

JULY 2005: UK GOVERNMENT NEWS REPORT
JICA UK OFFICE

Sources:

- Department for International Development (DFID) website: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/>
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>
- HM Treasury website: <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/>
- 10 Downing Street website (PM's speeches): <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/>

SPEECHES

21 July 2005

Human rights, security and development – FCO Annual Report

FCO Minister Ian Pearson, at launch of the Annual Report on Human Rights 2005, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

Terrorism is the most evil way in which human rights are destroyed. But there are others too, of course - poverty, oppression, exploitation, and dictatorship. And none of these can be seen through a single prism; only by seeing how each can contribute to the other can we make progress in bolstering our efforts for those under threat at home and abroad.

Two key areas of foreign policy – development and counter-terrorism – will both only achieve their objectives if we acknowledge the central role of human rights. The United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan made the point eloquently: “we will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights”. [‘in larger freedom’ : March 2005]

The Annual Report describes what the Foreign Office has done over the last nine months:

- worked with the international community to highlight abuses and to condemn them publicly
- taken further multilateral action where necessary – the best way to achieve improvements is through multilateral dialogue
- the Foreign Office’s Global Opportunities Fund is supporting improvements in human rights on the ground - one of the priorities for the Global Opportunities Fund is promoting closer engagement with the Islamic world. This financial year we expect to spend over £14 million on projects which support human rights, good governance, democracy and the rule of law. This is almost double what we were spending only two years ago.

We rely on partners around the world in this work, including many non-governmental organisations. Promoting human rights is integral to the Government’s wider foreign policy and security agenda. It is and will continue to be part of a global strategy bonded by our commitment to play our part in creating a better world.

19 July 2005

Statement to All Party Parliamentary Group on AIDS, House of Commons

Hilary Benn

What was achieved at Gleneagles was very significant. A historic package to help Africa. Fair to say, I think, the most the G8 has ever done for Africa and poverty eradication.

The fight against AIDS has been an important part of our work for some time now. It is worth taking a close look at the Gleneagles Communique text on AIDS:

- *"With the aim of an AIDS-free generation in Africa"* - ending the 6,000 new infections every day; treating the 6 million who could already benefit from treatment.
- *"significantly reducing HIV infections and working with WHO, UNAIDS and other international bodies to develop and implement a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care"* - this builds on the UNGASS target, but, crucially, commits the G8 to further action. A comprehensive response is vital – and that must include prevention.
- *"with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010"* - this commitment moves us a long way forward. It builds on the WHO and UNAIDS

"3 by 5" initiative - to get 3 million people on treatment by 2005. And while it is now clear that we will not reach that ambitious target, this has been an incredibly successful initiative.

- *"Limited health systems capacity is a major constraint to achieving this and we will work with our partners in Africa to address this, including supporting the establishment of reliable and accountable supply chain management and reporting systems"* - we will only make progress on any of the diseases of poverty if we invest enough in the national health services of the poorest countries. Our support in Uganda helped the Government end user fees for basic services, and we are investing £100 million over 6 years in the Malawi health service. We will learn from these and other innovative approaches and take similar steps in the countries that want our help.
- *"We will also work with them to ensure that all children left orphaned or vulnerable by AIDS or other pandemics are given proper support"* - the UK will continue to push - as hard as we can - to get this right - and that is why, in early November, we will host with UNICEF, the Global Partners Forum to help build momentum around the need to provide proper support to these children.
- *"We will work to meet the financing needs for HIV/AIDS, including through the replenishment this year of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria"* - UNAIDS have estimated how much is needed to do more to fight AIDS in low and middle income countries. They think that at least \$15 billion is needed in 2006, \$18 billion in 2007, and \$22 billion in 2008. Clearly there are huge needs but this year we have made extraordinary progress in raising new money. Overall increases in aid will contribute to - at the very least - the ability of countries to fight AIDS across all fronts.
- *"and actively working with local stakeholders to implement the '3 Ones' principles in all countries"* - we don't just need to provide more money, we also need to ensure it works. The UK has led the way on the 3 Ones, and this is now firmly embedded in the response to AIDS. The Global Task Team was set up at the "Making the Money Work" meeting - that we held in London on March 9 - and has brought together all those involved, to find ways of improving coordination. At the moment four different UN agencies claim to take the lead on youth HIV prevention. Clearly that can't be right - and it doesn't help countries fight AIDS. That is where the Global Task Team is making progress - working out the best way to share efforts, and putting in place timetables to bring about real change. I applaud the excellent work UNAIDS has done on this.

