



## **THE G8 PRESIDENCY AND CIVIL SOCIETY**

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*An overview of German and Russian efforts to engage civil society  
& civil society organization around the G8*

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## PREFACE

The G8 Research Group (G8RG) is an independent organization based at the University of Toronto. Founded in 1987, it constitutes an international network of scholars, professionals and students interested in the activities of the Group of Eight (G8). To date, the G8RG is the largest source of independent research and analysis on the G8, its members, and related institutions worldwide. The G8RG also oversees the G8 Information Centre, which publishes academic analyses and reports on the G8 free of charge; it also maintains an archive of official documents issued at G8 summits and ministerials. Any G8 document referred to in this report is available on the G8RG website without cost at <[www.g8.utoronto.ca](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca)>.

This report was compiled by the Civil Society and Expanded Dialogue (CSED) Unit of the G8RG under the leadership of Joanna Dafoe and André Ghione. The CSED Unit conducts research and analysis on the G8's ongoing relationship with the five 'emerging' economies—Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa—and on thematic issues pertaining to civil society that mirror each year's G8 agenda. In addition to this report, the CSED unit has also published a thematic report on the G8 and Africa which considers both G8 compliance with 2005 commitments as well as civil society reactions. The CSED Unit will also release a report on the relationship between G8 presidencies and civil society groups. All of these reports are available free of charge at <[www.g8.utoronto.ca](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca)>, and can be accessed as of June 2007. A summary report on civil society activity at the Heiligendamm Summit will be released in August 2007.

The G8RG welcomes all responses to this report. Any comments or questions should be directed to [g8@utoronto.ca](mailto:g8@utoronto.ca). The co-chairs and authors of this report would like to thank the many people who helped share their knowledge and expertise on the G8 and civil society, as well as those individuals who helped edit and publish the final report.

University of Toronto Adjunct Professor Peter Hajnal has charted four distinct historical phases in the civil society-G8 relationship, from non-existence in 1975 to intricate, refined, and nuanced.<sup>1</sup> Slightly more than a decade ago, the G8 acknowledged the role of civil society in the 1995 Halifax Summit communiqué. Today, there exists an expectation that the G8 Presidency will accommodate civil society demands. This report presents an analysis of the St Petersburg-Heiligendamm summit cycle, chronicling the differing approaches of host governments and civil society organizations to increasingly complex negotiations.

Our examination finds no linear path followed by the G8 in its consultations with civil society. While the St Petersburg Summit seemed to initiate a new process of civil society consultations through the Civil G8 initiative, events throughout the year of the German Presidency have dimmed prospects of a formalized civil society process. Groups denouncing the G8 and advocating alternatives have organized most effectively around Heiligendamm in spite, or perhaps because, of what more prominent civil society groups view as a regression in dialogue from St Petersburg to Heiligendamm.

This report focuses on the civil society-G8 relationship from each side's perspective. Beginning with the unprecedented civil society consultations initiated by the Russian Presidency under the umbrella of the Civil 8, the report then explains the difficulties faced by the Russian government to both guarantee security and ensure liberty of expression. The rotation of the presidency brought new outlooks from civil society as well as government officials. Organizations formed new alliances to influence the German Presidency's agenda, while German government officials recast its approach in the Civil G8 Dialogue. Though a complete analysis of the G8-civil society relationship during the German Presidency can only be effectuated after the Heiligendamm Summit's commitments are published, this report strives to identify and explain civil society's points of emphasis and their influence on the German agenda.

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Hajnal, 'Civil society at the Gleneagles G8 Summit', Civil 8, (Russia), 5 March 2006. <http://en.civilg8.ru/881.php>

“Wherever the G8 goes, we will be sure to follow!”<sup>2</sup> This declaration, from the small Michigan newsletter *The Advocate*, perfectly describes the history and spirit of global civil society’s (GCS) relationship with the Group of Eight (G8). From its earliest gatherings in the 1990s, and in spite of some notable *uncivil* altercations, GCS has expanded rapidly while becoming better organized and highly mobile. Its campaigns on African aid and poverty relief produced one of the biggest policy initiatives of the past decade; similar projects are now underway to focus the same attention unto sustainable development and climate change.<sup>3</sup>

This report seeks to explore the changing GCS-G8 dynamic through critical examinations of the 2006 St Petersburg Summit and the 2007 Heiligendamm Summit. The report will identify and distinguish the many diverse structures, alliances, and events GCS has organized around the 2007 Heiligendamm Summit and chronicle the German government’s response to these developments.

## **Global civil society and its relationship with the G8**

GCS is not a homogenous entity presenting a single vision or promoting a specific cause. Within its sphere lies a broad range of groups driven by varying ideologies and interests. Groups from the extreme left to the far right will be represented in Heiligendamm, among them mainstream NGOs, political parties, labour unions, faith-based organizations, feminist groups, academics, and anti-war, anti-globalization, and anti-imperialist campaigners.

