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ABSTRACT

The Group of Eight (G8) is one of the most prestigious forums to which Canada belongs. It represents an avenue through which the Canadian government can exercise its opinion on a number of economic and political issues. At the G8 summits in Genoa, Italy (2001) and Kananaskis, Alberta (2002), the Liberal Government of Canada, led by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, ensured that African poverty reduction was a central concern to the group. In 2001, authors of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) presented their plan to the G8. G8 leaders responded with the African Action Plan (AAP). At the Kananaskis summit, G8 leaders focused on African development issues, the specifics of which were addressed in the AAP. Prime Minister Chrétien took the lead in these efforts, developing domestic policies (such as the Canada Fund for Africa and the promises made at the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico) and working through the international concert of the G8.

This thesis adapts John Kingdon's public policy model, the Multiple Streams model, to analyze Canadian foreign policy. It studies how and why African development rose to the top of the agenda for Canada and the G8 in the early 2000s. It illustrates how Prime Minister Chrétien became a Policy Entrepreneur, both in Canada and within the G8. It argues that the streams of problem, policy and politics aligned and that Chrétien was able to couple them, pushing them through a policy window and affecting real policy change. It concludes that, while the Multiple Streams model lacks in predictive power, it is an excellent tool through which to understand policy decisions made both domestically and within an international body such as the G8.

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