



Act now for the Millennium Development Goals



appeals from religious leaders and scholars



**Cover: 'Moving Space'
by Toyin Loye, Nigeria**

In this century of ours, the world becomes even smaller. Barriers between humankind of all races are breaking down through access to means of transportation, internet and other communication apparatus. This should be the new world era, when we come to know each other better but yet the rift between people becomes even bigger. Persecutions, injustice, intolerance, stereotyping, and other vices are making people move or flee against their wishes. It is now imperative that everybody should work for the respect of human rights and a better co-existence of all world citizens irrespective of their colours, race, religion or sex.

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Millennium Development Goals

1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

To halve by 2015 the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger as compared to 1990.

2 Achieve universal primary education

To ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education.

3 Promote gender equality and empower women

To promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.

4 Reduce child mortality

To reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds of their current rates.

5 Improve maternal health

To have reduced maternal mortality by three-quarters of their current rates.

6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

To have, by 2015, halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity.

7 Ensure environmental sustainability

We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs.



By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers as proposed in the Cities Without Slums initiative. To halve by 2015 the proportion of the world's people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.

8 Develop a global partnership for development

To take special measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa including debt cancellation, improved market access, enhanced Official Development Assistance and increased flows of Foreign Direct Investment, as well as transfers of technology. To develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society organisations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication. To develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.

Foreword

It has been my long and continuous experience over the last two decades of international service that in almost every context throughout the world, religious communities play a major role - even if at times discreet or even silent - in economic development. Poor communities throughout the world trust religious leaders to a greater degree than anyone else in positions of leadership or power. Religious organisations are closer to impoverished grass roots communities than any other networks. Religious leaders use their moral authority in the fight against poverty and injustice in all their dimensions. But there is more. It is now universally recognised that poverty is not only a matter of lack of income but also of the failure to achieve certain basic capabilities and forms of social inclusion, along with other social, economic, cultural, political and security problems mentioned by poor people themselves. As a matter of fact, the agenda for development will not be completed as long as human persons are deprived of access to spiritual fulfilment, not to mention hope and dignity. This is why religious communities suggest a focus going beyond the individual and emphasise the importance of the common good - of the development of the whole community. Some religions speak in terms of

harmony, others of social justice but what they all point to is that if we fail to order our societies on the basis of the attributes commonly known as values or 'virtues', such as trust, solidarity, generosity, restraint and compassion, there will be no truly human development either for the rich or the poor. This suggests that development levels should be judged by the extent to which the last person is included.

An open and respectful exchange of ideas can make a significant contribution not only to achieving the Millennium Development Goals but also to incorporating them into a vision of development that could lead to greater well-being for everyone. Based on the core beliefs and values of their faith, religious institutions can play a part in ensuring a more peaceful, harmonious, equitable and prosperous world for all. This can help many to understand that poverty and wealth are intertwined and no matter how many pragmatic programmes are put into action, unless the rich of this world are prepared to forgo some of their privileges, the Millennium Development Goals will never be achieved.

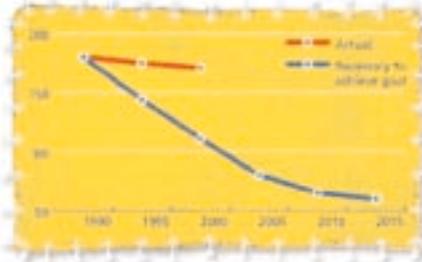
The Jubilee 2000 campaign for the cancellation of the debt of the most highly indebted poor countries showed how powerful religious communities can be when they unite around a cause.

Development co-operation should not only be about money changing hands but also, and foremost, about ideas changing minds and eternal truths changing hearts. Suffice it to underline the importance of the role religious leaders and communities of the faithful have to play.

*Michel Camdessus
President of the Semaines Sociales de France*

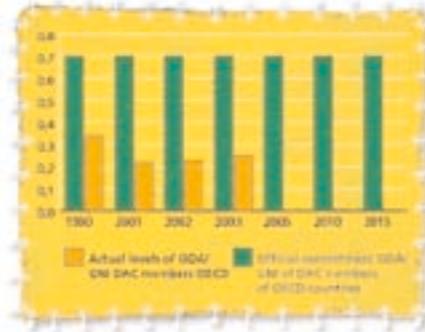
Reduce child mortality by two-thirds by 2015

Indicator: under-five mortality rate for Sub-Saharan Africa (per 1,000 births), Unicef 2004



High income countries to increase official development assistance to 0.7 GNI

Indicator: Official Development Assistance (ODA) as percentage of Gross National Income (GNI), OECD, Development Assistance Committee 2004



‘We have a common interest in creating a safer and more just world’

At the beginning of the new millennium

189 countries accepted the Millennium

Development Goals and agreed to take the

necessary action in order to attain them by

2015. The first formal stock-taking will take

place in September 2005. It is already clear

that the efforts made up till now are not

sufficient to achieve these goals by 2015.

Leaders of world religions have made strong statements in support of the Millennium Development Goals. Locally, religious leaders and scholars have taken initiatives to hold governments accountable and to stimulate communities of the faithful to take a proactive role in their society. Internationally and within their own communities, these statements and initiatives are not widely known. More than 75% of the world population ascribe to one of the major world religions and can be reached through their religious leaders. Active support from the communities of the faithful in North and South is needed in order to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved by 2015.

Justitia et Pax Netherlands collected 18 personal messages from religious leaders and scholars. In these messages they indicate, from a religious point of view, the need to support the Millennium Development Goals and they encourage communities of the faithful to take a proactive role in their society. Through a concerted action between religions and within communities of the

faithful a strong support can be obtained in the fight against poverty and injustice.

The first formal stock-taking in September 2005 is just the beginning. Justitia et Pax Netherlands will continue to monitor progress on the different Millennium Development Goals. Every year it will present the MDG-barometer: to measure how much we - as world citizens - have achieved in reducing poverty and injustice.

In a world where poverty and the basic needs of a vast majority of humanity remain to be met, it is of crucial importance to stimulate constructive cooperation and co-ordinated action amongst people of good will in religious communities, political parties and civil society. They have a common interest in creating a safer and more just world by fostering effective efforts to combat poverty.

As people of faith we are proud to take up this challenge.

Victor Scheffers
General Secretary, Justitia et Pax Netherlands



Fundamental Values

We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include:

Freedom

Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.

Equality

No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.