Similarly, a host country’s approach to GCS has not been standardized. Though G8-GCS interaction has developed into an important aspect of annual preparations for the G8 summit, methods of consultation and incorporation differ widely. Using the 2006 St Petersburg and 2007 Heiligendamm Summits as test cases, the host country’s approach to GCS can be characterized as two-tiered: a policy of engagement with those civil society groups wishing to democratize G8 decision-making processes and a policy of management and containment of anti-G8 demonstrators.

## **Global civil society and the 2006 St Petersburg Summit**

GCS’ performance at the 2006 St Petersburg Summit can best be described as mixed. The summit cycle itself was unique, for it marked Russia’s first G8 Presidency and full integration into the Group. The Russian government viewed the summit as an opportunity to re-establish itself as a global economic and political power.<sup>4</sup> Russia attempted to broaden consultation between G8 governments and GCS, creating the Civil G8. Supported by Russian President Vladimir Putin and coordinated by Ella Pamfilova, the Civil G8 united representatives from Russian and international civil society groups as well as commercial and governmental organizations to express their positions and policy

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<sup>2</sup> Group of Six Billion, Peaceful Protest, *The Advocate*, (Grand Rapids, MI), June 2002. Date of Access: 10 May 2007. [www.crcna.org/site/uploads/uploads/advocate\\_2002jun.doc](http://www.crcna.org/site/uploads/uploads/advocate_2002jun.doc).

<sup>3</sup> Germany aims to please G8 guests, *Financial Times*, (London), 02 May 2007. Date of Access: 11 May 2007. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/3856f9b4-f8c4-11db-a940-000b5df10621.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Putin’s critics take aim as Russia steps into G8 limelight, *The Independent*, (London), 31 December 2005. Date of Access: 13 May 2007. <http://news.independent.co.uk/europe/article335764.ece>.

recommendations to the G8.<sup>5</sup> The objectives of the project were to foster greater continuity, consistency, transparency and openness in the G8 process.<sup>6</sup>

During the primary stage of summit planning, the Civil G8 compiled reports on the positions of participating civil society organizations (CSOs) for distribution among G8 officials. Three months prior to the summit, CSOs met with Sherpas to discuss their initial policy recommendations.

The central project of Civil G8 was the International NGO Forum, from 3-4 July 2006. The forum facilitated discussion among a wide range of CSOs, academics, professionals, and institutions. On the final day, groups presented formal policy recommendations to the G8 Sherpas and President Putin.

Civil G8's post-summit phase aimed to institutionalize independent structures to monitor the implementation of G8 policies, summarize the results of the Civil G8-2006 project, and facilitate information transfers between GCS and the German government as it assumed the G8 presidency in advance of Heiligendamm.<sup>7</sup>

### *Working within the framework of the G8*

Over 2,000 NGOs from 58 countries participated in the 2006 Civil G8 initiative.<sup>8</sup> For the first time in Summit history, G8 Sherpas canvassed policy recommendations from GCS. Civil society representatives reacted favourably to the opportunity to work with their peers both inside and outside the official G8 structure. Transparency International concluded that the Civil G8 had "great value in terms of our visibility and the forging of connections with other members of civil society. Perhaps," it continued, "some members of the grey ranks of the Russian bureaucracy saw that civil society is not a danger to be feared, but potential partners that can help find solutions to the complex problems facing all countries including Russia."<sup>9</sup>

### *Security v. freedom of expression*

While no previous summit host had ever consulted so widely with GCS, the Russian Presidency was nonetheless subject to severe criticism. In an effort to ensure the smooth functioning of their historically significant summit, Russia enacted strict limits on civil liberties. On 17 April 2006, the Kremlin instituted the federal law "On Introducing Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation" that placed new requirements on the formation of foreign NGOs in the country.<sup>10</sup> These new requirements subsequently increased the ability of the state to withhold registration privileges.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the Russian Presidency also made an amendment to "On

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<sup>5</sup> Civil G8-2006: What, How, When, Civil G8. Date of Access: 18 March 2007. <http://en.civilg8.ru/1195.php>.

<sup>6</sup> Working Meetings: Summit 2006, G8 Presidency of the Russian Federation, (Moscow), 2006. Date of Access: 1 June 2007. [http://en.g8russia.ru/page\\_work/19.html](http://en.g8russia.ru/page_work/19.html).

<sup>7</sup> Civil G8 – 2006: What, How, When, Civil G8. Date of Access: 18 March 2007. <http://en.civilg8.ru/1195.php>.

