

Partnership for Global Justice: July Alert, 2007

As you are aware the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed as a 15 year program of action by all member states of the United Nations in 2000 to make a major dent in the scourge of world poverty. They are time-bound, measurable targets. The 8 Goals aim to address the greatest evils of our time – poverty, hunger, education, early childhood deaths, gender injustice, destruction of the environment, halting the killers AIDS, TB and malaria. We see the MDGs as being very much in harmony with our gospel vision for a world where the common wealth is shared and greed never overrides the need of our sisters and brothers. They will only be reached if the international partnership agreed among countries is honored.

Sadly, the good progress towards achieving the MDGs was badly affected by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Much of the money and resources that rich countries had promised was redirected from development and towards financing the ‘war on terror’.

July 2007 marks the halfway mark of these time-bound MDGs. The calendar reminds we are halfway there. Are we halfway there in ensuring freedom from poverty, malnutrition, childhood deaths, education for all, gender equality, environmental reprieve etc?

To mark the halfway point and highlight the urgency of the task, we have prepared a postcard which is attached to this email. Please make copies and distribute them as widely as you can.

Send postcard or letter to:

The president or prime minister of your country and your local congressional leaders or parliamentary representatives.

Dear _____

The Millennium Development Goals were a bond of trust between the rich world and the poor. But already the goals are looking more and more out of reach. We have a moral obligation to follow up on what we promised. As a leader, I ask you to keep our promise to eradicate poverty now. The calendar reminds us that we are halfway there, but are we halfway in ensuring freedom of poverty, malnutrition, childhood deaths, education for all, gender equality, environmental reprieve?

Sincerely,

Background Information:

-Present progress in sub-Saharan Africa suggests that primary education for all will not be delivered by 2015 by 2130.

-Poverty will not be halved by 2015 by 2150

-Avoidable infant deaths will not be eliminated by 2015 but by 2165

-Meeting the MDGs will require more resources from the wealthy countries. Increasing effective development assistance by just 1% would allow major steps toward reducing poverty.

-Maintaining trade barriers like tariffs and quotas and providing subsidies that favor large agricultural producers slant the trading field and stack the deck against producers in the developing world trying to compete in the global market.

-Eliminating harmful trade policies that limit economic growth of developing countries go a long way in reducing poverty.

-The debt burden of many poor countries remains high—often absorbing vast government resources that could go to health, education and rural development.

-Forgiving debt would free many developing countries from the staggering burden that has stymied their economic growth and slowed progress toward achieving the MDGs.

-By improving aid effectiveness by working in partnership with civil society and other donors to coordinate assistance would be an efficient way of using taxpayer money.

For more information:

www.millenniumcampaign.org

www.endpovertynow.org

www.undp.org

www.un.org/millenniumgoals

<http://millenniumindicators.un.org>

www.undg.org

www.mdgender.net