2007 Budget outlined a three-point plan to strengthen the focus, improve the accountability and enhance the efficiency of Canada's aid program. This plan features provisions to focus Canada's bilateral aid in fewer countries and increase our field presence in order to be able to better manage our aid program.

Canada is also working to ensure close alignment of projects and programs with partner countries' plans and priorities. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and Canada's efforts to increase our own effectiveness, offer opportunities to work closely with partner countries and other donors to integrate sustainable development practices into national plans and strategies.

To do this, Canada is increasing its use of program-based approaches - initiatives that are led by the host country or organisation; have a comprehensive program budget framework; have a formalized process for donor coordination; and make efforts to increase the use of country systems, including national budget systems. In 2006-07, program-based approaches accounted for nearly 60% of Canada's bilateral spending in Africa, up from only 20% four years earlier. The use of this approach has allowed Canada to join other donor countries in supporting our African partners towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other key priorities.

In Ghana, our joint efforts are contributing to the national efforts to reduce poverty. Through Sector Budget Support in Tanzania, we are contributing to primary school enrolment increases from 66% to 97% in the last six years. In Mozambique, our support to the health sector program-based approach has contributed to the government of Mozambique meeting or surpassing its 2007 goals in childhood immunization, institutional births and drug coverage for HIV-positive pregnant women.

While aligning our programs with African partners' plans and priorities, we have also promoted the strengthening of local systems such as public financial management and procurement systems. Canada is supporting increased ownership of Ghana's development process by strengthening and using country public financial management systems for aid projects. Our contribution to building African capacity to address economic development and governance reforms was highlighted in the OECD-DAC's recent peer review of Canada.

Canada's bilateral aid certainly contributes to the achievement of important results in Africa (and elsewhere), but a large portion of Canada's aid program is not bilateral. We welcome efforts to improve how development assistance is dealt with in the UN system, for example through our support to the One-UN pilot in Tanzania and Mozambique.

This coming September, the 2008 Accra High Level Forum will offer the opportunity to reaffirm and deepen our commitment to aid effectiveness. We are particularly pleased that the forum will include a discussion on the unique role of civil society and its place in the aid effectiveness agenda. Not only do civil society organizations foster innovation, they also mobilize significant resources for development and promote transparency and accountability. Canada and other countries are called upon to ensure our development assistance is as effective as possible, especially now, as we approach the mid-point for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you.