<sup>8</sup> The NGO World Community Discussed the Results of the "Civil G8 – 2006" Project, Civil G8. Date of Access: 18 March 2007. <http://en.civilg8.ru/conf0212/2436.php>.

<sup>9</sup> E-Bulletin: Transparency & Culture, Transparency International, (Berlin), August 2006. Date of Access: 04 June 2007. [http://www.transparency.org/publications/newsletter/2006/august\\_2006/transparency\\_culture](http://www.transparency.org/publications/newsletter/2006/august_2006/transparency_culture).

<sup>10</sup> Bourjaily, Natalia. Some Issues Related to Russia's New NGO Law, The International Journal on Non-Profit Law, Vol. 8 Issue 3, (Washington, DC), May 2006. Date of Access: 1 June 2007. [http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol8iss3/special\\_1.htm](http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol8iss3/special_1.htm).

<sup>11</sup> Bourjaily, Natalia. Some Issues Related to Russia's New NGO Law, The International Journal on Non-Profit Law, Vol. 8 Issue 3, (Washington, DC), May 2006. Date of Access: 1 June 2007. [http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol8iss3/special\\_1.htm](http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol8iss3/special_1.htm).

Countering Extremist Activities” to extend the definition of “extremism” to public criticism of the government.<sup>12</sup>

The broad restrictions and enhanced state-supervision were harshly received by human rights advocates in Russia and the international community. They accused the Kremlin of stifling the very democratic values the G8 was supposed to embody.<sup>13</sup> Though the measures were not fully implemented before the summit, non-governmental advocacy groups wrote of journalists being detained for covering anti-G8 rallies<sup>14 15</sup> and protestors being denied entry at Russian borders.<sup>16 17</sup>

## The present state of global civil society

In an effort to improve lobbying efficacy through coordination, individual groups and members of GCS form larger “protest alliances.”<sup>18</sup> The alliances formed for Heiligendamm are driven by a specific agenda orientation that correlates with its conception of the G8’s role in global governance. The G8 NGO-Platform is perhaps the most structured, with “a pool of about 40 organizations, mainly of environmental and development backgrounds”<sup>19</sup> including Greenpeace, Oxfam International, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and World Vision. Unlike more radical alliances, the NGO-Platform is motivated primarily by a “citizen-friendly” reformist perspective that recognizes the legitimacy of both the G8 and globalization while stressing the need for sustainable and socially just growth.<sup>20</sup> Its campaign efforts so far have focused on engaging officials *within* the G8 structure to advance policy initiatives on environmental responsibility, economic equality for developing countries, and poverty reduction in Africa.

The more radical factions of civil society have also organized themselves into a loose network of left-wing alliances that share a common grievance towards the “capitalist, patriarchal, imperialist”<sup>21</sup> objectives of the G8. Members of the extreme left seek to dismantle the G8 system entirely. The Anti-G8 Alliance for a Revolutionary Perspective and the Dissent! Network of Resistance have issued international battle cries to “Stop G8 capitalism, imperialism, war,”<sup>22</sup> and to “Smash G8 2007

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<sup>12</sup> Russia closer to controlling NGOs, BBC News Online Edition, (London), 27 December 2005. Date of Access: 12 May 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4562278.stm>.

<sup>13</sup> The G8 Summit in St Petersburg: Russia’s Democracy and Human Rights Status, Human Rights First, (New York), 13 July 2006. Date of Access: 10 May 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Ukrainian TV reporter jailed covering anti-G8 rally, Committee to Protect Journalists, (New York), 17 July 2006. Date of Access: 12 May 2007. <http://www.cpj.org/news/2006/europe/russia17july06na.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Call for release of two young German students arrested over anti-G8 protests, Reporters Sans Frontieres, (Paris), 13 July 2007. Date of Access: 12 May 2007. [http://www.rsfs.org/article.php?id\\_article=18282](http://www.rsfs.org/article.php?id_article=18282).

<sup>16</sup> Cyclists Denied Visas for Russia G8, Jubilee Scotland, (Edinburgh), 28 June 2006. Date of Access: 12 May 2007. [http://www.jubileescotland.org.uk/action/g8watch/cyclists\\_g8russia.htm](http://www.jubileescotland.org.uk/action/g8watch/cyclists_g8russia.htm).

<sup>17</sup> Browder Barred as a Security Threat, The Moscow Times, (Moscow), 20 March 2006. Date of Access: 12 May 2007. <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2006/03/20/002.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Smash G8 in Germany 2007, UK Indymedia, (London), 31 December 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007. <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/12/359075.html>.

<sup>19</sup> NGOs and Social Movements Preparing for the Summit, G8 NGO-Platform, (Bonn), 29 November 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007. <http://www.g8-germany.info/english/index.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> Smash G8 2007 in Germany, Indymedia UK, (London), 31 December 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007. <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/12/359075.html>

<sup>21</sup> For a Left that Intervenes, G8-Xtra, (Berlin), 26 February 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007. [http://www.g8-2007.de/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=10&Itemid=21&lang=en](http://www.g8-2007.de/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=10&Itemid=21&lang=en).