Our objective is to agree ambitious targets at the September UN Millennium Review Summit: a global commitment to universal access to HIV prevention and AIDS treatment by 2010; support to all orphans and children affected by AIDS; meeting the resource needs, including for the Global Fund, and making these resources more effective through implementing the "Three Ones" principles and progressing the Global Task Team's recommendations. We recognise that the 2000 Millennium Summit did not give enough attention to sexual and reproductive health and we want the September Summit to rectify this.

- All Party Parliamentary Group on AIDS: <http://www.appg-aids.org.uk>

19 July 2005

Press conference: Tony Blair and Afghan president Hamid Karzai

Downing Street, London.

Much of the discussion focused on the recent terrorist attacks in London. Both TB and President Karzai stated that the same terrorists that attacked London are attacking Muslim clerics in Afghanistan and numerous innocent people in Afghanistan, Iraq and many other countries. Leaving aside whether it was right or wrong to attack Iraq, the terrorists are now trying to undermine the peace process there and in Afghanistan. This stems from their belief that democracy, freedom and the ability to worship as you want is somehow a 'western' value and that the 'western' world is acting in a conspiracy to suppress Islam. What the media does not seem to realise is that the terrorists do not have a place in Muslim societies either – they are working against the peaceful growth of democracy and stability there too. But progress on the parliamentary election in Afghanistan in two months time shows they will not succeed – people wish to vote and there are 6,000 candidates, including many women, even in the areas close to

the border with Pakistan that are heavily affected by terrorism. The terrorists will not stand for election because they know they will lose – they wish to undermine these processes because they know they are on the losing side.

12 July 2005

Statement at the European Parliament Development Committee

Hilary Benn in Brussels

The UK will focus on three areas during its EU Presidency: the MDGs; Africa; and HIV and AIDS:

1. **The MDGs:** The Millennium Review Summit will address the linked challenges of Development, Security, Human Rights and strengthening the UN. As Presidency we will work to ensure a significant contribution to this Summit, and to encourage the wider international community to be ambitious in fighting global poverty. In November last year, the EU agreed an EU Action Plan to improve aid effectiveness. We will also use the Commission's Annual Report and the Annual Orientation Debate to discuss aid effectiveness, and how the EC reform process is helping to improve the quality of Europe's aid. Aid is most effective, as we all know, if it supports good policies. Adopting a successor to the 2000 Development Policy Statement will be among our most important tasks during the next six months. To support this, the Community needs a Development Instrument that also focuses on poverty. The UK Presidency will do its utmost to reach an agreement between the Parliament, Council and the Commission, as part of the overall future Financial Perspective external package.
2. **Africa:** The EU has a major role to play in supporting Africa's priorities for development. We want to take forward the June European Council agreement to develop a new, comprehensive, and long-term EU plan for Africa. The Commission is due to issue a proposal in October. This should build on the UN Secretary General's In Larger Freedom report, the agreements reached at the G8 Summit, the Commission for Africa Report, and the Millennium Review Summit. We understand that it will focus on: governance and infrastructure and social cohesion and peace and security.
3. **HIV and AIDS:** This was a priority issue for the Irish, Dutch and Luxemburg Presidencies and is for the UK. The Council in May agreed a new Programme for Action on HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. We need to implement it. We will encourage the Commission and Member States to provide the necessary funding for this Programme, including through the Global Fund Replenishment Conference to be held in London in September. On the 1st of December, World AIDS Day, we will host an event on prevention, with the aim of agreeing a communiqué on doing more on HIV prevention, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, and in defining priorities for the EU.

