



---

## **Global Call to Action Against Poverty Key asks for the 2008 G8 summit**

---

### **What we are asking of the G8**

The following common lobbying positions have been adopted by the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, which the International Trade Union Confederation is a key part of. It should be read alongside the trade union submission to the G8 summit at [http://www.tuac.org/en/public/e-docs/00/00/02/30/document\\_doc.phtml](http://www.tuac.org/en/public/e-docs/00/00/02/30/document_doc.phtml)

#### **Aid**

The G8 must recognise that they are failing to meet the promised aid levels and all G8 countries need to reaffirm their commitment to the Gleneagles pledges when they meet in Japan this year. This includes increasing ODA levels by an extra \$50 billion by 2010, with \$25 billion of this for Africa, and each G8 nation provides a detailed timetable for their budget increases to achieve this in the next two years.

Japan, as President of the G8 needs to agree to address its decreasing aid levels by increasing its global ODA levels as well as committing to the UN target of 0.7% of GNI by TICAD V in 2013. As president of the G8, Japan should aim for all G8 leaders meeting in Hokkaido to go further than their Gleneagles promises to reach the UN target of 0.7% of GNI by 2013 at the latest. The G8 needs to also agree that any increases in ODA to reach 0.7% does not include any monies needed to address climate change (see below).

The G8 needs to agree to an independent, UN led review of their aid pledges with specific references to water and sanitation, health, HIV/AIDS, and education. The Japanese government should work with its G8 colleagues and the UN to deliver this report prior to the G8 in July and institute an annual report of G8 progress to meet its development pledges to be delivered and discussed at each subsequent G8 at least until 2015. This report should include inputs from civil society.

#### **Climate change**

As the major current and historical source of carbon emissions, the G8 bears particular responsibility to make progress towards a post 2012 framework as part of the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol process. Binding agreements must be made to keep global warming at less than 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels, which requires stabilisation at 450 ppm CO2 equivalent or below, in line with present EU

policy and scientific projections. Scientific progress may require review of these guardrails to avoid dangerous climate change.

The G8 should reach collective commitment to reduce their domestic carbon emissions by at least 80% from their 1990 levels by 2050, as precondition for a global long-term emission reduction goal which needs to be agreed on under the UNFCCC framework. This level of ambition would reflect the fact poor people and poor countries will in many cases be the first and worst affected by climate change, while having done least to bring it about. G8 countries must also commit to ensuring that sufficient resources and other incentives are made available to assist developing countries in building sustainable, low carbon economies, and in supporting efforts to adapt to the immediate and future impact of climate change, in particular in the Least Developed Countries and small island states.

These commitments need to be sufficient with at least \$50 billion needed annually for adaptation, and these resources must be additional to the UN target of 0.7% of GNI, and be provided in the form of grants rather than any kind of loans. Mitigation-related, including means to avoid deforestation, needs are in addition to this amount.

As noted by many developing countries in the UN climate negotiations, instruments within the UN climate policy framework, such as the Adaptation Fund, should be the prior channel to stream climate change related funding, rather than through donor-driven instruments such as the World Bank.

Efforts to support low-carbon development in poor countries must be matched by similar steps to 'de-carbonise' the global economy. The G8 should put renewable energy at the forefront of these efforts, and commit to 20% of energy from renewable sources by 2020. However, implementation of this target should be based on impacts assessments of the actual climate benefits and pay particular attention on the possible adverse impacts on the most vulnerable people, such as biofuel production contributing to violation of human rights such as food security.

### **Debt**

The implementation of the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative is a positive example of the G8 doing what it said it would in 2005. However, debt cancellation is needed for a much larger group of countries that continue to face a heavy debt burden, at great cost to some of the world's poorest people. The G8 must agree to full debt cancellation for all IDA-only countries, and all other countries whose debt levels currently prevent them from meeting their people's basic needs, without the imposition of economic policy conditions. G8 countries should initiate audits of outstanding debt claims, based on recognition of creditor co-responsibility for the current situation, and follow through on their 2007 commitment to a charter on responsible lending.

The G8 must also take measures to prevent the activities of vulture funds, ensuring that poor countries have access to rapid legal technical assistance when threatened with predatory lawsuits. In order to address these issues more fundamentally, the G8 should recognise the need for a just, transparent and comprehensive debt work-out process.

