



Together for Equality

THE MONTEVIDEO DECLARATION

May 5, 2007

Two and a half years after we came together at Porto Alegre (Brazil) to launch the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) at the World Social Forum, we - civil society activists from across the world representing over 80 national coalitions and major global trade unions, faith based organizations, national and international NGOs, human rights organizations, youth groups and women's organizations - have gathered here in Montevideo (Uruguay) to reaffirm our commitment to this global call against poverty and inequality.

Since we met in Beirut in March 2006, GCAP has deepened and expanded its presence globally to become a significant voice against poverty and inequality in both the North and the South. In 2006 alone, we have mobilised over 24 million people across the world to act against poverty.

However, governments and international institutions have continued to renege on their promise to eradicate poverty. Human rights violations have sharply increased and space for citizens' action has further reduced. Conflict and militarization has increased insecurity at all levels and taken valuable resources away from fighting poverty to fighting wars. The feminization of poverty has deepened. Commitments made on improving governance and increasing accountability to people living in poverty by Southern Governments often remain empty promises. G8 and EU countries are backsliding on their 2005 commitments to increase aid volumes and too many countries have failed to improve the quality of aid.

A large number of developing countries continue to suffer from severe debt burden and capital flight. The Doha trade negotiations are deadlocked and anti-poor trade deals are being forced through in the form of Economic Partnership Agreements and other Free Trade Agreements. Performance on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is inexcusably slow. Inequality between and within countries has worsened creating serious social tensions. Consequently, extreme poverty and the lack of access to quality basic services continue to be the daily reality for over half the world's population. In addition, the growing power and influence of corporations poses particular challenges and

governments must create the appropriate regulatory frameworks that ensure companies become accountable to the people.

In light of the above, we today solemnly resolve that GCAP will continue to grow as a global force against poverty and inequality until 2015. We

will not rest until we defeat the underlying and structural causes that impoverish and exclude large sections of the population including women, children, youth, indigenous peoples, minorities, workers, dalits, persons with different abilities, people living with HIV & AIDS, people affected by conflict, occupation and disaster, and people of different sexual orientations – amongst others. We will not stop until we put an end to the gross abuse of human rights and undemocratic practises of governments and global governance structures.

Purpose

GCAP fights the structural determinants and causes of poverty and challenges the institutions and processes that perpetuate poverty and inequality across the world. We work for the defense and promotion of human rights, gender equality and social justice.

We are committed to democratizing the values, mechanisms and processes of negotiation and decision making in the interest of the poorest and marginalized people, and to ensuring that equity, human security and inclusion are the core principles around which global, regional and local governance is organized.

Actions

We affirm that our actions are organized around the rights of people who face poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion including women, children, youth, indigenous peoples, minorities, workers, dalits, persons with different abilities, people living with HIV & AIDS, people affected by conflict, occupation and disaster, people of different sexual orientations – amongst others.

We recognize mobilization as a strategic process of organizing the political participation of the marginalized and creating widespread support to defend and promote their entitlements. Mass mobilization, advocacy and global solidarity are our key strategies.

In our collective struggle for social and economic justice, we will be guided by this Montevideo Declaration for The Global Call to Action Against Poverty.

Preamble

1. At the start of the 21st century more than a billion people were trapped in a situation of abject poverty and gross inequality, 70% of them being women. We faced an AIDS and Malaria emergency, with 40 million people infected by the disease. 104 million children were denied access to school,

and 860 million adults (70% of them women) could not read or write. 1.4 billion people did not have access to safe water. Seven years later, children and young people who make up half of the world's population continue to suffer from the lack of inclusion and provision of basic services and youth employment. Millions of people are unemployed, working in precarious jobs with deteriorating conditions of labour without a secure income to sustain their families. Hunger is a daily reality for many. In parts of the world, the death of mothers in childbirth and infant children are routine - deaths that could be prevented by the availability of simple healthcare. We draw inspiration from their persistent daily struggles to realise their rights to livelihoods, resources, assets and basic services. Today the world has enough resources, knowledge and technologies to eradicate poverty.

