

Financial Reform, Development, Haiti on Agenda at "Back to Basics" G7 Meeting

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The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, and Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of Canada, today highlighted the need to focus on continuing fiscal and financial cooperation, following through on development commitments and assisting in the reconstruction of Haiti at this weekend's meeting of G7 finance ministers and central bank governors.

“This meeting will not revolve around negotiated communiqués and scripted text—it will be a time for frank discussion and a collective determination to help put the global economy firmly on the road to recovery,” said Minister Flaherty. “As the recent global crisis made clear, when the G7 Plan of Action served as the foundation for the G20 Washington Action Plan and all that followed, the G7 still has a vital role to play, even as it continues to evolve. This meeting will make an important contribution to these efforts, in a truly breathtaking part of Canada. ”

“I am delighted to join Minister Flaherty in welcoming the G7 to the land of my birth. The spirit of the North—resilience, resourcefulness and a profound sense of community—embodies the best of the G7. Through frank, open discussion, this meeting should advance the objectives of the broader global community to secure strong, sustainable and balanced growth,” said Governor Carney.

The Iqaluit agenda will begin with a working dinner on the current state of the global economy and international financial markets, including continued risks to the emerging worldwide recovery. It will be followed by a fireside chat including finance ministers and central bank governors on the future role of the G7.

Saturday's schedule will begin with a candid discussion on financial sector reforms and the need for coordinated efforts by G7 nations to address the underlying causes of the financial crisis, such as a consensus on capital standards. It will be followed by a session on the Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth, which was endorsed by all G20 nations at the Pittsburgh leaders' summit to address global imbalances. The meeting will conclude with a working lunch on development and other issues, with a particular focus on the ongoing need to assist Haiti with reconstruction.

Minister Flaherty added that, as G7 Chair, Canada will use the meeting as an opportunity to highlight the contribution Canada has made to the global economic recovery—a financial system widely recognized as the world's soundest, a substantial but temporary stimulus program that goes well beyond G20 commitments to create and maintain jobs, significant and ongoing support for vital international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, and unilateral tariff reductions that reinforce Canada's commitment to open markets.

“The G7 cannot play the role it once did, but it can and it must continue to lead by example in whatever role it will play in the future,” said Minister Flaherty. “The first responders to the recent crisis were G7 members, and it was the result of the same frank and open dialogue we intend to have here in Iqaluit. The group’s role in preventing the next crisis must be just as determined, with benefits that go far beyond G7 members themselves. The G7 will continue to evolve in an ever-changing world, while contributing to a more stable and prosperous world for all.”