Solidarity

Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.

Tolerance

Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a

precious asset of humanity. A culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations should be actively promoted.

Respect for nature

Prudence must be shown in the management of all living species and natural resources, in accordance with the precepts of sustainable development. Only in this way can the immeasurable riches provided to us by nature be preserved and passed on to our descendants. The current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants.

Shared responsibility

Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role.

‘...and hold our governments to commitments they have made on behalf of the citizens they represent’

**His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso,
14th Dalai Lama, 1989
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate**

Today we have all come to accept the interdependence of peoples, nations and even individuals. No one group of people can exist completely independently of the rest of humanity. This is not merely an abstract concept, it is also a political, economic and environmental reality. For Buddhists the concept of interdependence is a deep spiritual truth which links all sentient beings.

It is because we are interdependent that I believe we human beings need to develop a sense of universal responsibility. Concerned not only for ourselves, our families, our community and country, we should also feel a responsibility for the individuals, communities and peoples who make up the human family as a whole. This would express itself not only as compassion for those who suffer, but also as a commitment to share what we have with those in need. The recent unprecedented response from governments and individuals across the world to the victims of the tsunami disaster is a fitting example.

Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can make a major contribution to the alleviation of poverty and suffering. They provide an agenda whereby we can work together and hold our governments to commitments they have made on behalf of the citizens they represent. If the MDGs are implemented with a positive motivation we can make an important start in creating a more equitable, compassionate and responsible international system.

Keeping this in mind, I urge responsible world leaders and governments to live up to their commitments, while also hoping that private individuals, concerned NGOs and so forth, will exercise their influence and use whatever means at their disposal to contribute to achieving these worthwhile goals. If we can reduce poverty and suffering in the world we will all benefit, whereas failure to fulfil this initiative will harm us all.

‘He never asked us to be isolated’

Statement by Bishop Moussa, Bishop of Youth Affairs, Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt

Peace is the longing of everybody: the individual, the family, the society, the region, and the world at large. It has - in our concept - three dimensions: peace with God, peace with myself, peace with the others.

This cannot be achieved except through the work of God inside our hearts, when we reconcile with God, regretting any wrong behaviour in our personal and social life and insist to cope with God's love and commandments; and when we struggle against evil that divides and fragments the human personality into spirit, mind, psyche, body, and relations.

The integrated personality is composed of:
A nourished spirit in the Lord, through prayers, scriptures, meetings, fasting, serving others, and witnessing for God in the society;
An enlightened mind that can differentiate between right and wrong, work enthusiastically to know, interact, and decide for different life activities, specifically communication tools like chatting, internet, satellites, and friends;
A peaceful psyche controlling our motives, fulfilling our psychological needs, acquiring good affections towards others, adopting useful habits and attitudes in our life;
A healthy body having good nutrition, sufficient sleep, rest and recreation. A body preserved

healthy by abstaining from smoking, alcohol, drugs, and sexual immoralities.

Social fitness that gets us to be in good terms with everybody around us, maintaining strong flexibility that goes with positive things and rejects the negative ones.

Peace with others

Our Lord asked us to witness for Him in the society. He never asked us to be isolated. Yes, He insists not to be confronted to the life of people going astray from Him, but to behave socially, like the Light, that dismisses darkness, the Salt, that preserves food, the Ambassadors, representing Him, the Message, read by everybody and The Aroma, that smells good, spreading love, goodness, and peace around us.

May God help us all to behave in His Light, to attain and spread His Peace.

Bishop Moussa

Moussa

Bishop of Youth

**Rigoberta Menchú Tum,
1992 Nobel Peace Prize
Laureate**

The Millennium Development Goals were

accepted by the United Nations in 2000, to

guide the international community in

assisting developing countries to catch up on

the arrears in social development. However

the Millennium Development Goals were not

as extensive as expected, as little or no

reference was made to indigenous peoples.

‘they will just become another list of good intentions...’

We as indigenous peoples have made important contributions to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the past and will continue to do so in the future, as we have supported a large number of other global initiatives. Our age-old Maya culture has shown us the importance of the preservation of ecology, the maintenance of harmonious bonds with mother nature and the utilization of the knowledge of our ancestors in favour of humanity.

Today there is a serious risk, we will not be able to achieve the aims we have set for 2015 on reduction of extreme poverty and hunger by half in comparison to 1990, reduction of child mortality by two-thirds, promotion of gender equality and combating HIV/AIDs and other diseases. One continent which is far from achieving the Millennium Development Goals, is Latin America. A region where wealth has been accumulated by a limited few and poverty has become more and more acute. In a recent report of the United Nations insight is given in the fast degradation of the natural environment. Together with other factors, this is a major threat to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

All citizens and communities of the world should accept the Millennium Development Goals as their own and insist on an extension of these goals to include each and every one on this earth. They should also demand that effective measures are taken to ensure that the goals are implemented and not remain a piece of paper. This can only be achieved through a worldwide social movement, which stresses the importance of the fight against poverty and demands attainment of these goals in accordance with the Millennium Declaration.

I hereby give my full support to the Global Call to Action of citizens and NGOs in all cities of Latin America on the 1st of July 2005. A call to action a few days before the meeting of the G8, in order to pressurize the governments of the eight richest countries in the world and all other countries to donate 0.7% of their tax income to the poorest countries.

If the citizens of this planet do not claim the Millennium Development Goals, the goals will follow the same path as many other plans: they will just become another list of good intentions.

Shinto Prayer for Peace

*Although the people are living
across the ocean surrounding us,*

I believe are all our brothers and sisters.

*Why are there constant troubles in
this world?*

*Why do winds and waves rise in the
oceans surrounding us?*

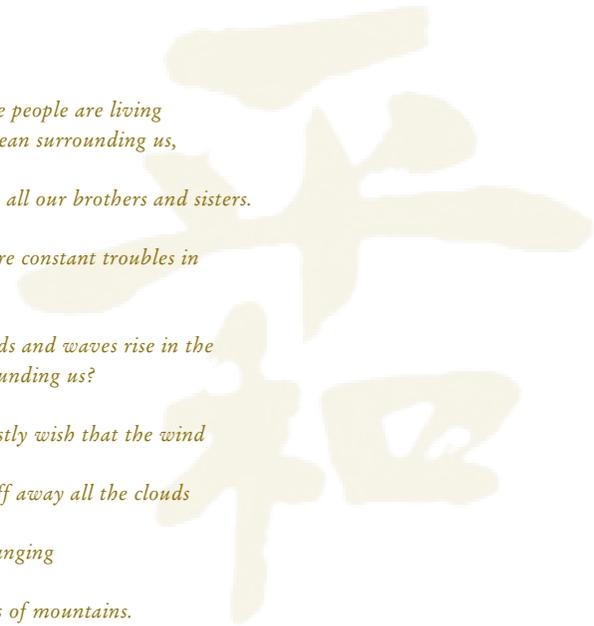
I only earnestly wish that the wind

will soon puff away all the clouds

which are hanging

over the tops of mountains.

