



Policy Brief

## **Vulnerable and Fragile States at the G8**

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G8 Research Group

Vulnerable and fragile states threaten the safety of domestic populations and of the broader G8. When the G8 leaders meet at their Muskoka Summit on June 26-27, 2010, they will work to combat the terrorism, drug trafficking, piracy and transnational organized crime proliferating in parts of South America, the Caribbean and Africa.

Global stability and security are affected by conflict, disasters, terrorism, crime and trafficking in illicit drugs and people. However, many countries are particularly vulnerable to these insecurities because they lack the effective institutions that are essential to good democratic governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

In January 2010, Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper announced that the G8 priorities would include addressing security concerns and human welfare in vulnerable and fragile states. In March, Harper declared it “incumbent upon the leaders of the world’s most developed economies to assist those in the most vulnerable positions.” In May, Canada hosted a conference of G8 senior officials in Gatineau, Quebec, to discuss how to increase the effectiveness and coherence of capacity-building efforts in vulnerable states. The meeting aimed to build cross-disciplinary coordination focused on military, policing, justice, corrections and border security. In addition to G8 foreign ministers, participants included representatives from key multilateral organizations including the World Bank, the United Nations Secretariat, the United Development Programme, the UN’s Office of Drugs and Crime and the UN’s Peacebuilding Support Office. The results will be reported to the G8 leaders with a proposed framework for cross-disciplinary coordination and recommendations for its application to specific regions of concern.

At the Muskoka Summit, G8 leaders will support cross-disciplinary approaches to capacity building in vulnerable states and regions. They will focus on improve governance and human rights in struggling states, including Afghanistan and Haiti. They will strengthen security and counter-terrorism efforts and emphasize the importance of programs that prevent extremism.

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