



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AS ECONOMIC CRISIS THREATENS TO REDUCE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE BY AT LEAST \$4.5 BILLION AND PUSH MORE THAN 50 MILLION MORE PEOPLE INTO POVERTY, UN MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN URGES WORLD LEADERS TO PRIORITIZE SOLUTIONS FOR THE POOR AT G-20 MEETING

Millennium Campaign cautions that while additional resources are urgently needed to help the world's poor survive the economic crisis, they must be free of harmful conditionalities that increase indebtedness and put at risk the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

March 24, 2009 -- Amidst a global economic crisis that threatens to reduce development assistance by at least \$4.5 billion as a result of contractions in Gross National Income, force more than 50 million more people to live in poverty and set back the fight against poverty by up to three years, the United Nations Millennium Campaign is urging G-20 leaders gathering in London on April 2 to commit to measures to "bail out" the world's poor, without harmful conditionalities and without increasing indebtedness.

"The global economic crisis threatens the very livelihoods of the 1.4 billion people around the world who are living in extreme poverty and will be hardest hit of all if G-20 leaders do not address their problems on April 2," said Salil Shetty, Director of the UN Millennium Campaign. "Already, more than 130 million people were pushed into extreme poverty as the result of soaring food and fuel prices in 2008. This is particularly cruel and unjust given that the crisis is of the rich world's making. G-20 leaders must stick to their commitments to meet the Millennium Development Goals and marshal resources which do not exacerbate poor countries' crises. Rich countries must keep their commitments to allocate 0.7 percent of Gross National Income to aid, ensure the participation of the world's poorest in international decision making, and reject protectionist measures."

To address the global emergency, the Millennium Campaign is calling on G-20 leaders to do the following:

1. Provide additional resources to help poor countries handle the crisis, but not let these solutions become part of the problem. This means that conditions which stifle poor countries' growth or increase their indebtedness must not be attached to these resources.

2. Ensure that re-structured international financial institutions are representative of the world's poor. Poor countries must have a greater voice and representation in international financial institutions in order to ensure greater equity.
3. Not use the economic crisis manufactured in rich countries as an excuse to renege on their aid commitments to poor countries, which are already bearing the brunt of the financial crisis. OECD member countries of the G-20 must re-affirm their previous commitments to allocate 0.7% of their gross national income for development assistance and establish transparent, time-bound calendars for the disbursement of these funds.
4. Honor their pledges for a moratorium on protectionism made at the G-20 summit held in Washington on November 15, 2008 and develop structures for effective monitoring and supervision to prevent further protectionism.

[Click here](#) to read the Campaign's policy demands in greater detail.

To arrange interviews with spokespeople across Africa, Asia, Europe and North America, contact:

Kara Alaimo
(+1) 212-906-6399
Kara.Alaimo@undp.org

Note to editors:

The UN Millennium Campaign was established by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in 2002. The Campaign supports citizens' efforts to hold their governments to account for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Millennium Development Goals were adopted by 189 world leaders from the north and south, as part of the Millennium Declaration which was signed in 2000. These leaders agreed to achieve the Goals by 2015. Our premise is simple: we are the first generation that can end poverty and we refuse to miss this opportunity. For more information, visit www.endpoverty2015.org.