Finally, with the growing food crisis, the importance of debt cancellation is paramount to allow countries to put the resources into feeding their people rather than making debt repayments. Specifically, the G8 must stop debt payments from flowing out of countries most affected by the food crisis, especially Haiti, whose debt payments should be suspended until it reaches completion point in the HIPC initiative. In addition, the G8 must recognise that economic and policy conditionalities placed on developing countries by the international financial institutions have played in the creation of the food crisis and pressure those institutions to de-link debt relief and aid programmes from such conditions.

### **Education**

G8 nations have a responsibility to ensure that education is free, high quality and available to all for at least 9 years. Access to pre-school and second-chance learning for those who have missed out are hallmarks of decent societies committed to equality of opportunity, poverty eradication and growth. To this end, the G8 must commit a minimum of \$15-16 billion per annum in aid to ensure EFA, a sum that includes provision for adult literacy, early childhood care and education, targeting the hardest-to-reach children and expansion of lower secondary education. The G8 should commit to this aid being given predictably and to finance recurrent costs, in order that 18 million teachers can be trained, hired and paid between now and 2015.

The 2007 G8 communique included the assurance that the financing gap for 31 countries endorsed through the EFA Fast-Track Initiative, estimated at \$500 million for that year, would be closed by the end of 2007. This commitment must be delivered: the G8 must report back on progress since last year, and should reaffirm the pledge that it will pay its fair share of the annual external financing requirement to enable FTI plans to be realised. The G8 should support the creation of an annual replenishment cycle for the Catalytic Fund of the FTI, and encourage the endorsement of a further 16 countries' plans in 2008 and 2009. The G8 communique must reaffirm the pledge that 'no country seriously committed to the achievement of Education For All should be thwarted in this ambition for lack of resources'.

### **Food Crisis**

The G8 must respond to the growing food crisis with decisive and effective measures. Civil society is concerned that the slow response and protectionist

measures being taken by rich countries are placing millions of the world's poor in jeopardy. The most affected are women, children and the most vulnerable sectors of society including those ill or aging – these groups are in need of immediate support to buy and produce their own food.

Therefore, the G8 must take the following actions: the G8 must take immediate emergency action to ensure there is the necessary mobilisation of funding to prevent the immediate starvation of millions of people; The G8 must support the UN demands for fund to fill the gap between pledges and commitments to help deliver the needed food. This aid must come in the form of grants and not loans that will deepen the debt burdens these countries – debts that they already cannot pay; The G8 must intervene in to stop market speculation on agricultural commodities that are artificially increasing food prices for short-term profits; immediately remove the perverse incentives to turn food into biofuels; the G8 must empower trade negotiators in the Doha Round to reach an agreement that achieves an end to trade distorting agricultural policies by wealthy nation that prevent farmers in developing countries from accessing wealthy markets and distort food production and prices; the G8 needs to invest in sustainable small-scale agricultural production in developing nations; the G8 needs to stop debt payments from flowing out of countries most affected by the food crisis; finally, the G8 must double their efforts to meet and exceed the Millennium Development Goals to ensue the food crisis does not lead to a deterioration in the small progress towards meeting the MDGs.

### **Gender Equality & Women's Rights**

Women are disproportionately impacted by poverty, and other global problems such as HIV&AIDS, climate change and environmental degradation, war, conflict and related large scale sexual violence and other human rights atrocities hampering their human right to development. Regardless of nationality, race and class women continue to experience specific discrimination in access to economic resources, essential services such as education and health care as well as protection in armed conflict. Time after time it has shown that the most effective way to achieve sustainable development is to protect the rights of women and girls and invest in their empowerment as a pre-requisite to poverty eradication and economic development. Women's active involvement in their societies is imperative to overcoming inequality and ensure the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and other international frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) can be implemented.

For the first time in G8 history, women's empowerment was put on the agenda last 2007, under German Presidency. The Summit Declaration Growth and Responsibility in Africa reported some important references to the women's rights and women's role in development.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's engagement and the strong advocacy by civil society and feminist organisations ensured recognition of:

- the feminisation of the AIDS epidemic and the consequent need to have a gender sensitive response to it.
- the empowering role of education for women and girls.
- the importance of gender training of civilian police for post conflict scenarios.
- the key role that women can play in economic growth and political development.

Nonetheless, apart from the support granted to the World Bank's Gender Action Plan and a call for a gender-sensitive response to AIDS, TB and Malaria by the GFATM, concrete steps have not been undertaken to translate declarations into practice. All plans and strategies for sustainable development may fail if the root causes of poverty such as gender inequality and injustice are not removed.