<sup>22</sup> Call of the Alliance, Anti-G8 Alliance for a Revolutionary Perspective, (Berlin), 20 March 2006. Date of Access: 09 March 2007. [http://www.antig8.tk/aufwurf\\_en.php](http://www.antig8.tk/aufwurf_en.php).

in Germany!”<sup>23</sup> Reports of vandalism, sabotage, and attempted arson demonstrate the extreme lengths to which some militant activists are willing to go to disrupt G8 proceedings.<sup>24</sup>

The left itself is heterogeneous, and many question if such antagonisms are the most effective form of protest against the G8. The Interventionist Left has proposed a more moderate approach that involves forging alliances with the NGO-Platform, faith-based alliances, local political parties, and the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens (ATTAC) to create a singular demonstration by the entire civil society community.<sup>25</sup> The Interventionist Left’s call for action emphasizes its vision of a unified GCS: “The essence of this movement lies not in a kind of competition – where every ‘Party’ does its own thing... but neither does it lie merely in indifferently existing side-by-side. Its essence, rather, lies in setting in motion a real social alternative, a counter-power, another world.”<sup>26</sup>

One protest-alliance that has recently emerged within civil society is the G8 Youth Platform. Heiligendamm will mark the first time youth have forwarded agendas independent of any other civil society organization. The Youth Platform stresses the need for G8 countries to take immediate action on “the state of the poor, the gap between north and south, cultural conflicts, [and] security and environmental issues.”<sup>27</sup> Other youth-based initiatives, like Green Youth (*Grüne Jugend*), Connecting Youth, and Junior 8 (J8) have helped to further legitimize the youth perspective.

## **The German G8 Presidency and its relationship with global civil society**

### *German civil society dialogue*

Many expected the German government to continue the Civil G8 process during its G8 presidency. Chancellor Angela Merkel noted that NGOs are “strong, vital partners” of the G8, indispensable to the development process.<sup>28</sup> Ms Merkel noted that this is especially the case where culturally sensitive topics are concerned. HIV/AIDS programming and preventative counseling in particular require a degree of personal trust that NGOs have the ability to provide. Two weeks prior to the summit, the German Chancellor restated her intention to include civil society in G8 processes. She also acknowledged anticipated demonstrations, saying that “peaceful protestors have legitimate concerns, and we will listen to their points of view.”<sup>29</sup> Ms Merkel’s statements and good intentions stand in contrast with the German government’s less than successful attempt to continue the Civil G8 tradition.

In partnership with the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development, the German

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<sup>23</sup> Smash G8 2007 in Germany, Indymedia UK, (London), 31 December 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007.

<http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/12/359075.html>

<sup>24</sup> Police Say G8 Opponents behind Attack on German Politician, Deutsche Welle, (Bonn), 28 December 2006. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,2292773,00.html?maca=en-rss-en-all-1573-rdf>.

<sup>25</sup> Smash G8 2007 in Germany, Indymedia UK, (London), 31 December 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007.

<http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/12/359075.html>

<sup>26</sup> News from the Red Planet, G8-Xtra, (Berlin), 4 March 2006. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. [http://www.g8-2007.de/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=8&Itemid=21](http://www.g8-2007.de/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=8&Itemid=21).

<sup>27</sup> Letter to Ms Merkel, G8 Youth Platform. Date of Access: 09 March 2007.

<sup>28</sup> Joining Forces in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS, G8 Summit 2007 Heiligendamm, 12 March 2007. Date of Access: 18 March 2007. [http://www.g-8.de/nn\\_94646/Content/EN/Artikel/2007/03/2007-03-12-merkel-konferenz-gegen-Aids-bremen\\_en.html](http://www.g-8.de/nn_94646/Content/EN/Artikel/2007/03/2007-03-12-merkel-konferenz-gegen-Aids-bremen_en.html).