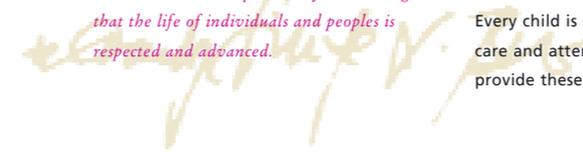
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‘Violence destroys what it claims to defend’

**H.E. Mgr. Carlos Ximenes
Belo, Bishop of Dili
(Emeritus), 1996 Nobel
Peace Co-Laureate**

*Ten years ago Pope John Paul II addressed
the General Assembly of the United Nations
about the need for a common commitment to
the service of peace. In his address he referred
to the grammar of universal moral law.
By inspiring common values and principles,
this law unites human beings, despite their
different cultures, and is itself unchanging:
‘It subsists under the flux of ideas and
customs and supports their progress.
Even when it is rejected in its very principles,
it cannot be destroyed or removed from the
heart of a man. It always rises again in the
life of individuals and societies’. It requires
commitment and responsibility in ensuring
that the life of individuals and peoples is
respected and advanced.*



In this light, the evils of a social and political nature afflict the world. Particularly those provoked by outbreaks of violence are to be vigorously condemned. To attain peace there must be a clear and conscious acknowledgement that violence is unacceptable and that it never solves problems. Violence is a lie, for it goes against the truth of our faith, the truth of humanity. Violence destroys what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings. There is a need for an integral and fraternal humanism which the Catholic Church proclaims and promotes. This is the foundation for a social, economic and political order respectful of the dignity, freedom and fundamental rights of each person.

The good of peace is closely linked to the development of all peoples. As a member of the human family, each person becomes a citizen of the world, with consequent duties and rights. Every child is entitled to rights and deserving of care and attention; and someone has the duty to provide these.

The condemnation of racism, the protection of minors, the provision of aid to displaced persons and refugees, and the mobilization of international solidarity for all the needy are nothing other than consistent applications of world citizenship.

The new millennium began with a wide consensus on the commitment to promote development and fight poverty. This consensus was formalized in the Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000. Eight concrete goals were set with the intention of giving a perspective of hope above all to the poor. Attaining these Millennium Development Goals is equivalent to resolving the dramatic situation of multitudes of the poor. Common and united actions are needed and above all strength, incisiveness and creativity.

We must realize that we all are of God’s family and that together we can make our own effective contribution to building a world based on values of justice, freedom and peace.

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‘We cannot accept forces that produce poverty’

Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, General Secretary, World Council of Churches

many communities of the ability to meet their needs in harmony with their environment.

Increasing poverty, the gap between the rich and the poor, and global environmental destruction are global challenges that must be addressed.

At the moment the international community has taken certain measures, particularly in addressing the grinding poverty due to which over 1.2 billion people live on less than one dollar a day and 3 billion on less than two dollars a day. The Millennium Development Goals signed five years ago by 189 countries are aimed at reducing poverty by half by the year 2015.

The implementation of Millennium Development Goals should be considered as merely minimal measures addressing poverty in the short term. Together with this supply-side approach to the problem of poverty,

the ecumenical family also will continue to address it from the justice perspective, seeking a fundamental change from the neo-liberal economy to an agape economy of solidarity and sharing.

It has come to the attention of the ecumenical family that despite the fact that the Millennium Development Goals are minimal measures, five years without fundamental change in poverty have passed since the Millennium Development Goals were first outlined. There remains a lack of political will on the side of governments. The ecumenical family and the member churches of the World Council of Churches request governments to effectively address the problem of poverty in the world and to deliver according to their promises.

Justice demands that donor countries raise sufficient resources, provide debt cancellation for poor countries and

ensure equitable trade access. Justice demands that receiving governments spend available resources in a transparent and efficient way and in line with the Millennium Development Goals. We cannot accept that forces that produce poverty, despair, injustice and death should continue to prevail. We must succeed in sharing the bounty of the earth and contribute to eradicating poverty and building a sustainable world community.



‘It is within our reach to make poverty history’

H.R.H. Prince El-Hassan of Jordan

Millennium Development Goals

As each successive UNDP Development

Report underlines, life on our planet is

currently far from equitable. The Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) represent a

renewed commitment to addressing some of

the most enduring failures of human

development. Their implementation is crucial

to the attainment of sustainable development,

to overcoming persistent poverty, to achieving

a balance between peoples of all nations and

cultures and finally, to ensuring world peace.

Sadly however, to date insufficient progress has been made. More must be done as has been emphasised repeatedly by the British Government, in its current position of holding the presidency of both the G8 and the EU, and by the leaders of Great Britain, France and Germany at the recent meeting of the World Economic Forum.

The challenge facing society is how to build peace and foster development with equity in a rapidly changing world. The Global Marshall Plan Initiative (GMPI), seeks an international order based on partnership and cooperation, leading to an optimal use of human and natural resources to the benefit of all. It offers a viable concept, complementing both the MDGs and the EU Development Programmes, based on the core concepts of co-financing and the establishment of mutually agreed economic, social, cultural and ecological standards, for stimulating worldwide sustainable socio-economic development.

Whilst we all insist on the non-ultimacy of political and economic considerations, people of all faiths (and none) are agreed that the current inequitable distribution of the benefits of globalisation is not only morally and ethically unsustainable, but will lead ultimately to greater global instability. We must become more sensitised to the concept of consequences: poverty, illiteracy, oppression,

lack of opportunity, despair and anger... which can all lead to the contemplation of violence. The GMPI offers a practical and pragmatic way forward. It simultaneously supports many of the fundamental tenets of all our faiths: the sanctity of life and protection of the planet, the alleviation of poverty, charity, and protection of the weak. Such a new and holistic approach to global development, based on awareness that our human interdependence is our community, is not only long overdue, but could engender positive change.

