

July 9, 2008
Hokkaido, Japan

G-8 NGO Platform Network Reaction To the 2008 G-8 Summit Final Communiqué

We are the largest coalitions of humanitarian and development nongovernmental organizations in the G-8 nations, speaking on behalf of over 1,500 NGOs supported by millions of citizens in our respective countries. We have come together out of concern for those who are most affected by the decisions made in global decision-making bodies like the G-8.

Collectively and individually, we reached out to the G-8 leaders to include the following issues in the 2008 G-8 commitments:

- Establish a mechanism to monitor G-8 pledges, particularly the historic commitments made in Gleneagles in 2005 towards ending extreme poverty, especially in Africa.
- Fulfill their commitments to increase official development assistance (ODA) to help advance the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly to fight infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB) while strengthening health systems, to expand access to education, clean water and sanitation, and to improve maternal, newborn and child health.
- Seriously take on the challenges posed by the effects of global greenhouse gas emissions, including global warming and the related devastating impacts such as water scarcity, droughts, sea-level rise, floods, disruption of agricultural production, and spread of disease.
- Add agriculture and the growing food crisis to the 2008 G-8 agenda to significantly increase its support for emergency food aid and for agricultural development in the developing world.

Unfortunately, the 2008 Hokkaido Summit produced no significant breakthroughs and failed to meet the expectations of firmer and more comprehensive commitments to end extreme poverty and protect the environment.

We are pleased that the Group of Eight included the following building blocks in this year's commitments; which they should build on and broaden in subsequent G-8 Summits.

- We applaud the G-8 leaders for agreeing to deliver on their Gleneagles commitment of \$50 billion in new assistance, half of it to Africa by 2010. Similarly, we welcome the G-8's initial response to our call for an accountability mechanism to monitor the delivery of promises made by G-8 leaders. The commitment to monitor the implementation of pledges in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation is a move in the right direction. We will continue to advocate for such measures across all G-8 commitments.
- We commend the Group of Eight for displaying an improved understanding of the complex nature of the issues before them and the need for a comprehensive approach that links financing for development, trade and aid effectiveness and recognizes the value of local initiatives and the roles of non-state actors such as the private sector, civil society organizations, and other donors.
- We applaud the G-8's \$10 billion contribution to address the humanitarian aspects of the global food price crisis, along with the pledge to "build up local agriculture by promoting local purchase of food aid".

We are troubled that despite intense outreach by civil society organizations, G-8 leaders failed to take the actions needed to address the following critical issues:

- G-8 leaders' attempt to address climate change fell incredibly short on expected outcomes. The 50/50 agreement has no baseline year and no mid-term targets. In addition, the \$6 billion Climate Investment Fund to be housed at the World Bank will come out of aid budgets and

reinforces the role of an institution with a mixed track record on the environment. This Summit missed an opportunity to add political momentum to the UN climate treaty negotiations launched last December in Bali. What was needed was a clear signal that the world's major industrialized countries would provide real leadership in cutting their own emissions of heat-trapping gases between now and 2020. Instead, the G-8 statement underscores the sharp divide of its members on this issue.

- Although the Group of Eight reaffirmed its commitment to the MDGs overall in the communiqué on Development and Africa, its focus centered on health, education, and water and sanitation. Even in these areas, the resources committed are insufficient. The agreement to provide "at least a projected \$60 billion over 5 years to fight infectious diseases and strengthen health" is an unrealistic estimate of the needs in the health sector, particularly for infectious diseases. AIDS organizations estimate that a 3-year commitment to fight only HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis will require about \$89 billion and a 5-year commitment about \$173.2 billion.
- There is no concrete proposal for lasting solutions to the global food price crisis. The impact of biofuel policies in developed countries on this crisis was not acknowledged. In addition, the G-8 made only a vague commitment to "reverse the overall decline of aid and investment in the agricultural sector".
- On the world economy, the G-8 decided to unrealistically rely on globalization and open market approaches, voluntary adherence to corporate social responsibility principles for multinationals, more stringent intellectual property rights, and anti-corruption measures to address the challenges to economic growth worldwide.

Our work on the ground in all the developing nations of the world affords us a unique understanding of the challenges faced by citizens of these countries. There, our member organizations work to support billions of people who live on less than \$2 a day, including millions of men, women and children who go to bed hungry every night. We are committed to ensuring that global bodies like the G-8 take actions that effectively address social and sustainable development challenges around the world.

Members of the G-8 NGO Platform Network

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