<sup>29</sup> We Aim to Give Globalization a Human Face, G8 Summit 2007 Heiligendamm, 24 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007. [http://www.g-8.de/nn\\_92160/Content/EN/Artikel/2007/05/2007-05-24-merkel-regierungserklaerung-g8-heiligendamm\\_en.html](http://www.g-8.de/nn_92160/Content/EN/Artikel/2007/05/2007-05-24-merkel-regierungserklaerung-g8-heiligendamm_en.html).



government hosted a Civil G8 Dialogue conference on 25-26 April 2007. Discussion panels were established to focus on the major issues of the German Presidency's agenda for Heiligendamm. Three panels addressed the global economy, African development, and climate change. These panels were further subdivided into different working groups to debate discussion issues in greater detail and identify points of opposition and agreement between the G8 and civil society. At the conference's end, GCS representatives presented their views to the G8 Sherpas.<sup>30</sup>

The German attempt failed to build upon the success of Russia's Civil G8-2006. G8 Research Group Trade Policy Director Lida Preyma notes that the roundtable discussion with G8 Sherpas was limited to select NGOs that were not representative of all civil society actors present;<sup>31</sup> in fact, some had not even participated in the events of the first day of the conference.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, only 300 GCS representatives arrived in Bonn to discuss Germany's priority issues, as against 700 at Civil G8-2006.<sup>33</sup> ActionAid Policy Officer Astrid Schwietering concluded that, "The Civil G8 dialogue was simply not much of dialogue."<sup>34</sup>

### *Governmental preparations for Heiligendamm*

German Sherpa Bernd Pfaffenbach and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania State Chancellery Chief-of-Staff Reinhard Meyer have expressed their hopes for peaceful G8 demonstrations.<sup>35</sup> Mr. Pfaffenbach believes this will be the case in Heiligendamm due to the incorporation of NGO concerns into the Heiligendamm agenda.<sup>36</sup>

Early optimism eroded quickly in view of extremist action throughout the year. Protesters attacked the Kempinski Grand Hotel in Heiligendamm and set fire to German Deputy Finance Minister Thomas Mirow's car in December 2006.<sup>37 38</sup> Both acts were attributed to leftist extremists, focusing attention on their movement and leading to a police crackdown on their activities on 10 May 2007. 900 police officers conducted widespread searches of 40 areas in Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, and two other northern areas.<sup>39</sup> Security officials searched for protestors in apartments, offices, bookstores, media studios, and centers commonly linked to left-wing groups.<sup>40</sup> Police also confiscated computers,

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<sup>30</sup> Documentation: Civil G8 Dialogue, German NGO Forum on Environment and Development, (Bonn), 25 April 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007. <http://www.forum-ue.de/index.php?id=137&L=1>.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with G8 Research Group Trade Policy Director Lida Preyma, 17 May 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with G8 Research Group Trade Policy Director Lida Preyma, 17 May 2007.

<sup>33</sup> G8 Dialogue Forum, G8 Summit 2007 Heiligendamm, 25 April 2007. Date of Access: 12 March 2007. [http://www.g8.de/nn\\_92160/Content/EN/Artikel/2007/04/2007-04-25-g8-zivilgesellschaft-wieczorek-zeul\\_en.html](http://www.g8.de/nn_92160/Content/EN/Artikel/2007/04/2007-04-25-g8-zivilgesellschaft-wieczorek-zeul_en.html).

<sup>34</sup> Civil G8 Better in Moscow Than in Bonn. Astrid Schwietering, (Berlin), 30 April 2007. Date of Access: 1 June 2007. [http://blog-astrid.blogspot.com/2007\\_04\\_01\\_archive.html](http://blog-astrid.blogspot.com/2007_04_01_archive.html).

<sup>35</sup> G8 Summit Could be a Shot in the Arm for Regional Economy, G8 Summit 2007 Heiligendamm, 20 December 2006. Date of Access: 18 March 2007. [http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Artikel/2006/12/2006-12-20-g8-vorbereitungen\\_en.html](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Artikel/2006/12/2006-12-20-g8-vorbereitungen_en.html).

<sup>36</sup> G8 Summit Could be a Shot in the Arm for Regional Economy, G8 Summit 2007 Heiligendamm, 20 December 2006. Date of Access: 18 March 2007. [http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Artikel/2006/12/2006-12-20-g8-vorbereitungen\\_en.html](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Artikel/2006/12/2006-12-20-g8-vorbereitungen_en.html).

<sup>37</sup> Protesters Carry out Series of Attacks Ahead of G8 Summit, Spiegel Online International, (Hamburg), 29 December 2006. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,457017,00.html>.

<sup>38</sup> Police Say G8 Opponents behind Attack on German Politician, Deutsche Welle, (Bonn), 28 December 2006. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2292773,00.html?maca=en-rss-en-all-1573-rdf>.

<sup>39</sup> Germany Raids Leftist "Terrorists" Ahead of G-8 Summit, Spiegel Online International, (Berlin), 9 May 2007. Date of Access: 15 May 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,482009,00.html>.

<sup>40</sup> A Taste of the Coming Showdown, Spiegel Online International, (Berlin), 14 May 2007. Date of Access: 15 May 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,482855,00.html>.

files, and cell phones; shut down the main server to an anti-G8 website;<sup>41</sup> and changed passport controls to restrict movement between countries.<sup>42</sup> The German police force has also announced the possibility of using dogs to locate specific protestors by their body odour.<sup>43</sup> Federal prosecutors defended the raids by claiming that “militant extreme left groups and their members [were] suspected of having founded a terrorist group;”<sup>44</sup> the leftist extremists denied all allegations.