It is within our reach to make poverty history. However, we cannot focus on economic considerations alone. What I am suggesting is both consensual and contractual and basically focuses on the importance of restoring justice to development. Development, inclusive of reference to culture, especially the transparent fostering of human dignity and self-worth for all human beings, without which it cannot work and loses credibility. Our actions, whether in developing or developed countries, impact upon us all and our future depends not only on finding technical solutions, but also on reaching a consensus about the ethical basis of our response – a universal code of conduct and an ethic of human solidarity. I believe the GMPI offers the framework for reaching such a consensus.

Can we see God's image in one another?

We can think of no greater goal for twenty-first century religious leaders than ushering in the era predicted by the Old Testament prophet Isaiah: when nations will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. (Isaiah 2:4).

God speaks in the Quran of the righteous and unrighteous of the People of the Book [Christians and Jews] as well as of the Prophet Muhammad's own followers. Spirituality is about learning to see with God's eyes, and as we learn to do so, to recognize in this life Christians, Jews, Muslims, and others who emit the fragrance of Paradise, in whom God's pleasure is evident, as well as people across the religious spectrum in whom we detect the odor of God's displeasure. This simple insight brings us to the conclusion that challenges many believers: that among those who confess to be of other faiths are those who in God's eyes share the same ultimate destiny.

Historical experience has demonstrated the value and integrity of dialogue among faith-based partisans holding opposing beliefs on various matters of public importance. Theological and secular justifications exist for working together to build a heightened human consciousness of God among humanity. Sincerely conducted dialogue has the power to reveal the fundamental truth that all human beings share a great deal in common at

their deepest spiritual level. For the sake of our common shared goals, we must learn to view ourselves in relationship to others, whether religious or secular. Two major ground rules, simple and far-reaching, must be observed when we dialogue. First, compare equal to equal, and second, allow each party to define itself to the others.

The same God created us all. And when, as human beings, we learn to recognize, identify with, and speak from the core human and spiritual values that we hold in common, we may transcend our superficial divisions and learn to embrace the cultural and theological diversity that only enriches the human family. Over time, interfaith dialogue can dissolve the concept of the 'other', replacing it with a deeper realization that we are all - in fact - brothers and sisters.

*Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf
Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp*

'We stand at a critical moment in earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future...'

**Imam Feisal
Abdul Rauf**

**Rabbi Awraham
Soetendorp**

A prophetic time path

'We stand at a critical moment in earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future.(...)
The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life'.
This is the challenge, awesome in its simplicity posed by the Earth Charter, written in a remarkable collaborative effort by hundreds of thousands all over the world and presented to the Queen of The Netherlands in the Peace Palace in The Hague in June 2000.
This global partnership, required to reverse the trend towards destruction and provide hope to our Earth community, was formed only months

later in September 2000, when the highest political representatives of 189 states signed the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. 'We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want.'
The greatest hope lies in the audacity of putting a definite date to these efforts. They truly embarked on a prophetic time path towards the year 2015.
We believe with a complete faith that our spiritual traditions must and will answer the challenge and together help immensely to reach these goals. We are called by the All Merciful One to sanctify time, and devote this coming decade, every year, every hour

to the alleviation of misery, to the provision of water, health, food, education and peace. We are commanded to love the neighbor and the stranger as ourselves, to be aware always that we form one body, and that when one part of the body aches, we all feel the pain.
Our prophets teach us not only to feed the hungry, but to give of our own bread. We must show by personal example, by sharing more of our material wealth, by rescuing our planet from pollution, by giving more of our time and energy to help meet these goals in time.
Thus we commend to take upon us an extra millennium taxation of 0.1% of our income in addition to our tzedaka, our normal contribution, for this decade.
Every woman, man and child must take personal responsibility and enter into this covenant of justice.

The millennium evaluation report shows that the world community has at its disposal the proven technologies, policies, financial resources, and must importantly, the human courage and compassion to reach the goal of cutting extreme poverty by half by the year 2015 and altogether within the coming years.
We, the children who survived by the soft forces of compassion, by people who opened the door of safety to us cannot but respond fully and timely. Every moment counts: we hold the doorknob in our hands, the door stands ajar. Millions and millions of children look toward us from the despair of preventable diseases, enslavement, violence, thirst. Do we close or open the door?
In the eyes of these children we meet the Holy Blessed Be He, the Master of the house, Who urges us to make the right choice, to save one human life and thus the whole world, every second.

**Message of His Holiness
Pope John Paul II**

The conditions of extreme poverty afflicting many millions of people are a cause of grave concern to the international community. The Church, committed to a 'preferential option for the poor', naturally shares in that concern and strongly supports the Millennium goal of halving the number of people living in poverty by the year 2015. Through the many Catholic aid and development agencies she makes her own contribution to relief efforts, thereby continuing the work of Christ Himself, Who came to bring good news to the poor, to feed the hungry, to serve and not to be served. What is needed now is a new 'creativity' in charity (cf. Novo Millennio Ineunte, 50) so that ever more effective ways may be found of achieving a more just distribution of the world's resources.

“What is needed now is a new ‘creativity’ in charity”

Much work has already been done to reduce the burden of debt afflicting poor countries, but more is needed if developing nations are to escape from the crippling effects of underinvestment and if developed countries are to fulfil their duty of solidarity with their less fortunate brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. In the short to medium term, a commitment to increase foreign aid seems the only way forward, and the Church therefore welcomes the search for innovative solutions, such as the International Finance Facility. She also encourages other initiatives being sponsored in many parts of the world both by various organizations of the United Nations and by individual governments. At the same time, financial support from wealthy nations places an obligation on the receiver to demonstrate transparency and accountability in the use made of such assistance. I am confident that the governments of rich and poor countries alike will take seriously their responsibilities towards each other and towards their people.

Quotations from a Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to His Eminence Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, at the occasion of the International Seminar on "Poverty and Globalization: Financing for Development, including the Millennium Development Goals".