Two other Presidency priorities also have a large impact on development:

- Free and fairer trade - only an ambitious outcome to the Doha Round in Hong Kong in December will make trade work for the poorest countries. There are important decisions to be made during the next six months on sugar, Economic Partnership Agreements and Rules of Origin, as well as on Doha Development Round.
- Climate change poses a very real threat to every country. But developing countries are particularly vulnerable, and we need help to identify the risks and to cope with its impact. That's why climate change will feature at the EU Summits with India, China, Russia and Canada and why December's meeting to discuss the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is so important. We hope to secure agreement on the EU Forestry, Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Regulation, and also the voluntary partnership agreements.

The Commission is also due to produce important proposals this month on Development and Migration and we will also take forward work that began in January in response to the tsunami.

11 July 2005

Prime Minister's statement on the G8 Gleneagles Summit

House of Commons, London

There were two major issues on the agenda for this summit - Africa and Climate Change. These subjects were chosen because they represent huge problems for the world which require concerted action by the international community.

At Gleneagles we agreed a doubling of aid for Africa by \$25 billion a year by 2010, as part of an overall increase of \$50 billion for all developing countries, which will start to flow immediately.

The G8 put particular emphasis on health and education in Africa. We agreed free primary education and basic health care for all. Specific measures agreed were:

- On HIV/AIDS, to provide as close as possible to universal access to treatment by 2010;
- On Malaria, to reach 85% of the vulnerable with bed nets and drugs in order to save 600,000 children's lives a year by 2015.
- On Polio, the UK has agreed the funding to eradicate Polio this year and the G8 has agreed to ensure that the programme is fully funded in the years ahead.

This was the most detailed and ambitious package for Africa ever agreed by the G8. But none of it can be implemented and improve the lives of African citizens without significant improvements in standards of governance, transparency and accountability. This is a partnership, not an act of charity. In the end, only Africans can lead and shape Africa. This summit of itself cannot end poverty in Africa. But it should mark a turning point.

In respect of climate change, discussion included the leaders of China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico. Four things were agreed:

1. Climate Change is indeed a problem, with human activity contributing to it.
2. It needs to be tackled with urgency.
3. In order to do that, we have to slow down, stop and reverse greenhouse gas emissions in time.
4. A new dialogue involving the G8, the emerging economies and the key international institutions was put in place to create a pathway to a post Kyoto agreement, so that when Kyoto expires after 2012, the world can act with unity. The new Dialogue between the G8 + 5 and others will have its first meeting in the UK in November.

The task is now to implement what has been agreed.

6 July 2005

Statement at the G8 Business Action for Africa Conference

Hilary Benn, London

I welcome the initiative that Business Action for Africa has taken built it on the work of the Commission for Africa very much. Discussions with several hundred businesses across Africa and the G8 have been made to develop a comprehensive plan that can help raise growth rates across the continent to 7 per cent per year. At the heart of this is a very simple idea: We can do good by doing good business. It's a message that needs to be heard more loudly - that unleashing Africa's entrepreneurial potential - from its family farms and small firms to its larger companies - will improve lives by creating the jobs and economic opportunity that will lift people out of poverty.

For this to happen, the right conditions need to be in place:

- an end to conflict
- good governance - business must play its part in this too - the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative is a good example of this
- children need to be in school and health care improved
- something needs to be done about the fundamental constraints to growth – in particular, improving infrastructure and getting the domestic investment climate right
- help for Africa as it builds its capacity to trade
- provision of resources for growth

What DFID is doing:

1. We attach high priority to improving the investment climate in Africa with support for a wide variety of investment climate reform programmes across the continent, many of them in conjunction with other bilateral and multilateral donors. One of the exciting new initiatives in this area is the AU-NEPAD Investment Climate Facility for Africa (the 'ICF'). We recognise African ownership of the ICF. And we recognise the influential role that the private sector is being given - in helping to fund and manage the Facility. I am therefore pleased to confirm to you today that I intend to help fund the ICF during its initial three years phase.
 2. We support enterprise development and economic growth across the region - I am pleased to announce the launch of the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund. This Challenge Fund is expected to result in over £100m of new private sector spending and investment in Africa - in other words every one pound of public money would be matched by two pounds of private money. It will extend access to financial services that are vital for economic growth and poverty reduction, addressing the extremely high levels of financial exclusion in Africa and will also promote partnerships between large and small companies that are needed to open up new markets to small African enterprises, and transfer essential production, management and marketing skills to them.
- Business Action for Africa website: <http://www.businessactionforafrica.org/>