Fearing the growing threat of danger, the German government has erected a USD17 million steel wall, in early May 2007, to surround the resort where G8 leaders will meet. The barb-wired fence is a 13-kilometre-long, 2.5-metre-high which stretches across the parameters of the Kempinski Hotel in Heiligendamm.<sup>45</sup> Plans call for a 16,000 strong police force supported by 1,100 soldiers to guard the fence.<sup>46</sup> On 15 May 2007, police announced a ban on protests and demonstrations within 20 metres of the barrier and other parts of Germany such as Rostock’s airport.<sup>47</sup> According to Democracy Now!, these police measures have prevented more than 100,000 people staging protests in the areas.<sup>48</sup> On 25 May 2007, the municipal court in Schwerin eased restrictions by permitting protests around the Heiligendamm hotel at which G8 leaders will stay.<sup>49</sup>

In response to complaints that high security measures would exclude rather than include GCS, Chancellor Angela Merkel said, “The people who loudly criticize our security measures today would also be the first ones to charge security officials with a lack of preparation if violence broke out.”<sup>50</sup> The German government must strike a balance between democratic dialogue and security.

## The Alternative Summit

GCS’ heightened activity has generated great anticipation for the opening of the Alternative Summit. The first-ever alternative summit was launched in 1984 as a critical response to the London World Economic Forum. Since, GCS has hosted a counter-conference every year to expand public dialogue on the G8’s decision-making process.<sup>51</sup>

The schedule of Alternative Summit events has been updated continuously since the end of the St Petersburg Summit. Anti-Summit meeting and information centres, known as “Convergence Centres” (CCs), were opened in Berlin, Hamburg, and Rostock in early 2007 to keep citizens up-to-

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<sup>41</sup> A Taste of the Coming Showdown, Spiegel Online International, (Berlin), 14 May 2007. Date of Access: 15 May 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,482855,00.html>.

<sup>42</sup> Germany: Controversies Simmer as G8 Summit Approaches, Inter Press Service, (Berlin), 25 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007.

<sup>43</sup> Germany: Controversies Simmer as G8 Summit Approaches, Inter Press Service, (Berlin), 25 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007.

<sup>44</sup> Germany Raids Leftist “Terrorists” Ahead of G-8 Summit, Spiegel Online International, (Berlin), 9 May 2007. Date of Access: 15 May 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,482009,00.html>.

<sup>45</sup> German Police Ban Protests in Area Outside Fence Sealing Off G-8 Summit, Associated Press Newswires, (Berlin), 16 May 2006. <http://dissentnetzwerk.org/node/2645>.

<sup>46</sup> Germany: Controversies Simmer as G8 Summit Approaches, Inter Press Service, (PLACE), 25 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007.

<sup>47</sup> German Police Ban Protests in Area Outside Fence Sealing Off G-8 Summit, Associated Press Newswires, (Berlin), 16 May 2006. <http://dissentnetzwerk.org/node/2645>

<sup>48</sup> German Police Raid Activist Sites Ahead of G8 Protests, Democracy Now!, 10 May 2007. Date of Access: 15 May 2007. <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/05/10/1418221>.

<sup>49</sup> German Court Partially Lifts G8 Demonstration Ban, Agence France presse, 25 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Merkel Says G8 Will Deliver on African Aid, Irish Times, (Dublin), 25 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007.

<sup>51</sup> Concept of the Alternative Summit, G8 NGO-Platform, (Bonn), 15 February 2007. Date of Access: 10 March 2007. <http://www.g8-germany.info/english/altsummit.htm>.

date on the latest times and locations of upcoming events.<sup>52</sup> CCs have also hosted a number of practical orientation sessions for international activists unfamiliar with German laws and the area of the summit, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.<sup>53</sup> Other organizations offered their own sets of seminars. The NGO-Platform, for instance, had organized a number of action workshops on issues such as energy security, debt relief, and intellectual property rights. It also hosted a conference series, “Global Social Rights,” featuring presentations from prominent speakers such as World Economic Forum Sherpa Ulrich Benterbusch, and Ewah Eleri from the International Centre for Energy, Environment & Development in Nigeria.<sup>54</sup> Other groups have preferred more hands-on activities, like *Camp Inski*, which sponsored a ten-day anti-G8 information training camp in the remote forests of northwestern Germany.<sup>55</sup>