2. This poverty is a violation of human rights on a massive scale. Poverty continues to intensify due to the exclusion of groups of people on the basis of class, caste, gender, disability, age, race and religion or other status, increasing militarism, environmental degradation and the lack of democratic governance and processes.
3. Armed conflicts, wars, occupation and their consequences destroy livelihoods, undermine democratic process, human rights including the right to self determination - and divert resources that should be directed to development and social equity. Investing in human security best prevents conflict and builds peace. The protection of people is a universal obligation of all states and the international democratic institutions. Growing militarism and rearmament reduces political space and public accountability of states, diverts development financing and ultimately, renders lasting peace elusive and unrealisable. War and conflict disproportionately affects the security, dignity, and future of women and children.
4. Overcoming poverty will not be possible without challenging patriarchy, capitalism and the current model of development, which puts profits before public goods, human security and welfare. A more equitable distribution of land and other resources is necessary to overcome poverty, especially rural poverty.
5. The lives and livelihoods of millions are being steadily destroyed by denying them rights over land, water, forest, natural resources and energy. Climate Change is exacerbating this. Floods, droughts, famine and conflicts resulting from climate change also threaten the development goals for billions of the world's poorest people. Action by the international community and national governments is required to address climate change and its impacts in particular on people living in poverty.

6. States are obliged to protect, respect and fulfil all human rights including economic, social, cultural, civil, environmental, sexual and reproductive rights. International Human Rights instruments protect the rights of all people to an adequate standard of living and well-being, including the right to food and food sovereignty, clothing, housing, clean water and health care. Unjust governance, debt and aid conditionality and trade rules and practices are undermining these rights.
7. To date the pledges to meet the Millennium Declaration and efforts to tackle poverty, inequality, injustice and deliver sustainable development have been grossly inadequate. Governments too often fail to address the needs of the people within their territory, aid from rich countries is inadequate in both quality and quantity, and promises of debt cancellation have not materialized. Rich countries have yet to act on their repeated pledges to tackle unfair trade rules and practices. We have the means to turn this situation around. It is high time governments took action.
8. Galvanised by this imperative, a group of civil society actors including NGOs, international networks, social movements, trade unions, women's organisations, faith based groups and other civil society actors met in Johannesburg in September 2004. They launched the Global Call to Action Against Poverty in 2005 as the year when governments could take decisive action to deliver on their promises of the Millennium and make poverty history.
9. Over 2005, we contributed to some of the successes against our policy demands namely:
 - European commitments to increase ODA to 0.56% by 2010 and 0.7% by 2015;
 - Renewal of G8 pledges to double aid;
 - Agreement to cancel the debts of 18 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries and Nigeria;
 - A commitment by the G8 that they will no longer force Poor Countries to liberalise
10. We recognise that this political will has been generated by tremendous global mass action and public opinion change on poverty. We therefore renew our call to action.
11. The Global Call to Action against Poverty and Inequality embraces a growing number of civil society actors and people in both the South and North. Any civil society organization willing to support the values, core message and joint action is invited to participate. This is not based on membership.

12. The last few years have seen great global fragmentation and division. People all over the world feel less secure and less safe than ever. We believe that the world can unite again in solidarity against poverty. We have agreed to undertake joint action and mobilization at key times in 2006 and 2007. We plan to link our actions symbolically by the wearing of a white band.
13. We call on governments to act against poverty immediately and decisively. We reject the minimalist poverty line defined in terms of subsistence on \$1 per day and work towards a new poverty line essential for life with dignity. We call on civil society to pressurise governments and mobilize the political will needed to achieve our goals. We call on people to wear a white band to express their support for the global call. We invite organisations to actively participate, co-operate with each other and coordinate their activities, particularly at national level to promote participation, mobilisation and people centred advocacy. National activities will be home grown.
14. GCAP is a wide, diverse and inclusive coalition working against poverty and inequality. Various members of GCAP will connect to particular issues with their own constituencies. Members of GCAP respect each others' choices in this.

Public Policy Change Objectives

15. There is great diversity among our group, but we know that we will be more effective when we work together. We do not endeavour to reach absolute agreement on detailed policy, but we want to pressure governments to eradicate poverty, dramatically lessen inequality, and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

We demand:

- Public accountability, just governance and the fulfilment of human rights
- Trade justice
- A major increase in the quantity and quality of aid and financing for development
- Debt cancellation

16. We demand that gender equality and women's rights be recognized as a central issue for poverty eradication.

17. We demand that upholding the human rights of all people who face poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion be recognised as fundamental to the achievement of these goals.
18. We demand that all governments ensure the right of people living in poverty - including indigenous peoples - to natural resources and energy. We also demand that rich countries dramatically cut their greenhouse emissions and provide additional finance (beyond their 0.7 per cent aid commitments) to support developing countries in adapting to the effects of climate change. International commitment is needed to ensure that genuine action on climate change happens. This commitment should abide by the following principles: that the polluters pay for their abuse of climate and environment; that food sovereignty and the right to food is realised; that the production of bio-fuels does not displace the production of food on arable land or lead to the destruction of forests; that there is funding, and free and open access to technologies that mitigate green house emissions; and that people come before profits.
19. We further demand an end to conflict, occupation, war and the accompanying systematic violation of human rights, and that governments work towards de-militarization to ensure peace and human security. Governments causing war and producers of military equipment must be held responsible for the post conflict consequences of war, and must compensate victims of war for the injuries, ensuing health problems and loss of property.
20. While specific objectives will be determined by national priorities and contexts, the following text reflects the Montevideo policy discussion.

