

FULFILL YOUR PROMISES!

Statement Submitted to the U.N. General Assembly in Behalf of Civil Society by
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The Millennium Development Goals will not be reached by 2015. This is the assessment of civil society organizations five years after their adoption by the global community of nations. The promises of the Millennium Declaration are not fulfilled; the financial resources identified under the Monterrey Consensus have not been generated. The leading actions on financing for development which heads of state and leaders of government agreed upon have not been fully implemented.

As a consequence, more than a billion people continue to live in absolute poverty, girl children are not able to go to school; infant mortality rates remain high; mothers still die in childbirth, the HIV pandemic continues to escalate, the environment continues to be devastated, and global issues on trade, debt and ODA remain unresolved.

Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development. Developing countries are continually nagged and reminded that they are responsible for mobilizing domestic financial resources. How can they collect more taxes when their economies stagnate and are stunted because of unfair terms of trade, massive debt burdens, and structural adjustment programs?

Mobilizing foreign direct investment. We deplore conditionally in structural adjustment programs which compel countries to open their markets and their natural resources to foreign investment.

We are continually told that foreign direct investment is crucial to capital formation. Developing countries demand that foreign investors should not only exercise corporate responsibility. They need to be transparent in their operations. Most important, they have to be accountable to their host countries whose natural resources they exploit for profit.

International trade. The Monterrey Consensus recognizes that "...trade is the single most important external source of development financing." Ironically, developing and least developed countries continue to suffer from unfair terms of trade. As poignantly stated by an African official, "You demanded that we faithfully pay our debts, and we did. You asked us to restructure our economies. Our people underwent indescribable suffering but we did it. You even demanded that we change our leaders, and we did. But you refuse to buy our cotton, our cocoa and other products!"

ODA. Substantial increase in ODA to developing countries has not been achieved. A number of rich countries steadfastly refuse to honor their 30-year commitment to share .7% of their GNP. We ask the General Assembly to remind recalcitrant member countries of this promise.

External Debt. It has been two decades since the last global debt crisis. The babies who survived are now 20 years old. They still carry the scars of malnutrition, inadequate education and poor health. They have been tragically deprived of the basic capacities for full human development.

The debt crisis continues to rage in many countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. While the G8 committed to cancel all the debts of eligible HIPICs, countries euphemistically described *as* "middle-income" teeter on the brink of disaster as they struggle with unmanageable and unsustainable debts.

Recently, these countries have been further shaken by natural catastrophes, severe terms of trade, bloodletting and conflict. The magnitude of the destruction Katrina left in its wake has been experienced by many developing countries as well.

We therefore urge the General Assembly to support debt relief for "middle income" countries whose economies have been devastated by natural catastrophes like the tsunami, as well as those with high levels of poverty and unsustainable debt.

The persistence of debt crises underscores the need to reform the international financial system. We demand transparency and accountability from multilateral institutions. Developing countries voice and vote in the governance of these institutions need to be strengthened.

Follow up of Monterrey Consensus

We urge the General Assembly to initiate preparations for a follow up of the Monterrey Consensus and the leading actions which the heads of state and the leaders of government committed to.

Gender Equality. The issue of gender equality cuts across all the Millennium Development Goals. We likewise urge the members of the General Assembly to allocate resources to promote gender equality in their respective countries.

Promises, Promises. The heads of state and leaders of governments have made many promises for decades, some of which are The World Summit on Social Development in 1995, the Beijing Summit also in 1995, the G7 meeting of 1999, the Millennium Summit in 2000, the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002, the Johannesburg Summit also in 2002, and the recently concluded G8 Summit in Gleneagles.

This General Assembly is not the time for more promises. It is time to fulfill old and new promises. The poor of the world, especially the women and children cannot wait until 2015. **Keep your promises!**