Planning for the summit itself first began in November 2006, when over 500 activists from around the world convened in Rostock for the first International Action Conference.<sup>56</sup> After a weekend of debates, a preliminary roadmap for action entitled “The Choreography of Resistance” was drafted.<sup>57</sup> Activities begin on 1 June 2007 with opening ceremonies and a brief anti-military rally in downtown Rostock. The main event is the International Demonstration on 2 June, where all currents of civil society will march together against the G8. Due to the large number of people expected to participate in the street protest, organizers were forced to split the demonstration into two groups that will each embark on a five kilometer route around town, converging at the harbour for a night-time rally and musical concert.<sup>58</sup>

It remains unclear if and how this route might change in response to the German government’s recent efforts to tighten summit security measures. Security personnel from across the country have been assigned to patrol the area and contain anti-G8 protests as part of the most concentrated German police deployment since World War I.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the erection of the barbed-wire fence around Heiligendamm has also raised concerns.<sup>60</sup> Civil society activists, who had hoped to march as close as possible to the meeting location, were outraged at being literally “fenced-out” of G8 deliberations.

The International Demonstration is but one of many protests, rallies, meetings and cultural concerts that together form the “Week of Action against the G8.”<sup>61</sup> Each day of the week has been assigned a particular theme and a corresponding list of activities that aim to raise public awareness and disrupt the G8 meetings. 4 June, for example, is the Day of Action on Migration. Demonstrations are scheduled to take place simultaneously in Rostock and at detention camps and immigration offices

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<sup>52</sup> Home Sweet Home – Call for Convergence Centers in Germany, The WOMBLES, (London). Date of Access: 13 March 2007. <http://www.wombles.org.uk/article200702662.php>.

<sup>53</sup> Home Sweet Home – Call for Convergence Centers in Germany, The WOMBLES, (London). Date of Access: 13 March 2007. <http://www.wombles.org.uk/article200702662.php>.

<sup>54</sup> Conferences of the G8 NGO-Platform, G8 NGO-Platform, (Bonn), 27 February 2007. Date of Access: 09 March 2007. <http://www.g8-germany.info/english/conferences.htm>.

<sup>55</sup> Anti-G8 Camping at the Baltic Sea, Camp Inski 2006, (Berlin), 15 August 2006. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. [http://camp06.dissentnetwork.org/Main\\_PageEn](http://camp06.dissentnetwork.org/Main_PageEn).

<sup>56</sup> Anti-G8 International Action Conference, Rostock Nov 10-12, UK Indymedia, (London), 29 September 2006. Date of Access: 09 March 2007. <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/10/354616.html>.

<sup>57</sup> Inviting the G8 Includes Inviting the Protest, International Action Conference Rostock, (Lubeck), 22 February 2007. Date of Access: 09 March 2007. [http://www.heiligendamm2007.de/Demo\\_en/index\\_demo\\_en.html](http://www.heiligendamm2007.de/Demo_en/index_demo_en.html).

<sup>58</sup> Preliminary Planning of the Demo Route, International Action Conference Rostock, (Lubeck), 22 February 2007. Date of Access: 09 March 2007. [http://www.heiligendamm2007.de/Demo\\_en/index\\_demo\\_en.html](http://www.heiligendamm2007.de/Demo_en/index_demo_en.html).

<sup>59</sup> 100,000 protesters prepare to disrupt G8 summit, The Times Online, (London), 10 April 2007. Date of Access: 09 May 2007. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article1632861.ece>.

<sup>60</sup> Uneasy echoes of Berlin in G8 wall, The Guardian, (London), 01 May 2007. Date of Access: 09 May 2007. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/germany/article/0,,2069255,00.html>.

<sup>61</sup> Overview of the Protests against the G8 Summit, G8-Xtra, (Berlin), 23 January 2007. Date of Access: 09 March 2007. [http://www.g8-2007.de/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=21](http://www.g8-2007.de/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=21).

across Europe. A panel discussion on migration issues and a small concert will conclude the day's events. The following day, 5 June, marks both the arrival of G8 leaders in Heiligendamm as well as the official opening of the 2007 Alternative Summit. Human blockades are expected to be erected at the Rostock-Laage military airport as part of the Day of Action against Militarism, War, Torture, and the Global State of Emergency, while other acts of civil disobedience targeting local summit infrastructure are also being prepared to 'welcome' G8 officials.<sup>62</sup>

The launch of the Alternative Summit presents a dilemma for civil society. On the one hand, it is the primary event of the counter-summit that often attracts distinguished members of the private sector, academia, and civil society to its plenary discussions and workshop meetings. UN Special Rapporteur Jean Ziegler, Centre for Science and Environment Director Sunita Narain, and Right Livelihood Award winner Vandana Shiva will be among some of the presenters at this year's Alternative Summit.<sup>63</sup> Celebrity-activist Bono will also make an appearance at a musical concert organized by *Deine-Stimme-gegen-Armut* ("Your voice against poverty") on 7 June.<sup>64</sup>

However, the Alternative Summit also runs parallel to the street protests, and could potentially draw energy away from the mass demonstrations and blockades scheduled to commence on 6 June. Participants will thus be forced to choose between the NGO-Platform's analytical counter-summit and street protest.

