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D0129-05/CB/NS

23rd June 2005

Dear Chris

Many thanks for your letter and leaflet detailing your campaign to Make Abortion History. Please find attached our response statement on the Millennium Development Goals and Make Poverty History, which clarifies that our campaign to Make Poverty History has three clear aims:

- More and better aid
- Debt cancellation
- Trade Justice

It does not in any way promote abortion and there is no hidden pro-abortion agenda behind it.

I also attach a letter from the late Pope John Paul II supporting the Millennium Development Goals at a Vatican Conference last year.

I hope this will put your mind at rest.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely



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CAFOD is the official overseas development and relief agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of the Caritas International Federation.
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Millennium Development Goals and Pro-Life Issues

As a Catholic development agency, in line with Church teaching, CAFOD does not support abortion in any form. We have always held and will continue to hold this position.

The Holy See's endorsement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) encourages us in our role as a Catholic development agency.

CAFOD has recognised that issues have been raised about the UN Millennium Development Goals and the Make Poverty History campaign in 2005. We hope this paper clarifies our opposition to abortion but also our commitment to continue to campaign against world poverty and its causes.

1. Background

The 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted by the United Nations aim to achieve the following by 2015:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

CAFOD wishes to underline a growing concensus across the political and faith divide that the MDGs are worthy of support; we are firm in our belief that they provide the basis for a *'last exit from poverty for the world's poorest nations'*. We also concur with the Holy See that implementation of the MDGs goes hand-in-hand with promoting good governance and combating corruption¹.

2. Concerns raised

CAFOD would caution against accepting conclusions that imply that the Millennium Development Goals are linked to a hidden pro-abortion agenda. The 9-page Millennium Declaration by the UN General Assembly issued on 8 September 2000:

¹ "We are convinced that the MDGs can only be achieved if poverty eradication policies are aimed squarely at the poor as persons of equal worth; if serious progress is made in good governance and combating corruption; if financial and trade reform is adequately introduced to make markets work in favour of developing countries; if the long-standing 0.7% GNP pledges are truly honoured in justice and solidarity; and if debt is cancelled in all the applicable cases." Holy See's Permanent Observer to the United Nations, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, in his presentation to the General Assembly of the UN regarding the Millennium Development Goals, 24 February 2005

<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf> makes no reference to abortion nor to “reproductive health”.

Prior to the agreement by the UN member countries on the 8 MDGs, there was a lot of debate about the issue of “reproductive health” and the question of so-called ‘safer abortion’ being included. The lobbying work of faith-based NGOs, and specific interventions of the Holy See (in its status of permanent observer at the UN) led to this original ‘target’ being removed. We saw the exclusion of this target in the final MDG document as an historic success.

We acknowledge that several ‘pro-choice’ groups condemn the decision to exclude what they consider the ‘*Missing MDG on Reproductive Health*’. Such groups continue to campaign for “reproductive health” to be included in the MDGs and more broadly will continue to lobby for a ‘pro-choice’ agenda irrespective of the MDGs. We will oppose any such moves.

3. The Make Poverty History Campaign

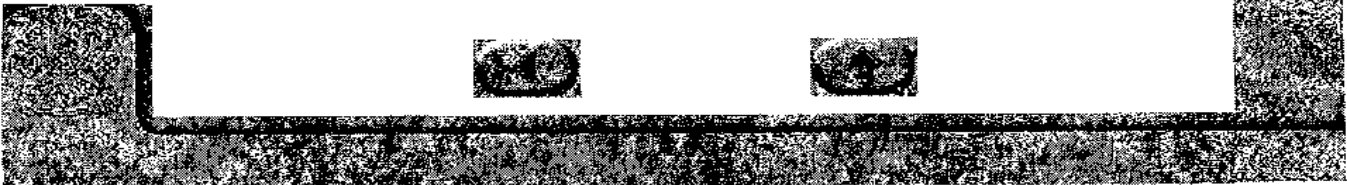
Under the Make Poverty History Coalition there are currently 450 organisations that have joined forces in the common belief that 2005 offers an unprecedented opportunity for global change. This opportunity results from the influential leadership position of the UK in 2005 – both through its Presidency of the EU in the latter half of the year and it’s hosting the G8 Summit in Scotland in July.

Make Poverty History is campaigning for change in three areas: debt cancellation; more and better aid; and lastly, trade justice. These are broad areas on which we all agree. There is no channeling of any funding through the Coalition. We would not expect to agree with all the views of all the organisations that have come together to make common cause in Make Poverty History. Whilst we may not agree with the views on “reproductive health” of a small number of groups within the Coalition we feel it is important that we remain with the Coalition to make our voice heard on behalf of the world’s poorest peoples.

4. Conclusion

CAFOD does not and has never funded any groups who have a pro-abortion agenda. In our interaction with the government Department for International Development (DFID) we have made clear our own stance in this and other areas of “reproductive health”, our views are respected and this was shown in our joint document on the original international development targets which took account of our position from within Catholic moral teaching.

22 June 2005



**MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
TO CARDINAL RENATO RAFFAELE MARTINO
PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE**

*To my Venerable Brother
Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace*

I was pleased to be informed of the international seminar on "*Poverty and Globalization: Financing for Development, including the Millennium Development Goals*", which is taking place on Friday 9 July 2004 under the auspices of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. In extending my heartfelt greetings to Your Eminence, to government representatives and to other distinguished participants present in Rome for this occasion, I should like to assure you of my prayers and encouragement for this most important work.

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.

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.

Trusting that your important discussions will bear abundant fruit, I invoke the light of the Lord upon all who are participating in this seminar and I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 5 July 2004

JOHN PAUL II