Public Accountability, Just Governance And The Fulfilment Of Human Rights

21. All governments must fulfil their commitments. They must be fully accountable to their peoples and transparent in the use of public resources. Governments, institutions, and civil society groups must ensure the causes of corruption are aggressively fought, including in the private sector.
22. Governments are obligated under international law to enforce human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. They must meet this responsibility by delivering economies that are equitable and work for the poorest people, delivering quality universal public services and ensuring decent work for all.

23. In the formulation of bilateral or multilateral agreements related to aid, debt or trade and investment, governments should neither impose nor accept externally driven conditions making the implementation of the rights above impossible.
24. Governments should:
- Ensure gender equality, social justice and stop all forms of violence against women and uphold women's rights including their political participation and access to resources.
 - Deliver comprehensive legal, physical, social and economic protection of children's rights, including children affected by conflict and/or disasters who must have full access to quality public services.
 - Ensure redistributive mechanisms within existing and new policies and budgets that enable equity, such as land reform, progressive taxation and poverty reduction strategies.
 - Implement policies that ensure full and productive employment with special attention to youth employment.
 - Actively involve civil society, including people living in poverty, women, children, youth, indigenous peoples, minorities, workers, dalits, persons with different abilities, people living with HIV & AIDS, people affected by conflict, occupation and disaster, people of different sexual orientations - amongst others, in the formulation, decision-making and implementation of international and national development priorities, policies and plans.
 - Enforce the right to information and support freedom of expression including media freedom and freedom of association.
 - Develop pro-active national anti-corruption strategies consistent with international conventions on anti-corruption.
 - Ensure civil society participation on the budgetary process.
 - Ensure quality, universal public services for all (health, education - including adult education, water and utilities) and stop privatisation where it causes deprivation and poverty.
 - Emphasize, in their health policies, preventive health, reproductive health and actively combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and diseases associated with poverty.
 - Ensure adequate housing.
 - Ensure young people are partners, not only targets, in development and decision-making.
 - Fully support effective peace-building and conflict prevention strategies and ensure that post conflict reconstruction programmes enshrine social and economic justice, poverty eradication and public accountability.
25. Governments must commit themselves to achieving and surpassing the MDGs and immediately develop National MDG-based Plans.

Trade Justice

26. Developing countries must have the right to determine their own trade and investment policies, putting their peoples' interests first. International trade rules and national trade policies should support sustainable livelihoods, promote the rights of women, children and indigenous people, and lead to poverty eradication. However trade rules and policies and the imposition of harmful economic policy conditionalities have become the vehicle for the indiscriminate liberalization of developing country economies undermining sustainable development, increasing poverty and inequality.
27. Therefore, we remind national governments of their international human rights obligations, and call upon them to use their influence at the World Trade Organization, the International Financial Institutions and in regional and bilateral trade agreements to:
 - Ensure developing countries are not forced to open their markets and have the flexibility to use tariffs for sustainable economic development.
 - Protect public services from enforced liberalization and privatisation.
 - Ensure a fair price for commodities, particularly for poor producers.
 - Support the right to food and equitable access to land and natural resources.
 - Secure affordable access to essential drugs.
 - Reject harmful regional and bilateral free trade agreements.
 - Immediately end subsidies that lead to the dumping of cheap produce on international markets.
 - Increase transparency and accountability to grassroots constituencies in the formulation of international trade rules and national trade policies, while ensuring consistency with respect for workers' rights and human rights more broadly.
 - Ensure developing countries have the flexibility to regulate foreign investment in the interests of their own development priorities.
 - Regulate corporations to make them accountable to people and governments for their social, environmental and development impacts.

Debt Cancellation & A Major Increase In The Quantity And Quality Of Aid And Financing For Development

28. Donor governments and international institutions must urgently provide the major increase in the quality and quantity of resources necessary for the eradication of poverty and promote social justice, the achievement of the MDGs, gender equality and guarantee the rights of children and youth. These resources must also support sustainable development, workers rights, migrants rights and interests of marginalized groups including indigenous peoples. Resources must work to rebuild, not

undermine governments and the public sector, enabling them to deliver on the rights of their citizens.