### **Global civil society's impact on the 2007 Heiligendamm agenda**

While Alternative Summit activities and anti-globalization rallies tend to portray GCS and the G8 as contradictory and combative forces, there is room for cooperation between both sides. On 18 October 2006, German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced her tentative agenda for the 2007 Heiligendamm summit. Among the top priorities for the German Presidency were investment, innovation and sustainability and African peace and security.<sup>65</sup> These areas of mutual concern could provide an excellent opportunity for civil society to influence G8 leaders.

Africa has been a particularly effective rallying point for government and GCS members since its inclusion in the 2002 Kananaskis Summit agenda. Many groups involved with the G8 NGO-Platform are also highly invested in the African question and could add practical knowledge to G8 proposals. Oxfam International, for instance, has been working in Africa since the 1960s, and welcomed the news of its inclusion as a theme of the German presidency. "Chancellor Merkel has shown real leadership by securing a prominent place for Africa on the G8 agenda," said Joern Kalinski, policy advisor for Oxfam. But he quickly added, "The summit in Heiligendamm must be more than a photo opportunity for the world's poorest people... In the coming months, the G8 must make clear how and when they will deliver real aid increases and must bring their blueprints with them to Heiligendamm."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Move. Block. Stay. Block G8, 18 December 2006. Date of Access: 10 March 2007. [http://www.block-g8.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=3](http://www.block-g8.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3).

<sup>63</sup> Programme: The Opening and Closing Panels, G8 Alternative Summit, (Berlin). Date of Access: 03 June 2007. <http://www.g8-alternative-summit.org/en/pages/programme/opening-and-closing-panel.php>.

<sup>64</sup> Bono to Host 'Your Voice Against Poverty' Concert at G8 Summit, Christian Today, (London), 28 March 2007. Date of Access: 04 June 2007. <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/bono.to.host.your.voice.against.poverty.concert.at.g8.summit/10136.htm>.

<sup>65</sup> Sunderland, Laura. Growth and Responsibility: The Prospective Agenda for the 2007 G8 Heiligendamm Summit, University of Toronto G8 Research Group, (Toronto), 21 February 2007. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/state/2006/0719afterg8.htm>.

<sup>66</sup> Oxfam welcomes German G8 agenda on Africa, Oxfam International Media Centre, (Oxford), 18 October 2006. Date of Access: 09 March 2007.

The German presidency also received high praise for including climate change and environmental security as a topic within the agenda item “investment, innovation and sustainability.” Greenpeace and WWF representatives were encouraged by Chancellor Merkel’s comments to the Legislators Forum on Climate Change and Energy Security, where she declared, “The impact of climate change affects us all to the same extent. Protecting our economic future through innovation, energy efficiency and renewable energies is a global challenge. There is, therefore, a good chance that we will finally find a common basis for global climate protection.”<sup>67</sup>

## Conclusion

The relationship between the German G8 Presidency and civil society is best understood by considering the capabilities and constraints of both parties. While the German government has addressed the presence of civil society in the G8 process, its lack of action with respect to the Civil G8 Dialogue raises questions about its ability to shape the G8-civil society relationship. German Sherpa, Bernd Pfaffenbach, has claimed that Chancellor Merkel’s agenda objectives are NGO-friendly, and therefore likely to be well received.<sup>68</sup> Ms Merkel refers solely to peaceful protestors when she says that “[civil society’s] concerns are not just legitimate; they will be heard.”<sup>69</sup> Still, even though NGOs have shown their ability to shape the G8 agenda and promote change, their power is limited when it comes to forcing changes in governmental policy. G8 leaders may consider GCS recommendations during Civil G8 talks; having these same leaders incorporate GCS recommendations into their commitments is a more difficult challenge.

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[http://www.oxfam.org/en/news/pressreleases2006/pr061018\\_german\\_action](http://www.oxfam.org/en/news/pressreleases2006/pr061018_german_action).

<sup>67</sup> Climate Change Key Issue for This Year’s G8 Summit, Environmental News Service, (Washington, DC), 21 February 2007. Date of Access: 11 March 2007. <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/feb2007/2007-02-21-03.asp>.

<sup>68</sup> Germany Aims to Please G8 Guests, Financial Times, (Bonn), 2 May 2007. Date of Access: 10 May 2007. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/3856f9b4-f8c4-11db-a940-000b5df10621.html>.

<sup>69</sup> Merkel Says G8 Will Deliver on African Aid, Irish Times, (Dublin), 25 May 2007. Date of Access: 26 May 2007.