

United for Life

Raising greater awareness of human life issues

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2 July 2005

Mr Chris Bain
Director
CAFOD
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Dear Mr Bain

Thank you for your letter of 23 June 2005, in reply to United for Life's **Make Abortion History** campaign.

In our letter to you we raised concerns that the **UN's Millennium Project Report** calls for abortion to be included in the Millennium Development Goals. The Report claims that 'safe abortion' and 'abortion rights' are necessary to achieve the MDGs. According to **C-FAM's** Friday Fax for February 11, 2005, the Millennium Report will be the basis of the review of the MDGs at the **Millennium Summit + 5** to be held in New York in September 2005.

C-FAM's Friday Fax for June 24, 2005, entitled: **UN Excludes Pro-Life Groups from Important UN Meeting**, claims that pro-life groups - **most with official UN status** - were not allowed to participate in the meeting with the UN General Assembly while hundreds of UN-picked international lobby groups were allowed to attend and that the meeting 'consisted of repeated and unopposed calls for more access to abortion and homosexual rights through the Millennium Development Goals'.

In your reply to United for Life you acknowledged that 'there was a lot of debate about the issue of "reproductive health" and the question of so-called 'safe abortion' being included' in the MDGs.

United for Life is delighted that CAFOD has made the statement that CAFOD 'will oppose any such moves'. We therefore ask CAFOD how it will internationally oppose moves to include access to abortion in the MDGs made by organisations such as IPPF, UNFPA, UNICEF and Family Care International, and how it intends to lobby these and other groups? Will CAFOD rally its partner organisations to help in opposing 'any such moves'?

Many other groups attended the UN meeting calling for abortion to be included in the MDGs which also need to be lobbied by CAFOD and its partners, such as Women's Environment and Development Organisation, National Youth Network for Reproductive Rights and The European Youth Network for Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

Will CAFOD also condemn those nations which partially funded the meeting such as Canada, Finland and Norway?


I await your earliest reply.

Yours sincerely

Chris Mason
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Enc

Friday Fax

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Archived Fax

February 11, 2005
Volume 8, Number 8

UN-Commissioned Report Advocates Abortion Rights/Attacks Christian Beliefs

A commission working for the United Nations recently released a number of important reports that are unusual in their open advocacy of legalized abortion and the radical sexual rights agenda. Each report argues that advances in these areas are necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, a five year old UN initiative that is scheduled for review in September at a "Millennium Summit." However, the Millennium Development Goals do not make any mention of reproductive rights; neither does the Millennium Declaration on which they are based.

The Millennium Project Report, released last month by the Secretary General's advisory body, will be the basis of his presentation to UN Member States at the September review. The Report states that "ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health...is essential to the attainment of many" Millennium Development Goals. In UN parlance, sexual and reproductive services refer to abortion. The Report is supplemented by 13 task force reports, including a report on gender equality which states that the Millennium Development Goals require "ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services through the primary healthcare system."

The 2004 interim report by the same Task Force on Gender Equality was still more explicit, stating that to achieve this goal, "At a minimum, national public health systems must provide quality family planning, safe abortion, and emergency obstetric services."


The interim report also stated that "the Task Force opposes the political ideologies and religious fundamentalisms that have sought to erode women's reproductive rights guaranteed through numerous international conventions. According to the report, these forces have persuaded some national governments, including the U.S., to pursue three strategies: limiting or withdrawing funding from effective programs that support women's sexual and reproductive autonomy; censoring or distorting information and research on comprehensive health interventions and issues; and reneging on previous international agreements involving sexual and reproductive health and rights. These tactics threaten to choke the progress that has been made in the last ten years to improve women's reproductive health and may worsen the inferior reproductive health status of poor women around the world."

The Millennium Report has been endorsed by major UN agencies including UNICEF, whose outgoing head Carol Bellamy stated "We could not support it more strongly." The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) specifically referred to the Report's focus on "ensuring universal access to reproductive health" as "critical" to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Also at the end of January, the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) released a report detailing its strategy for upcoming UN conferences, including the Millennium Summit. The report states that "the Millennium Development Goals provide a valuable opportunity for advancing the gender equality agenda," and should be treated "as a new vehicle for CEDAW and Beijing implementation." The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are considered by prolife groups to support legalized abortion.

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Friday Fax

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June 24, 2005
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UN Excludes Pro-Life Groups from Important UN Meeting

For the last two days, hundreds of UN-picked international lobby groups have gathered in New York for discussions with the UN General Assembly about the upcoming Millennium Summit +5. Numerous pro-life, pro-family groups applied to participate, but all were rejected by a handpicked panel of the United Nations. As a result, yesterday's sessions consisted of repeated and unopposed calls for more access to abortion and homosexual rights through the Millennium Development Goals.

The UN's "informal interactive hearings" with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are the first of their kind. Ominously to pro-life groups, Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette opening remarks called them a "significant new step in the way the United Nations relates to civil society." UN bureaucrats and radical NGOs have sought for years for a way to keep pro-life groups out of UN negotiations but they have largely failed. This new approach has succeeded.

Participating NGOs for this round of negotiations were chosen by a task force under Jean Ping of Gabon, President of the General Assembly. Aside from Ping and his staff, the task force included ten lobby group representatives, including the radical feminist group Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO).

WEDO is circulating a document today at the UN which calls for the +5 Summit to "reaffirm that universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2015 and protection of reproductive rights are critical for achieving the MDGs." Another WEDO pamphlet states that "Right-wing forces everywhere invoke culture and religion to deny women's rights," and blames "cultural and religious fundamentalism" for blocking women's "reproductive health and rights." Terms such as "reproductive rights" are misused at the UN to include abortion.

C-FAM and numerous other pro-family, pro-life groups, most with official UN status, applied to participate in the hearings, but were rejected by the task force. Selected NGOs include the International Planned Parenthood Federation and other pro-abortion groups such as the National Youth Network for Reproductive Rights and Family Care International.

Thursday's sessions saw repeated calls for "universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and a full recognition and protection of reproductive rights," by participants such as the Association for Women's Rights in Development. The Europe Youth Network for Sexual & Reproductive Rights and other groups also called for greater access to abortion for young people.

Several groups also stressed the protection of rights based on "sexual orientation." The representative of MADRE, an Argentine group, stated that gays and lesbians must have their "sexual rights, gender identity and gender expression" protected. "No religion...can be excused for these violations."

The hearings were partially funded by Canada, Finland and Norway.

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