

**GLOBAL
NETWORK
For
JUSTICE**

**A Project of New Orleans Bread for the
World at the Twomey Center for Peace
Through Justice**

**July - August 2004
Volume 3 Number 8**

***News from G8 Summit, (8-10 June, 2004,
Savannah, Georgia,
U S A)***

The outcome from the June 10th G8 meeting is a great disappointment given the hope created by the news that 100% debt cancellation was under discussion. All the G8 have done is to extend the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) for a further two years – HIPC was due to close down this year. This will benefit countries like Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone which have been unable to enter HIPC because of the various conflict situations. However, HIPC is not a panacea for heavily indebted countries.

The USA and Great Britain were the main movers in promoting discussion on debt cancellation. This was linked to the USA's push for at least 90% cancellation of Iraq's debts. The G8 failed to agree on Iraq debt. Countries like France and Russia argued that 50-60% cancellation would be sufficient as Iraq would have to use all its oil revenue over the next 20 years in order to repay its debts. Jubilee Iraq argues strongly that given that Iraq's debt is odious i.e. lent to an oppressive dictator, the argument is not only whether it can be paid, that odious debt should not be paid by subsequent regimes. It is interesting to note that in its eagerness to get Iraq's debt cancelled the US Treasury has also argued that Iraq's debt is odious.

A further striking aspect of the debate on Iraq's debt is that the IMF supported

cancellation of almost all of Iraq's \$120 billion debt. This puts us in an even stronger position to press for cancellation of 100% of poor countries' \$5 billion debt to the IMF.

***Debt Relief Good Enough for Iraq, Why not
Africa?***

The international agency Oxfam welcomed the proposal to cancel \$90 billion of Iraq's foreign debt, and urged G8 leaders to do the same for Africa. Deep debt relief is crucial if African nations are to invest in improving the lives of their citizens.

"Zambia, Mali, Niger and the Gambia spend more on debt servicing each year than they do on education," said Irungu Houghton, Oxfam's Africa Policy Advisor. "If the G8 Leaders are willing to write off \$90B for Iraq, why not a third of that for Africa?"

The debt of the 42 poorest and most indebted countries amounts to \$35 billion. The World Bank estimates that a minimum of \$2.3 billion new relief is needed immediately to keep its HIPC program from collapse.

Rich countries can afford the deeper debt relief required. What they cannot afford is the current crisis of poverty and instability. Debt relief is an essential component of the G8 Leaders' commitment to African peace and security.

The G8's Africa Action Plan - regarding education, good governance, conflict prevention, water, corruption and health will amount to little unless there is relief from the crushing debt burden. "Well-intentioned declarations without significant transfers of resources ring hollow on a continent in need of global action," Mr. Haughton added. For more information visit www.debtireland.org

***Frechette urges wealthy nations to remove or
cut agricultural subsidies***

June 28, 2004, UN NEWS CENTER – Calling on the world's rich countries to revitalize stalled international trade and development talks, United Nations Deputy

Secretary-General Louise Frechette today urged them to eliminate or at least reduce “the crippling effect “ of agricultural subsidies on the world’s poorest and least developed nations.

In an address to the opening of the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at UN Headquarters in New York, Ms. Frechette said the recent pledge by affluent countries to boost their aid levels developed countries was only a start.

“Giving with one hand will not work as long as the world takes away with the other – and that is exactly what is happening with quotas, subsidies and tariffs that stunt growth in poor countries and stifle their ability to trade,” she said.

Ms. Frechette praised several bilateral or regional initiatives by developed countries to “make the playing field a little more level,” and said increasing South-South trade and cooperation will also help poor countries.

But she said that reviving the so-called Doha development round of trade negotiations, which began in 2001, was vital to improving life for people who live in poor nations.

“There is no substitute for revitalizing the Doha development agenda,” she said.

Ms. Frechette said poor States were also suffering badly from massive debt burdens, and invited creditor countries to consider forgiving the debts of the poorest nations.

Given these problems, the Deputy Secretary-General said no issue was more important to the inhabitants of the least developed countries than achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Created at the Millennium Summit in 2000, the MDGs are a set of eight goals – including the halving of extreme poverty and the slashing of child mortality rates – which world leaders agreed to try to achieve by 2015.

If current trends continue, very few of the world’s poorest States are likely to meet these poverty reduction targets, Ms Frechette said, calling for steeped-up efforts across the board.

Poor countries, she said, “must spare no effort to strengthen the efficiency, transparency and accountability of governance, support local

entrepreneurs and invest more in health, education and infrastructure.”

Frechette said wealthy countries have a responsibility to not just give more aid, but to link it to national development strategies so that its arrival is not so unpredictable or irregular.

Foundations, UN can jointly promote Millennium Development Goals – Ms Frechette

June 1, 2004, UN News Center - Charitable foundations can play a crucial role in fostering progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – a key set of anti-poverty targets adopted at a United Nations summit in 2000, Deputy Secretary-General Louis Frechette has said.

In a speech to the European Foundation Center’s annual assembly in Athens last June 27, 2004, she stressed that the MDGs – which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of major diseases and providing primary universal education for all in 2015 are ambitious but not utopian.

The UN foundations share the same objective; “to work for human dignity, freedom and solidarity, for tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility.”

While hailing the MDGs as “a powerful catalyst for change,” she cautioned that overall progress has been “uneven at best.” In order to achieve greater results, democratic governance, sound development strategies and a true partnership of developed and developing countries are critical.

