

## GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION AGAINST POVERTY

Contact: Polly Truscott; civilsocietyhle@gmail.com; fax + 1 212 370 0183; telephone: +1 646  
884 2964

---

22 August 2008

All Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, New York

Dear Ambassador,

The Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), the world's biggest anti-poverty coalition, welcomes the UN Secretary-General's leadership in calling for 2008 to be a year of 'unprecedented progress for the poorest of the poor,' and his convening, with the President of the UN General Assembly, the High Level Event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on 25 September 2008.

GCAP represents tens of millions of people and thousands of organizations in more than 100 countries. On 17 October, 2007, 43.7 million people "Stood Up" in support of the MDGs and against Poverty and Inequality.

In order to ensure that the High Level Event re-energises the MDG process and places the world on a good footing to meet and exceed the MDGs, we urge your Government to strongly support the following.

**Delivery on commitments:** Specific existing commitments from donor and recipient countries on the MDGs need to be put into action through a human rights-centred approach to the key themes of the MDGs, namely agriculture, climate change and the environment, education, gender equality, health (including child and maternal mortality), hunger, water and sanitation. All commitments must be matched by the funding necessary to deliver them. This requires a reversal of the fall in aid levels, and urgent attention to the quality of aid.

**Systemic solutions:** MDG action plans must address systemic barriers to achieving and exceeding the MDGs and to realising rights, such as the human rights violations which are a cause and a consequence of poverty. These systemic solutions must include investment in agriculture and particularly small-scale sustainable farming, support for women farmers, an increase in available, accessible, acceptable and quality health services, the scrapping of unfair agriculture export subsidies and equal access to basic resources. Vertical solutions such as bednets and school feeding programmes, while commendable, are insufficient to address systemic barriers.

**Getting the MDGs back on track:** To ensure that MDG action plans work for the most impoverished people, are achievable, and comply with human rights, they must:

**Strengthen Government Accountability:** Governments have the primary responsibility for meeting, and where possible exceeding, the MDGs. To ensure this, efforts to achieve the MDGs should be built on the bedrock of legally enforceable human rights obligations, and subject to effective public accountability. All efforts to achieve and exceed the MDGs must address the human rights violations that drive and deepen poverty. They must come with clear benchmarks, and adequate resources for monitoring and evaluation at all levels.

**Advance equal access to human rights and ensure non-discrimination:** All action under the MDGs should prioritise the poorest and most marginalised people. There should be a renewed focus on the need to ensure non-discrimination and advance equality, including gender equality, to ensure that apparent progress does not mask continuing or deepening inequalities. To do so requires accurate data on progress, disaggregated according to internationally prohibited grounds of discrimination.

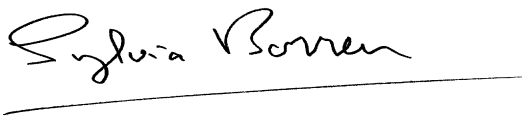
**Respect the right to active participation of people in poverty:** The active participation of civil society, and especially people living in poverty, must be guaranteed in the development and delivery of MDG plans, including at the High Level Event on 25 September. Particular attention should be paid to the active participation of the most vulnerable, including women, young persons, older persons, and persons with disabilities.

We urge your Government to engage in open dialogue with your population in the build-up to this High-Level Event and to report back publicly afterwards. We also urge you to engage transparently with your population for the long-term to make sure that any plan of action agreed at the United Nations in New York is effectively implemented in a way that will improve the lives of marginalised people and people living in poverty.

Furthermore, the 65 signatories to this letter call for a summit on MDGs to be held in 2010, with full participation of civil society, to review progress on the MDGs, including the extent to which action under the MDGs is advancing human rights in practice, and to identify a post-2015 agenda.

We would be glad to discuss these recommendations with you or your designate and look forward to your active support for these around the crucial High-Level Event on 25 September.