July 2004



‘Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good’

Quotations from the message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II on the celebration of World Day of Peace, 1 January 2005

Fostering peace by overcoming evil with good requires careful reflection on the common good and on its social and political implications. When the common good is promoted at every level, peace is promoted. Each person, in some way, is called to work for the common good, constantly looking out for the good of others as if it were his own. This responsibility belongs in a particular way to political authorities at every level, since they are called to create that sum of social conditions which permit and foster in human beings the integral development of their person. (No. 5)

The principle of the universal destination of goods can also make possible a more effective approach to the challenge of poverty, particularly when we consider the extreme poverty in which millions of people are still living. The international community, at the beginning of the new Millennium, set the priority of halving their number by the year 2015. The Church supports and encourages this commitment and invites all who believe in Christ to show, practically and in every sector, a preferential love for the poor. (No. 8)

At the end of the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, I spoke of the urgent need for a new creativity in charity, in order to spread the Gospel of hope in the world. This need is clearly seen when we consider the many difficult problems standing in the way of development in Africa. There is a need to create new forms of solidarity, at bilateral and multilateral levels, through a more decisive commitment on the part of all, with complete conviction that the well-being of the peoples of Africa is an indispensable condition for the attainment of the universal common good.

Once again I wish to state that failure to honour the repeated promises of Public Aid for Development, the still unresolved question of the heavy foreign debt of African countries and the failure to give those countries special consideration in international commercial relations, represent grave obstacles to peace which urgently need to be addressed and resolved. Today more than ever, a decisive condition for bringing peace to the world is an acknowledgement of the interdependence between wealthy and poor countries, such that ‘development either becomes shared in common by every part of the world or it undergoes a process of regression even in zones marked by constant progress’ (Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, No. 17). (No. 10)

No man or woman of good will can renounce the struggle to overcome evil with good. This fight can be fought effectively only with the weapons of love. When good overcomes evil, love prevails and where love prevails, there peace prevails. (No. 12)

**Sayed Nadeem Kazmi,
Main Representative to the
Economic and Social Council
of the United Nations on
behalf of Al-Khoei
Foundation**

Al-Khoei Foundation, in its capacity as a leading Islamic institute, hereby declares its support towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and emphasises the following:

That poverty is an affront to human dignity and it is a moral obligation on the part of those who believe in religion to actively combat it. The eradication of poverty is not only a fundamental ethical and moral obligation of humanity, and in particular governments, but is a spiritual and religious duty.

That achieving universal primary education is an absolute imperative, particular in areas where access to education is difficult or non-existent for cultural or other reasons. Islam lays great emphasis on education as a right of all people of all ages.

That promoting and safeguarding women's rights, including the rights of the girl child, is an obligation on all Muslims.

That governments have a responsibility to proactively reduce child mortality, especially in the Least Developed Countries of the world.

The international community should support the efforts of LDCs in reducing child mortality through a proactive partnership between NGOs and governments, particularly educationalists and health care specialists. This includes the issue of improving maternal health.

Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, which are particularly prevalent in certain poorer parts of the world, is a priority. We support greater education among certain communities, as well as greater investment in research and raising awareness.

Environmental protection is an absolute obligation. In Islam, the world is a gift to humankind held by human beings on trust. It must be cared for and protected through responsible ethical and moral legislative measures.

As a representative Muslim organization, we take this opportunity to call upon Muslims in particular to take action in support of the Millennium Development Goals. We reiterate our concerns regarding violations of women's human rights. Physical, verbal, sexual and psychological abuse is forbidden in Islam and Al-Khoei Foundation strongly condemns all forms of domestic violence and threats. In this context, we remain concerned at the prevalence of certain acts that are wrongly justified on spurious religious grounds.

Women and children remain particularly vulnerable as refugees and displaced persons, both in the context of conflict and migration (forced or otherwise). In refugee camps, the question of sanitation, the right to privacy and to dignity of the individual is paramount. We urge the relevant agencies and governments to prioritise their efforts in addressing these concerns.

We continue to emphasise the importance and relevance of interfaith and intrafaith dialogue in the context of the MDGs.

**'In Islam, the world is
a gift to humankind'**

'Religion and spirituality are motivating factors'

His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, International Association for Human Values

According to the ancient Hindu tradition, the whole world is One Family. All living beings should assume their responsibility. This is called purushartha. From the age of eight years, responsibility falls upon a child: to act responsible towards his parents and teachers and to focus on learning till the age of 25. After the age of 25, there is family responsibility and the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. From 50 onwards, he gives back to society all that he has earned and learned. The last 25 years of his life are dedicated to leading a monastic life, to be centred and to focus on contemplation, meditation, counselling and service.

God lives in every particle of creation and He is in the form of light, love and wisdom. Another unique concept in Hinduism is that everything is spherical such as Time, Space and Truth. Hence they are multi-dimensional also. Over the centuries, this concept has developed enormous tolerance and an ability to look from the other's point of view. These, along with other principles of Hinduism, induct into one's life the value of charity.

Hindu knowledge is so environment friendly. It advocates that for the cutting of every tree, there is a religious compulsion to plant five more trees. Even today, in Indian villages, we first ask permission from a tree before we cut it and promise to plant five more of the same species. This eroding tradition needs to be re-established. Cremation which is a common practice among Hindus is truly a blessing in a country like India that has such a high population density. In ancient religions, including Hinduism, women have enjoyed equal status. Perhaps that explains why Asia in

general and India in particular has had women leaders throughout most of its independent years.

Still, there is great reverence for spiritual leaders in rural India.

Religion and spirituality are motivating factors. One also finds spirituality a great tool in combating corruption. Inside every culprit there is a victim crying for help. Compassion is the key to bring people who have strayed away from the righteous path. Lack of spirituality leads to depression and suicidal tendencies on the one hand and violence and aggression on the other hand.

I call upon all the spiritual leaders of the world to be proactive in combating social disparity with care and compassion. We often find people who fight for justice are rude, angry and tense and indulge in brickbats and blames. They need to fight for justice with peace and tranquillity, care and compassion, serenity and solidarity. The message of the Gita is: "Be established in Yoga (equanimity) and do your actions skillfully."

Meeting with the Buddha

Tin Moe, Birma 2000

Not for anything in particular
even me the very Buddha
along with other antiques
they've put up for sale
here in Europe,
they have such a sharp eye for business
what business brings you here?
asks the Buddha

You may not know it
but if you were in Burma
you would surely receive
all kinds of veneration,
but
telling only untruths and preaching only falsehoods
Your Holiness would exclaim "Buddha!"
and long to flee
Telling untruths
you tire yourself out
on the rounds of births
A scandal to the whole world
the generals delivering all kinds of orders
engaging in all kinds of impropriety
what if they bind you hand and foot
and put you under lock and key?