29. We call on donor governments and Institutions to:

- Meet and exceed the 0.7% aid target directed to achieving community and country defined poverty eradication and sustainable development priorities that contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development.
- Implement innovative international taxes and mechanisms for raising finance for development which is additional to 0.7% ODA-obligations.
- Implement and improve the Paris Declaration to deliver long-term, predictable, harmonised and effective aid. Aid should not be tied to contracts with companies of donor countries or linked to economic conditionalities that harm people, communities and the environment.
- Ensure gender sensitive progress assessments, performance monitoring and indicators for aid effectiveness.
- Meet international pledges on Education for All (including adult education), Polio, Malaria, TB and the universal access to HIV/ AIDS, prevention, treatment and care, including through funding of the multi-lateral Fast Track Initiative and Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- Immediately and without externally imposed conditionalities cancel the odious, illegitimate and unpayable debt of poor and middle income countries through a fair, democratic and transparent process to free up resources for human development. Where debt cancellation measures are inadequate or failing to enable poor countries to reach the MDGs and provide basic social services, we support collective developing countries strategies for the repudiation of all odious and illegitimate debts.
- Debt cancellation and grants to refugees and foreign students in donor countries should not be counted as aid. Debt cancellation should not affect a country's credit ratings adversely.
- Reverse the flight of capital from poor countries and identify and repatriate stolen assets by taking action against tax havens, financial institutions, multinationals and others facilitating this resource leakage.
- Establish a fair and just world order in which International Financial Institutions (especially WB, IMF and WTO) operate within the broad principles enshrined under UN commitments and human rights obligations to better regulate world economy.

Structure & Co-ordination

National Coalitions

30. National coalitions are the base for our action and cooperation and should play a key role in developing policy messages that reflect local contexts. National coalitions ensure that our activities are designed around the priorities and demands that are closest to the people. We recognize that

advocacy and campaigning under local and national ownership will strengthen GCAP. National coalitions will encourage and provide space for other civil society sectors, grassroots organizations and local groups – particularly women, children and youth and marginalized groups - to play larger roles in the campaign.

31. GCAP promotes the exchange of information, insights, experiences and expertise across national coalitions, thereby facilitating the regional and global linkages for mobilization and advocacy that will enable us to maximize the value of our diversity and multiply the collective impact of our actions.
32. GCAP campaigners are encouraged to support each other and national coalitions by sharing experiences, best practices, knowledge, analysis, materials and tools in a way that we mutually benefit from the complementarity of our diversity. They will include:
 - Planning packs, educational materials, translation of documents into local languages and the production of materials, including flyers, brochures and posters, among others;
 - Media relations, information and communications technologies such as an online library and forum where national coalitions and international partners can deposit and retrieve resources – such as policy briefs and awareness-raising materials – and discuss opportunities for collaboration;
 - Monitoring the progress of nations towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals;
 - Best practices and tools for holding national coalition meetings, lobbying, mobilisation, advocacy, and campaigning and monitoring and evaluating the impact of our campaigns.

Regional Mechanisms

33. National coalitions may define and develop regional objectives and mechanisms to promote joint action and strategies that will complement and support the global and national policy objectives of the campaign.
34. Regions must be left to decide the most appropriate ways of inspiring and supporting national coalitions, translating global policy platforms to regional contexts and co-ordinating any other regional functions. In deciding the above regions must be inclusive, transparent and accountable to national coalitions. Regional structures can support capacity building efforts of national coalitions. We need to encourage the participation of women's organisations and associations at the region level.

Global Co-ordination

35. Based on the consultation and discussion prior to and during the Montevideo meeting, we have formed a Future Structure Task Group, which will analyze the pros and cons of different structural options for GCAP post January 2008 and make a proposal to the IFT and the global assembly. The Group will:
- make sure that its membership has the balanced representation by region, constituencies and gender;
 - ensure that the Guiding Principles as decided at the Montevideo meeting are respected and upheld;
 - respect the results of the straw poll taken during the Montevideo meeting;
 - follow the procedure as confirmed during the Montevideo meeting;
 - seek support and guidance of the professional expertise from outside of the GCAP;
 - seek advice of the funder's group, when necessary.
36. The Group's Guiding Principles are:
- Within the agreed declarations of GCAP, the national coalitions are the base for our action and co-operation
 - National coalitions must have a genuine, broad-based constituency
 - Regional secretariats are important but their role must be clarified
 - We need a clear global structure
 - We need more transparency at all levels
 - We must have good communications between levels and at each level
 - We need more clarity about decision making
 - Gender equity and regional representation in all our structures must be paramount
 - There must be accountability at each level and between each level and to constituencies (financial and political, and in terms of process)
 - There must be more clarity in terms of roles, responsibilities & mandates
 - We must have translation into English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic – in a timely fashion
 - We must be flexible, light and able to act and react quickly