Yours sincerely,



Sylvia Borren, Adelaide Sosseh and Kumi Naidoo, co-Chairs, Global Call to Action Against Poverty

Ramesh Singh, Director, Action Aid International

Elaine Ireland, Global Health Advocacy officer, Action for Global Health

Peter Niggli, Director, Alliance Sud

Widney Brown, Senior Director, Amnesty International

Grace A. Mukasa, Head of Programmes and Advocacy, African Medical and Research Foundation

Titik Hartini, Executive Director, Association for Community Empowerment, Indonesia

Nick Roseveare, Chief Executive, BOND (UK)

Alison Fenny, Director of Advocacy and Communications, CAFOD

Lesley-Anne Knight, Secretary General Caritas Internationalis -

Joseph Cornelius Donnelly, UN Liaison Office, Caritas Internationalis

Ondrej Kopečný, Cesko proti chudobě (Global Policy Institute)

Daleep Mukarji, Director, Christian Aid

Andrew Ryskamp and Ida Mutoiga, Co-directors, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Ms. Ingrid Smith, Secretary General, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Elaine Ireland, Global Health Advocacy Officer, Commonwealth Action Group on HIV/AIDS

George Cook, Chief Executive, Computers for Africa

Joseph P. Foley, Congregation of the Missions

Winifred Doherty, NGO Representative, The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Thierry Seewald, Coordinator, Defi Michee (Micah Challenge France)

Hamdi Al-Khawaja, Coordinator of Research and Studies, Democracy and Workers Rights Center

Steve Cockburn, International Campaign Coordinator, End Water Poverty

Dr. Dan Taylor, Director, Find Your Feet

Hamdi Al-Khawaja, Secretariat Coordinator, GCAP Arab region

Dennis Howlett, Coordinator, GCAP Canada (Make Poverty History / Abolissons la pauvreté)

Josué BALOMA, Coordinator, GCAP Cameroun

Viviane Castro, Coordinator, GCAP Chile

Jiovanni Fuentes, Support Team, GCAP El Salvador

Dr. Claudia Warning, Chair, GCAP Germany, Association of German Development NGOs (VENRO)

Wahyu Susilo, Steering Committee Coordinator, GCAP Indonesia

Tatsuo Hayashi, Chairperson, GCAP Japan, Hottokenai Sekai no Mazushisa

GCAP Mexico

Kailash Satyarthi, President, Global Campaign for Education

Maroliva Gonzalez, Coordinator, Global Youth Action Network, Mexico

Bridget Sleep, Rights Policy Advisor, Help Age International

International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)

Eugen Brand, Director General, International Movement ATD Fourth World

Fatima Rodrigo, UN Representative, International Presentation Association of the

Sisters of the Presentation

Algerian Alphabetization Association (IQRAA)

Mr. Nick Dearden, Director, Jubilee Debt Campaign

Jane Rose R. Bisa, Member, Kabataan Kontra Kahirapan

Le Réseau Arabe

Richard Sroczynski, Associate NGO Representative, Marianists International

Dr. Deirdre Mullan, Director, Mercy International Association

Joseph Nkinzo, National Coordinator, Micah Challenge DR Congo

Steve Bradbury, Chairman, Micah Challenge International

Ms. Yemisi Ransome-Kuti, Trustee, Nigerian Network of NGOs

Brother Steven O'Neil, Core Leadership Team, NGO Sub-Committee for the  
Eradication of Poverty

Michael Switow, ONE (Singapore)

Jeremy Hobbs, Executive Director, Oxfam International

PanAfrican Association for Literacy and Adult Education (PAALAE)

Andrew Scott, Policy Director, Practical Action

Christine Allen, Executive Director, Progressio

John Gordon, National President, Public Service Alliance of Canada

Rita Arthur, Main Representative, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

Andrew Gwaivangmin, Executive Director, Rural Development Councillors for  
Christian Churches (RURCON)

Thomas Brennan, Salesian Missions

Katy Athersuch, Campaign Coordinator, Stop AIDS Campaign

Student Stop AIDS campaign

Ben Simms, Head of International, Sue Ryder Care

Steve Bradbury, National Director, TEAR Australia

Paul Cook, Advocacy Director, Tearfund UK

Brendan Barber, General Secretary, Trade Unions Congress, UK

Kerstin Greback, International President, Women's International League for Peace  
and Freedom

AI index: IOR 41/035/2008