These hare-brained guys
don't know the truth
they don't keep promises
all kinds of lies
come out of their foul mouths
they have no respect for the nation
with their childish mentality
they're too dirty

An army exists to oppress the people
who flatter them
they ask them to sharpen the swords
it's a haven for thugs
the king of the master gangsters
Bo Ne Win's army
only knows how to shoot and cheat

The people are paupers now
the monks are beggars now
The scoundrels are monsters
weapons matter most
weapons are paramount
weapons reign supreme that's militarism

For you
to sit in peace
here in a European supermarket
is much safer
far from all the mishaps
fame growing a million-fold
and the name Buddha bandied about
don't feel uncomfortable

With all the crimes of the Burmese military
the Buddha will never leave prison
will always be in trouble
then you'll really be uncomfortable.
Don't think such an ignoramus as me
was lecturing you
I've come to think like this
because so many lay disciples in my country
have been victimized
excuse me,
Venerable Sir!

Translated by Anna J. Allott

Judge Hamoud Abdulhamid Al-Hitar The position of Islam concerning poverty

In addressing the problem of poverty
and relieving the sufferings of the poor,
Islam starts from the principle of
disregarding the religion, gender, origin,
homeland and political or social position
of those involved. According to the
words of God the Supreme: "We have
honored the sons of Adam; provided
them with transport on land and sea;
given them for sustenance things good
and pure; and conferred on them special
favors, above a great part of Our
Creation."
*(Surat al-Isra' verse 70, and cf Surat al-
Baqara verse 177 & Surat al-Nisa'
verse 39).*

Islam treated the problem of poverty by
various means such as:
Work is considered the foundation of
the Islamic economy and Islam urges on
effort and work in various ways.
Surat al-A'raf verse 10.

Inheritance is a form of financial
legislation with economic and
psychological purposes that helps to
reinforce family ties. Succession law
helps to achieve a well-balanced
economic division and to distribute the
wealth owned by an individual over a
group of individuals.
The Nafaqat (costs of living) are the
necessary provisions taken from
someone's property in order to support
someone else. It consists of feeding,
clothing, sheltering, medical treatment
and rendering services especially of poor
relatives.
The Zakat (alms tax) is imposed on cash
property, commercial goods, livestock,
crops and fruit. Paying the Zakat is not a
good deed or an act of kindness, but a
social duty and the Islamic state is in
charge of its collection and distribution.
(cf Surat al-Touba verse 60).
The Sadaqat (alms) are extra financial
duties. It is left to man's faith and good
and generous personality to give the
Sadaqat without being asked to.
(cf Surat al-Muzammil verse 20)
The Waqf (religious endowment)
involves setting apart property and

giving alms to the poor and the relatives
from its profit and its yield.
The Kaffarat (expiatory gifts) are
religious punishments granting the
remission of certain sins.
(cf Surat al-Ma'ida verse 89).
The Nadhr (votive offering) is the self-
imposed commitment of a legally
capable person to pay money, perform
an action or to give up something.
The will is the right to assign part of
one's property to someone else after
one's death.
Meals and slaughter animals including
the animals slaughtered during the
pilgrimage ceremonies part of which
goes to the poor.
The donation as an act of contribution.
The duty to the neighbor. In the Islamic
literature the neighbor is granted what
is due to him even when he is not a
Muslim.
Financial security (from the state). Islam
made the imam (the ruler) or what
applies to this in our time (the state or
the government) responsible for the
financial security of people in general
and the people in need specifically.
(cf Surat al-Nisa' verse 58).

Financial security from family and
relatives
Financial security from society.
This general financial security from the
members of society is for the poor and
needy.
(cf Surat al-Isra' verse 26).

These texts indicate that Islam provided
several measures to address the disease
of poverty and showed various solutions
to the problem of need and deprivation.
The Muslim community has to arrange
opportunities for anyone who is able to
work. For a man who is not neglectful in
performing his duty or whose strength
prevents him from doing any work,
the Muslim community should provide a
generous livelihood.
God Almighty said truthfully:
"The Believers, men and women, are
protectors, one of another".
(Surat al-Touba verse 71).

*Judge Hamoud Abdulhamid Al-Hitar
Chairman of the Theological Dialogue
Committee in Yemen,
President of the Yemeni Court of Appeal
of the Governorates of San'a and Al-Jawf*

**His Eminence
Dr. Rowan Williams
Archbishop of
Canterbury**

vision of some in the political world and beyond, the will to take this forward seems to be in short supply. Some developed nations appear deeply indifferent to the goals agreed. It is all too easy to be more interested in other matters – not least the profound anxieties about security that are at the moment so pervasive, massaged by various forces in our public life in the West.

No-one could or would deny that we face exceptional levels of insecurity and serious problems in relation to an

wide-ranging television series in the autumn, 'The Power of Nightmare': 'When a society believes in nothing, the only agenda is fear'. We struggle for a secure world; so we should.

But what if our only passion is to be protected, and we lose sight of what we positively and concretely want for ourselves and one another, what we want for the human family? We are not going to be living in the truth if we have no passion for the liberty of God's children, no share in the generosity of God.

'We struggle for a secure world'

unpredictable and widely diffused network of agencies whose goals are slaughter and disruption. It is not a mistake to be concerned about terror; we have seen enough this last year, in Iraq and Ossetia, of the nauseating and conscienceless brutality that is around. But some of you may remember words used at the end of that worrying and

So as we go into this next year in which our country can do so much to advance the vision of the Millennium Goals, the year too in which we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Live Aid, why not make this our central priority as churches and as individual Christians? It is a time to ask ourselves whether we are really living in the

truth, motivated by the engine of the universe that is revealed to us in the child of Bethlehem. It may mean risk, it will mean facing the prospect that the prosperity of the developed world can't go on expanding indefinitely; it may mean that we have to look at our security far more in terms of how we make each other safe by guaranteeing justice and liberty for each other.

But we shall have recovered a passion, a generous anger about the world's needs that is our surest long term answer to issues of security because it looks to a situation in which all are free to give and receive.'

*Quotation from the Christmas Sermon
25 December 2004*

'...as a protagonist in his or her own development...'

**Ms. Bani Dugal, Principal
Representative of the
Baha'i International
Community to the United
Nations**

In light of the collective challenges facing

humanity, the Bahá'í International

Community welcomes the efforts of the

United Nations to set forth a vision and goals

for global development, as articulated in the

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

which seek to focus the work of the

organization with the aim of restoring justice

and dignity to every human life.

