

Hilversum, July 1, 2005

Your Excellency,

I would like to draw your attention to the attached 'Edinburgh Declaration', which was agreed this June at the "G8 International Parliamentarians' Conference on Development in Africa 2005'.

This Declaration, prepared by parliamentarians from G8, European and African countries, calls on the leaders of the world's wealthiest nations to take concerted action to tackle the development needs of Africa at the imminent G8 meetings.

The Edinburgh Declaration addresses the structural issues of quality and quantity of aid, strengthening the capacity of Africa to benefit from the international trading system, and the expansion of debt relief. We are especially pleased though with the focus on:

- placing women's rights at the heart of development policy
- addressing the specific health burden of African countries, particularly HIV/Aids
- strengthening partnership with African-led initiatives

and all recommendations on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The undersigned NGOs from the Dutch MDG Platform "Make Poverty History" endorse the Edinburgh Declaration and urge you to make it known to your countries' governmental delegation to the G8 meeting 6-7 July, Gleneagles.

Gender equality, health, human rights and participation are currently overshadowed in international politics on development by the issues of security and finance. However, the Millennium Development Goals can only be achieved when the links between all these different areas are made, and all these issues are addressed. Participants and speakers emphasized this at the General Assembly Civil Society Hearings on the MDGs in New York on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of June.

We would therefore be grateful if you, as representative of your country, would bring this declaration to the attention of your Head of State and governmental delegation to the G8.

Yours sincerely,

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Sylvia Borren, General Director, Novib/OXFAM Netherlands

Ad Bijma, Director, COS Nederland

Dirk Elsen, Chairman of the Board of Directors, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation

Rene Grotenhuis, Executive Director, Cordaid

Peter Hermes, Director, Netherlands institute for Southern Africa

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