

# G8 SUMMITS 2002 TO 2003: FROM A TRICKLE TO A DROP

## JOINT STATEMENT FROM AFRICAN NGOS AND TRADE UNIONS AS THE G8 SUMMIT COMES TO AN END IN EVIAN, FRANCE

Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2003

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The outcome of the 2003 Summit of the G8 reveals that the political will of the eight most powerful nations to meet their obligations to Africa **has simply dried up**.

2001 saw the G8 summit heavy on rhetoric, 2002 saw the release of a G8 Africa Action Plan, but the outcome of **the 2003 Summit has been stunning on its failure** to make progress on the Debt, health, trade and agriculture issues.

Quite apart from the obligations of the G8 to Africa or the meeting of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa, **the G8 has failed to match the progress reached by the African Union** over the last year.

### Aid, the Monterrey Commitments and Debt

1. **We, representatives of six of the largest continental organisations and national networks headquartered in five Africa cities, bringing together women's organisations, labour, researchers, development and advocacy NGOs across Africa**, recognise that there has been some progress on raising the US\$6 billion promised by the G8 in 2002. However, the G8 is still a long way off meeting the US\$25-35 billion required by the UN to halve poverty in Africa by 2015. Much of the new pledges announced recently including the well appreciated US\$10 billion offered by the US for Global AIDS programmes or the money to fill the HIPC finance gap are not on the table yet. It should be noted that the G8 continues to spend less than 0.3% of their gross national product on aid. In all, the **G8 Summit closes with offers of assistance in the range of less than 1% of what was spent on the war in Iraq**.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

2. In the light of the deadlock in the last Doha WTO Inter-ministerial, the G8 summit is **a lost opportunity** for progress on the right of African countries to import, produce and distribute cheap life-saving drugs such as anti-retroviral medicine for AIDS and other life threatening diseases.
3. This G8 has failed to indicate sufficient progress in raising the resources to eradicate polio, combat tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS. The amount allocated is still a far cry from the \$10billion the UN fund needs, to treat and prevent these diseases.
4. We reaffirm that the right to clean, affordable and accessible water is critical both to African growth, fighting AIDS and arresting common pandemics such as cholera etc. We are concerned that the international policy discourse on water is dislocated from the experience in Africa of privatisation schemes that leave private suppliers unable to supply water at affordable rates for the poor and more importantly, poor people without water.

## Trade and Agriculture

5. **The 2003 G8 was ultimately a disaster for African farmers** It failed to adopt even limited proposals for a moratorium on reducing European and American tariff duties and subsidies for US and European agriculture. These policies are perverse. While millions of African farmers, most women's livelihoods, are ruined by these policies, European livestock are ensured major state subsidies.
6. **We note the commitment of the G8 to refocus on support to African agriculture**, but the G8 avoided translating this commitment into a tangible amount.

## Lessons for Africa

7. One or two drops of aid out of Evian amounts to a small patch for the haemorrhaging economies of Africa. Without a change in world trade rules, the rhetoric of ensuring a fresh start for Africa will not translate into meaningful action or a new partnership for Africa. **We strongly urge Africa leaders and citizens to take forward the initiative and the primary responsibility for resolving Africa's development crises.** Key on our horizon is the need to prepare a common African position in the lead up to the WTO Inter-ministerial in Cancun, Mexico.
8. Despite the failure of Evian, the G8 continues to have outstanding obligations and commitments to Africa. For this reason, **Africa must remain on the agenda of the G8 until these obligations are fulfilled.** We shall continue to track, lobby and inform public opinion of these obligations.

## SIGNATORIES

Representatives of six of the largest continental organisations and national networks headquartered in five Africa cities, bringing together women's organisations, labour, researchers, development and advocacy NGOs across Africa, met and signed this statement.

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