International Facilitation Team

37. During 2007, the work of the International Facilitation Team (IFT) will continue. It is to inspire and to promote co-operation and mutual support between the participating regional/national coalitions and networks. The group has this mandate until the end of the year 2007. The tasks at a global level are to:
- Facilitate outreach to encourage a wide range of organizations to become involved in GCAP in order to help widen and deepen the call.

- Facilitate the promotion of GCAP's policy demands through sharing information on lobbying opportunities.
 - Facilitate work relating to the Call to Action including preparation of materials, media work, website and other communications
 - Facilitate the international planning of the global month of action.
 - Identify spokespeople for the global call when required, with gender, youth, and regional balance.
 - Facilitate smooth and transparent flow of information across the global call including by providing regular updates to the Global Action Forum and facilitating the organisation of face to face meetings.
 - The IFT will *not* play a grant making role.
38. The IFT support team will report to the International Facilitation Team and will work with a particular focus on outreach, communications and mobilisation, and in general servicing the IFT.
39. The IFT will have appropriate proportionate representation on the basis of the number of active national coalitions in each region and population size, diversity and with a clear consideration of gender parity and a small quota for International networks and organisations playing an enabling role.
40. The IFT must be Southern/Developing Country Led and the following proportions will apply:
- Africa - 4
 - Asia and Pacific - 4
 - Latin America and Caribbean - 3
 - Europe -3 (1 from outside EU i.e. Eastern Europe)
 - North America - 2
 - Middle East - 1
 - International - 6
 - Women's Movement/Feminist Task Force 1
 - Children and Youth - 1
 - Workers' Movement - 1
 - United Nations Millennium Campaign -1 (Observer)
41. Each proportion needs to include the following minimum number of women: Africa - 2, Asia and Pacific - 2, Latin America and Caribbean - 1, Europe - 1, North America - 1, International - 3. Regional representation of children and youth in the IFT is encouraged
42. Any person on the IFT should be nominated by and fully accountable to those in their category who support the Call to Action.

43. The Global Call to Action against Poverty will work in strategic partnership with a number of other actors and these strategic partners can be invited as observers to the IFT.

Joint Mobilisation

44. We recognise that mobilisation is a process by which we continually build momentum to achieve our aims. We mobilise towards the political participation and empowerment of women, children, youth and other marginalized groups.
45. We agree that in 2007 the key mobilisation date is Global White Band Day on October 17th, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. GCAP will ensure that the voice of those living in poverty is heard in its October 17th activities.
46. GCAP recognises other key dates in 2007 including 8th March for International Women's Day, 2nd June for the G8 summit and 7th July for the midway point of the MDGs. We further encourage mobilisation on the 16th June for the Day of the African Child and the 12th August for International Youth Day. We also encourage national coalitions to mobilise around key dates in their respective regions and countries.
47. The Global White Band Day will focus on the structural causes of poverty and inequality. GCAP will demonstrate mass visible public support for the eradication of poverty and inequality by holding local, national and regional decision-making bodies as well as the International Financial Institutions, the WTO and other global institutions to account. These actions will be co-ordinated globally and will highlight the failure to deliver on trade justice, debt cancellation, more and better aid, good governance and accountability and climate change. Further, to demand gender equality and meeting and exceeding the MDGs.
48. The common slogan for all GCAP actions in 2007 is Stand Up and Speak Out followed by a political demand appropriate to national, regional and global contexts. This builds on the Stand Up action of 2006 while ensuring that we also Speak Out with strong policy demands to deepen our political impact.
49. The white band will remain our symbol and expression of solidarity against poverty. We actively encourage as many people as possible to wear and use the white band during 2007. We further encourage the use of this symbol in innovative ways on web sites and buildings and during rallies and other actions.

50. **The key actions for October 17th, 2007 include:**

- Striving to mobilise the maximum number of people to Stand Up and Speak Out
- Sending a strong political message through the GCAP ambassadors
- National GCAP coalitions and constituency groups sending delegations to target their key political decision makers

51. Further actions for October 17th, 2007 include amongst others:

- Banners Against Poverty
- Poverty Requiem
- Blowing the half-time whistle
- Rallies and other actions.

ENDS