The Baha'i Community's commitment to human development is rooted in its sacred scriptures, which state that all human beings "have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization."

As the experience of recent decades has demonstrated, material benefits and endeavors cannot be regarded as ends in themselves.

Their value consists not only in providing for humanity's basic needs in housing, food, health care, and the like, but in extending the reach of human capabilities. Equally important are aims to foster universal participation in the development processes, the development of individual capabilities to contribute to these processes, and the application of moral and intellectual resources from the fields of science and religion – two knowledge systems that have propelled our progress over the centuries. Ultimately, each individual, with the benefit of access to education, must be regarded as a protagonist in his or her own development and that of the community.

Alongside the concrete development targets set by the MDGs, it is imperative to attend to the realization of moral or spiritual principles needed for constructive development. At the heart of such principles is the understanding that human nature is essentially spiritual and that a vision of development must be responsive to this reality. These principles may include: fostering unity in diversity, equity, justice, gender equality, moral leadership, and freedom of thought.

Efforts to eradicate poverty must be accompanied by an earnest re-evaluation of global systems and processes - including governance, trade, and the private sector - that perpetuate the growing extremes of wealth and poverty.

At the heart of all collective action, therefore, is a concern for the application of spiritual principles. Not only do such principles point the way to practical solutions, but they also induce attitudes, the will, and the dynamics that facilitate implementation. Development as a learning process can best be described as one of action, reflection, and consultation - all carried out in the light of the guidance inherent in religious teachings and drawing on scientific knowledge.

H.E. Mgr. Adrian van Luyn s.d.b. Bishop of Rotterdam

In September 2000,

189 countries committed

themselves to the Millennium

Development Goals. These goals

represent a common and strong

commitment to eradicate

poverty and injustice worldwide

that are to be realised by the

year 2015.

The first formal review is to take place this year. From the initial reports, it has become clear that the international community has not kept its promises and commitments. The goals can only be met if all countries concerned immediately begin to take action.

2005 is also the year we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the closure of the Second Vatican Council which in particular gave special attention to the dignity of the human person in two conciliar documents, *Dignitatis Humanae* and *Gaudium et Spes*. I would like to draw attention to two challenges which need immediate attention and cannot be postponed.

The first challenge results from the universality of the concept of human dignity. This unique and sacred value is present in each individual without exception. All people are equal in dignity but unfortunately in reality many risk losing this dignity when faced by inhumane living conditions. Humane globalisation needs to ensure that all human persons can live a life in

‘...a major step in humanising the world’

dignity and participate fully: a globalisation of solidarity.

The second challenge results from the dignity of the human person as a whole. Each person is a unique part of the totality of creation and of the mosaic that is the human family. Each person is further related to other persons and bonded to each other as the human community (communion). Interpersonal relationships therefore cannot be expressed in material and measurable categories. It is these relationships which makes a person more humane. Further, the human being is endowed with a spirit (pneuma in biblical terms). It is through the spirit that the human person is able to humanize the world, strengthened and guided by the Holy Spirit: a globalisation of spirituality.

These two challenges underline the need for intercultural encounters and

dialogue. This presupposes the ability for self-correction based on the insight that no culture or religious tradition has an exclusive claim on ownership of the total truth. Only then we can constructively search together for the best insights and ways to take the right decisions with regard to universal basic values and to bring together our strengths to attain the common good which surpasses all cultural, religious and political interests.

In ten years the Millennium Development Goals must be attained. Attaining these is not an end in itself but a major step in humanising the world. In the same year, we will commemorate the golden jubilee of two key documents of the Second Vatican Council: *Dignitatis Humanae* and *Gaudium et Spes*.

Together we are responsible for a globalisation of solidarity and spirituality.

Values Matter

Archpriest Basil Kobakhidze, Georgian Orthodox Church

Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili, Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia

We represent a country and a region where we clearly see enormous significance for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. All eight goals are equally significant in our land. Without sound values there is no way to reach the MDGs. We need these goals to be implemented both in the state and churches.

Unfortunately there are a lot of countries and regions like ours on the earth. In accordance of the Gospel of Christ every single follower of the Lord should be concerned about the above issues and actively involved in the

implementation. In our faith the solution of these burning issues depend on the mentality and values of every individual and the society at large. Therefore we propagate in our churches that liberal democratic values are deeply rooted in Christian Gospel and Christian humanism. The contemporary definition of the individual can trace its origin back to the fifth-century church fathers St. Basil and St. Gregory. Therefore we as Christians who are called to be the salt of the earth by Jesus Christ should raise our voices in order to confirm the twofold value of the of every single individual which is social and religious both being of the supreme importance.

Values of dominating powers make society indifferent towards the poor and destitute.

Mediaeval mentality and wrong nationalistic traditionalism considers women as inferior creatures and

facilitates utilitarian approach towards them. Pseudo-religious mindset sidelines people in the name of the religion people affected by HIV/AIDS and other diseases. In the name of God it condemns global partnership which is the only way to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Weakening of moral values and rapid growth of consumerism in our region causes ruthless attitude towards the environment. The earth is the Lord's and entire world is our homeland. Therefore we as Christians are personally concerned about the suffering of every single individual in any regions of the world.

There is a prejudice that for certain cultures like Islam liberal democratic values are not compatible or even needed, as if human rights questions have to be imposed on them. We as Christians can boldly witness to deep aspiration of thousands and thousands of Muslim men and women in the

former Soviet Union countries towards the freedom and dignity. For the time being there is an enormous temptation in the political and church leadership in the Caucasus and in the former Soviet Union countries to use religious fundamentalism and wrong nationalism as a vehicle for sacralisation and expansion of their power. This is an attempt to go back to the tsarist empire and put considerable obstacles for implementation of Millennium Development Goals.

We think the main responsibility of every Christian in this region is to support religious freedom and uphold complete confessional neutrality by the state institutions and civil servants. The wounds of the people of the world can be healed by the practical implementation of the Goals. We think these Goals are in full harmony with the core message of the Gospel.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Hamid Bin Ahmad Al-Rifaie, Co-Sec. Gen. of World Muslim Congress and President of International Islamic Forum for Dialogue

world, and we have to recognize our huge responsibility toward the general deterioration in values and ethics from which most of the human communities are suffering, to know the reasons of dangerous deterioration of security which threatens life, human dignity and the world stability just as it threatens the environment. In front of our religious duty we must work together to correct and guide the temporary civilization march to become a march of justice, peace, stability, orthodox development and safe co-existence among human communities.