Therefore, the G8 should take leadership among UN member states to further develop proposals for a consolidated, stronger and robustly funded UN entity for women, with both normative and operational capacity, to effectively enhance results at country level. The G8 needs to take concrete steps in the provision of adequate and long-term financial resources for the implementation of key gender equality frameworks such as CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDG. This should include ensuring that all donor countries allocate 0.7% of GNI as aid immediately which will free up new funds for work on gender equality and women's rights, ensuring women's active participation in National Development Planning, and ensuring Budget Support and Poverty Reduction Strategies include indicators to track progress on women's rights. G8 members are called on to join the UN Secretary-General's Campaign to End Violence against Women. We also ask the G8 assess the impact of important initiatives such as the International Finance Facility for Immunization, the Fast Track Initiative on Education, the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative on women and girls. The G8 should ensure that governments implement their commitments under UN Security Council Resolution 1325 to ensure women's increased participation in local and national peace-building processes, and to safeguard women's right to protection in conflict situations.

### **Health**

The G8 must give concrete backing for a rapid scaling up of the public provision of free basic healthcare for all and an end to user fees in every country, and show willingness to provide the financial support to achieve this. In order to achieve this scaling up, the G8 should transform the International Health Partnership into a fully endorsed G8 initiative. This would create a suitable mechanism to help countries to design and implement clear, long-term and costed plans for assisting, expanding and strengthening public health systems to ensure the 2010 HIV/AIDS targets are met.

By using a transformed International Health Partnership, the G8 can reduce the fragmented donor financing and support one national and domestically led public health system plan or sector wide approach (SWAp) and by doing so, work in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. In addition, the G8 must agree to immediately finance the plans of the first 8 countries to participate in the IHP, and to fill the financing gap for the second wave of countries when their plans are developed. Within this initiative, supporting each country to have clear workforce strategies, to recruit, train and retain the 1 million health workers needed in Africa, and 4.25 million needed globally. Beyond the first eight countries, commit to a timetable to scale up health financing to provide long-term predictable commitments of an additional \$21 billion annually to guarantee that if all countries develop strong 10-year plans to expand their public health systems, the G8 will ensure they have the resources to do so<sup>1</sup>.

### **HIV and AIDS**

The commitment to achieve universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support for all people with HIV and AIDS by 2010 was among the most important outcomes of the G8 Gleneagles summit, yet remains far off track from being delivered. Meeting the Universal Access promise must be a key part of discussions to strengthen health systems throughout the G8 process, particularly in delivering the specific financial promises made in 2007, as well as those in supporting the production of generic medicines.

Whilst firm plans and timelines must be agreed to outline how and when each country will deliver its share of the promises made in 2007, the promise to provide \$60bn for AIDS, TB and malaria must either be increased or delivered at a rate that is sufficient to meet UNAIDS's estimates of resources needed to achieve Universal Access by 2010.

The G8 must also establish a system of monitoring the progress of delivering these commitments that reports into each future G8 summit.

### **Water and Sanitation**

The G8 must give urgent attention to the crisis in the sanitation and water sector. The G8 needs to recognise that, in Africa, sanitation is the most-off track MDG sector and that this lack of progress undermines wider development efforts. In the UN's International Year of Sanitation, the G8 must commit to the necessary extraordinary effort to address the crisis in the sector.

The G8 must recognise sanitation as a historical driver of poverty reduction efforts with the potential to accelerate global efforts to reduce child mortality: poor

---

<sup>1</sup> This figure is taken from the Commission for Macroeconomics and Health.

sanitation is one of the key factors in child mortality in the developing world. The G8 should heed the lessons of recent development history in East Asia where states placed sanitation at the forefront of their national development plans - alongside, water, health and education - with dramatic human development and economic outcomes. Above all, the G8 must provide the leadership required to overturn the longstanding neglect and resulting poor performance of the sanitation and water sectors in the poorest countries of the world.

To this end, the G8 must endorse a Global Water and Sanitation Action Plan recognizing the integral role of water and sanitation in the achievement of the MDGs and articulating a roadmap for ensuring progress in the sector. The Action Plan must include the G8's commitment to an annual high-level review of the sector with the necessary senior political representation to make the policy changes needed to overcome the key obstacles to progress.

Finally, the G8 needs to give firm and unequivocal backing to the African Ministers Meeting's 'eThekweni Declaration' that exhorts all African governments to spend a 'minimum of 0.5% of GDP for sanitation and hygiene: the G8 must make the commitment that no credible country plan, consistent with achieving the MDGs, should fail for lack of finance. To this end, the G8 must commit an additional \$4 billion per year as the donor share of the costs of reaching the MDG for sanitation.