The Deputy Secretary-General also underscored the role being played by those outside of government, including charitable foundations. She called attention to the work of the UN Office for International Partnerships, which was first established to channel \$1 billion donated to the UN by CNN founder Ted Turner, and has since served to inspire other foundations and philanthropists “to work with the UN in areas ranging from education to maternal health to biodiversity.”

“The UN is truly transforming the way it works with the outside world,” she told those present. “We stand ready to welcome you and work with you.”

News

The Global Network for Justice participated in the consultation meeting of the Carmelite NGO in May 22-23, 2004 in Rome. The purpose of the meeting was to meet with other member NGOs and eventually in the future apply for accreditation at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). ECOSOC is the central United Nations forum for discussing international economic and social issues and for formulating policy recommendations to the UN member states. Once a status is granted to an organization, it will be able to take a more active stand in the policy-making process of the UN by participating in the deliberations of the ECOSOC, and in the preparatory process for international conferences convened by the UN as well as the conferences themselves.

ZENIT News Agency, The World Seen From Rome

New Efforts Needed to Fight World Poverty, Says the Holy See

New York, July 1, 2004 (Zenit.org) - Mary Ann Glendon, president of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences and Head of the Holy See's Delegation to the Assembly of the United Nations Economic and Social Council's 2004 High Level Segment of Least Developed Countries (LDC) addressed UN Meeting in New York City, July 1, 2004. The Holy See made an appeal at the United Nations for developed nations to help the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), many of which are falling short of poverty eradication goals.

Sometimes overlooked among the obstacles to progress is the fact that globalization has accelerated the disruption of entire ways of life. As age-old patterns of work and family life have disintegrated, a sense of powerlessness has increased.

The Holy See appeal made on several occasions by Pope John Paul II said, “The poor can't wait.”

As new forms of poverty have emerged, the faces of the poor are increasingly those of women and children. In short the world is currently going through a chaotic phase, filled with both risk and promise. Those most at risk in the midst of this economic and social turbulence are often the most ignored.

However, the international community has worked out a coordinated, cooperative approach to enable the least developed countries to develop their own economies and to enter the circle of production and exchange.

The elements of that approach have been largely agreed upon: debt relief, fair trade practices, the rule of law, investment in education, primary health care, nutrition and sanitation. These are commitments that were formulated by the Brussels Program of Action which “aimed at the eradication of poverty and hunger in the world's 50 least developed countries where 700 million of world's poor live.”

The specific commitments envisaged under this Action Program can trigger increasing development aid, promote foreign investment, reduce debt burdens and open up markets in industrial countries for LDC exports.

For the first time in history we may even be within the reach of setting conditions for every girl and boy to develop her or his full human potential, but the key to the prison gates can not be turned by one party alone.

It will be a scandal and a tragedy if the nations do not join hands to turn that key. Here, the international community should call on the developed countries to take the lead in showing a greater degree of responsibility and solidarity as well as an abandonment of their sole group interests and objectives in the noble interest of the common good.

Without a serious commitment of the developed nations to do their share of sacrifice in this process, the LDCs will continue to be trapped in their current difficult situation.

In view of the internationally agreed targets of reducing poverty by one half in LDCs by 2015, the Holy See acknowledges that there is now a pressing need for a more effective

global commitment to mobilize increase volumes of financial resources for development to address widespread poverty in LDCs.

However, for this financial support to be of benefit to LDCs, it must be channeled more effectively into well-prepared, productive investments that provide clear benefits to the communities for which it was intended.

In parallel, a major effort is needed to build up local capacity to help prepare and implement these investments while improved transparency and accountability procedures need to be built in place to monitor how these resources are being spent.

As efforts are made to develop more adequate financial and commercial conditions, the international community should continue to seek for ways and means to enable a fair distribution of profits and to establish conditions that can ensure true human development.

Since the family is the primary setting where human beings first acquire the qualities of character and competence that ground healthy economies and polities, development policies must be attentive to their impact on endangered social environments.

What is needed is a change of heart, that the international community may be ever bolder, more generous, more creative, more energetic in its struggle to finally end division of the world into areas of poverty and plenty.

Article taken from
<http://www.zenit.org/english/subscribe.html>
Code: ZE04070107
Date: 2004-07-01

Holy See Plans a Coalition for Financing of Development

VATICAN CITY, July 6, 2004 (Zenit.org) – The Holy See plans to establish a “Coalition of Support and Promotion for the Financing for Development,” and has appealed to financial experts and other ideas.

To that end, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace has organized a study seminar this Friday (July 9), to be attended by officials of the

United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and representative of governments, Catholic nongovernmental organizations, and the ecclesial hierarchy. The theme of the meeting is “Poverty and Globalization: Financing for Development, Including the Millennium Development Goals.”

“Special attention will be given to the present situation of the International debt and innovative financing proposals, in particular the English initiative International Finance Facility (IFF),” said a statement by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

“The objective of the project is to collect funds that will make it possible to obtain the \$50 billion needed annually to achieve the millennium’s objectives before 2015, thanks to the emission of obligations in the international capital market,” it added.

Cardinal Renato Martino, President of the Pontifical Council, will open the morning session, which will be presided over by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor of Westminster.

Cardinal Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga of Honduras will preside over the afternoon session.

Article taken from
<http://www.zenit.org/english/subscribe.html>
Code: ZE04070603
Date: 2004-07-06

New Orleans Bread for the World
Loyola University New Orleans
Campus Box 907
New Orleans, LA 70118

Phone: 504.861-5834
Fax: 504.861-5833
Email: gcnfj@loyno.

Visit our Website:
www.globalnetwork4justice.org