How can we achieve this noble and stately goal? Undoubtedly it is a difficult and complicated question! But it is an inevitable one and it is our duty to deal with it because the Almighty has commanded us to build the life on Earth and to bring justice, peace and prosperity to all people. Actually, we have answered this question through our commitment in 2000: "Whereas the United Nation and the religions of the world have a common concern for human justice and peace". Also, we affirmed that the true culture of peace

must be founded upon the cultivation of the inner dimension of peace and that the religious and spiritual values must be the core source of the realization of a better life for the human family and all life on Earth, as it has been mentioned by the tenth and eleventh paragraphs of the preamble of the commitment.

On behalf of the World Muslim Congress and the International Islamic Forum for Dialogue which co-ordinates more than one hundred international Islamic organizations throughout the world, I would like to affirm our co-operation with the UN and to appeal all GOs and NGOs on the regional and international levels to work seriously and sincerely to put an end to the reasons of defective security and civilizational and ethical deterioration. Furthermore, we will work together to bring about justice, security, peace and the world stability as they are urgently requested to achieve an orthodox sustainable development and bring prosperity and safe co-existence to the international communities through dialogue to build a deep-rooted

culture for peace and development founded on:

- Respect of the human family and its benefits
- Affirmation of the holiness of justice
- Respect of human life and dignity
- Respect of freedom of faith and worship
- Respect of religious and cultural diversity and particularities
- Respect of human rights
- Affirmation of the sanctity of the environment
- Respect of the right of possession and the mutual usufruct
- Emphasis that man and woman are equal in life responsibilities
- Assuring that injustice is the source of corruption on Earth
- Fighting terrorism and double standards of justice
- Fighting weapons of mass destruction
- Respect of right to self-defense and self-determination
- Fighting on all kind of discrimination.

Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, General Secretary Lutheran World Federation

Neighbour Love and the Millennium Development Goals

In the Lutheran understanding, Christian freedom is expressed in relation to others – as a freedom to serve one's neighbour in love, whoever he or she may be. In the era of globalization, the effective scope of this freedom – and the effective responsibility of neighbour love – has become immeasurably wider. But the indwelling presence of God is a subversive power, which subverts distance, time, language, ethnicity, nationalism, politics and all other barriers to the expression of love for one's neighbour. In the global village, all 6 billion villagers are my neighbours.

Many of my neighbours are suffering. Many of them live in extreme poverty, and must experience hunger every day. Many of them cannot send their children to school. Many of the women and girls of this village continue to be treated with less respect and to be given fewer opportunities than the men and boys. Far too many children die from treatable diseases and malnutrition, and the health needs of pregnant women and mothers are far too often ignored. Our village is still being decimated by HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases, and not enough is being done to stop their spread or to care for villagers living with HIV/AIDS and children orphaned by the pandemic. And around the village, the natural environment on which our children and grandchildren must depend is being exploited and degraded without thought for the future. And yet the resources and knowledge exist in our village to address all of these problems and to

assuage the suffering of all its inhabitants. The Millennium Development Goals are not just about mass statistics. They are about the lives of our neighbours, the futures of our children, and the survival of our global village as a functioning community. They are about a concrete response to suffering, and a practical expression of neighbour love today.

Luther lived at a time of economic transformation, high prices, growing disparity of wealth and increasing poverty, especially for the economically and politically vulnerable. In this context, the principle of neighbour love meant, for Luther, denouncing exploitative conditions and promoting economic practices that served the common good, especially the good of the poor. In the midst of the world's injustice, Luther saw each Christian as having been freed by baptism, and by baptism crowned to service to Christ

and to one's neighbour. In the context of our global village, this vision could qualify as the ideal model of globalization, in which freedom and service combine.

The Millennium Development Goals represent stepping stones towards that vision. I pray that all people of faith and of good will may join together in the journey on which they lead us.

*Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko
General Secretary,
The Lutheran World Federation
and Convenor, Inter-Faith Action for
Peace in Africa*

‘and the survival of our global village...’

‘...living below the poverty line has increased...’

**His Eminence
Metropolitan Jonah
Lwanga, Uganda
Orthodox Church**

Since the adoption of the Millennium Development Declaration in September 2000, different countries have reached different stages of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore, for proper attainment of these goals by 2015 it requires concerted efforts on the part of both developing and developed countries.

In order to have a just world, there is need to build faith in people so that unethical conducts are minimised. That is why the Orthodox Church is in line with fighting corruption, which engulfs all the strategic Millennium Development Goals. Poverty eradication is important because poor people are highly vulnerable to demands for bribes and where corruption impacts on the quality of social services, it is the poor who are most affected.

Fundamental needs such as transparency, good governance,

and security are basic elements for sustainable development and personal freedom.

For good attainment of these Millennium Development Goals, there is need for a socio-economic and political environment, in assisting the Government to implement Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which is the basic national development policy framework, and even public attitudes, which may hinder its attainment.

Uganda as a country has an obligation to put these millennium conventions into effect and to raise awareness about the obligations and benefits arising from them. The need for capacity augmentation to provide the skills and other capacities required to fulfill these obligations.

The proportion of Ugandans living below the poverty line has increased

from 34% to 38% between 2000 and 2003. This decline follows a period of sustained progress since 1992 when up to 56% of the population lived below the poverty line and it is accompanied by a rapid increase in inequality. The population continues to rise at a very fast rate of 3.4% and this has major implications for the distribution of resources in future. Primary education enrolment increased to 86%.

An emerging issue in the education area is the very significant drop-out rates that are being experienced. Despite increased health provision and increased usage of services the overall health status is showing little improvement. Insecurity in Northern Uganda is a major impediment to progress with 1.6 million people displaced. Such circumstances, combined with a very fiscal situation, show that there is need for adoption and implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

Colophon



Publication **Justitia et Pax**, The Netherlands
Design and production SO creatief, The Hague
Print Bestenzet, Zoetermeer

© Justitia et Pax, 2005

Financially supported by Cordaid and NCDO.

This publication may be ordered (€ 6,50 p&p) through:

Justitia et Pax t +31 70 3136 800
P.O. Box 16334 f +31 70 3136 801
2500 BH The Hague e mdg@justitiaetpax.nl
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'Moving Space' by Toyin Loye



Act now for the Millennium Development Goals.

appeals from religious leaders and scholars