



30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Senior Officials  
from Centres of Government:

***Effective Responses to  
Modern Challenges***

30<sup>e</sup> Réunion des hauts responsables  
de centres de gouvernement :

***Relever efficacement  
les défis modernes***

# Agenda

**18-20 October 2011  
Ottawa, Canada**



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC  
CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
ORGANISATION DE COOPÉRATION ET  
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUES

**Canada** 

## AGENDA

30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Senior Officials from the Centres of Government (CoG)  
Ottawa, October 18-20, 2011

### Effective Responses to Modern Challenges

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

18:30-20:30 **Welcome Reception** (Caf  teria des Beaux-Arts, National Gallery of Canada)

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

9:30-10:00 Opening of the meeting (DFAIT, Robertson Room)

10:00-10:45 **Plenary Session One:**  
***When Fiscal Constraints Take Hold: How to Innovate? How to Motivate?***

Reforms aimed at cutting costs and streamlining public sector service delivery are underway in most OECD countries. Budget cuts tabled in 2010-11 will start to bite in 2012. In most cases, these cuts will not go deep enough to restore fiscal sustainability; nonetheless, the current wave of public spending reductions will have a significant impact on people's daily lives and challenge the motivation and morale of the public sector.

*Questions for discussion:*

- What strategies can governments employ to retain and promote public sector innovation in a fiscally-constrained environment?
- How can governments motivate public servants in the context of fiscal constraints?
- How can governments respond to resistance both in public opinion and within the public service?
- What measures can governments take to assess the fairness of budget cuts and to communicate this to the public? How do they ensure that the process is aligned with a strategic vision for the future of public service delivery?

10:45-11:15 Coffee break

11:15-12:30 Session one, *continued*

12:30-14:30 Luncheon hosted by the Government of Canada (DFAIT, 9<sup>th</sup> floor)

14:30-15:30 **Plenary Session Two:**  
***Complexity in Government Action: Horizontal Governance Imperatives in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

Governments develop and implement policy in an increasingly complex environment, engaging both foreign governments and multiple domestic government stakeholders.

*Questions for discussion:*

- What implications does a complex policy environment have on decision-making at the centre?
- How can policy be effectively developed and coordinated in such an environment?
- Which approaches have been successful, and which have been ineffective?
- What are the impediments to effective coordination? How can these be overcome?

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00-16:30 Session two, *continued*

16:30-17:15 **Dialogue with the Prime Minister of Canada**

17:15-17:30 Wrap-up of Day 1 discussions

19:30-22:00 **Official Dinner** (Hosted by the His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, at Rideau Hall)

Thursday, October 20, 2011

9:30-11:00     **Session Three** (Breakout sessions):  
***Emerging Long-Term Challenges***

a) The Challenge and Opportunity of Social Media (DFAIT, 9<sup>th</sup> floor)

The power of social media and the challenges and opportunities that it presents for governments have been demonstrated very clearly at different moments over the past year.

*Questions for discussion:*

- What is the impact of social media on citizens' "real-time" expectations of government's role and how it should deliver programs and services?
- Are social media and new technologies efficient and effective tools to facilitate program and service delivery?
- Is the prevalence of social media a hindrance to policy development and governance, or an unexplored opportunity? Should social media be a driver or a tool of policy development?
- How can centres of government effectively manage the use of social media given the dynamic pace of technological development?
- Are governments prepared to respond if citizens express strong feelings *en masse* that do not fit with current policy? Is there a risk that governments can be overwhelmed by the speed and scale of social media driven reaction from citizens?

## b) Governing in Multiple Crisis Mode (DFAIT, Robertson Room)

As recent events have also demonstrated, governments are increasingly facing multiple and concurrent crises, whether in an economic, foreign policy or natural disaster context. Crisis in the plural is now being seen not as a temporary “spasm” but more as a defining feature of our modern world.

### *Questions for discussion:*

- What structures can be put in place to strengthen public service capacity to deal with concurrent crises?
- How can a government ensure coherent policy when responding to multiple and concurrent high-profile crises?
- Is an effective approach to “governing in multiple crisis mode” proactive or reactive in nature?

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-12:45 **Report to Plenary** (DFAIT, Robertson Room)

Conclusions (Wrap-up) and Closing

12:45-14:30 Luncheon hosted by the Government of Canada (DFAIT, 9<sup>th</sup> floor)