6 July 2005

Closing statement at the European Parliament Plenary debate on Africa, Globalisation and Poverty

Hilary Benn, Strasbourg

There has never been a time, in my political experience, when this debate about Africa, poverty, its causes and what we can do about it has been so much at the centre of our politics. It seems to me that the message that we are being sent by those we represent is very simple: they look to us to act and they want to have faith in the capacity of the political process to deliver real change on behalf of Africa and of development. It is morally unacceptable that this great continent of 54 countries, only a few miles from Europe, should drift away from us and should be the only part of the world to become poorer in the last 25 years. Now we have the means to do something about it. The challenge that Europe faces will be to turn the passion, commitment and anger – the feelings people have – into practical action that will make a difference. I agree with all those who have called for the EU strategy on Africa to be the means by which we use our politics to make a real difference. I look forward to working with Mr Michel, as he draws that up. I hope very much that we can make progress on it.

What are the issues we need to address in the EU Africa strategy?

1. Aid works, aid saves children's lives. That is why we need more of it.
2. Debt relief
3. It is ultimately trade, economic development and economic growth that will enable Africa and the rest of the developing world to transform the lives of their people.

There are two other truths that we have to tell in this debate:

1. Unless there is peace and stability, there will be no development. That is why Europe must continue to show leadership and provide support to the African Union, building the capacity of Africa to tackle its own conflicts.
2. There should also be good governance because in the end, people look to governments to do things for them. In the end it is about governments with a capacity to deliver and about people who have the expectation that government might be able to improve their lives. When those two things come together – when the voices of the people are heard – then societies have a better chance of making real progress. In the end, it is about political will and political choice.

6 July 2005

Strengthening the EU as a force for good in Africa and the wider world

Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary, European Parliament, Strasbourg

A few years ago, Europe's nations were divided, over the question of Iraq. Yet today, we are taking strong common action in support of peace in the Middle East, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We have a comprehensive programme of engagement with the new Iraq. We are leading the international community in the difficult but vital process of international engagement with Iran. The story is the same on Security and Defence - today an EU force is working with NATO in Bosnia and we have two European missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and are assisting the African Union force in Sudan. I want the UK's Presidency – and the years ahead – to be a time in which we build on those achievements, and further strengthen the European Union's influence and power as a force for good in the world. Nowhere is that more important than in Africa.

In our action in Africa and around the world, the European Union can draw on three great strengths:

1. The EU's intrinsic power and influence - when we speak together we can set the international agenda – as on world trade – as an organisation which represents a quarter of the world's wealth, a third of its commerce, more than half of all development spending, and one in eight members of the United Nations. I have seen the phenomenal strength of the EU working together in the difficult negotiations with Iran.
2. The strength of our global connections - there is hardly a country anywhere in the world which does not have some special tie of history or friendship with one of the EU's member nations. The last enlargement added further to that network of partnership and trust.
3. The force of the EU's values - 'soft power' in foreign policy has been defined as making others want what we want. The European Union's enlargement is one of the most striking and powerful examples of our soft power in action. The magnetic pull of the EU's success, its values and its institutions have helped to transform first Southern, then Central and Eastern Europe. And the prospect of EU membership is now spreading reform and stability to Turkey and across the Western Balkans.

6 July 2005

Security is the key to the future of Iraq

Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary, European Parliament Debate, Strasbourg

Security is the key to the future of Iraq. The security situation is serious. There is no disguising this fact. As the Foreign Secretary of one of the countries that took a major part in the military action against Iraq, I feel a personal responsibility for improving security there. Ensuring security in Iraq means giving responsibility for it to the Iraqi people. The quicker the Iraqis take responsibility for security the better – and the quicker the multi-national forces can leave. I said that the security situation was poor. The better news is that the Iraqis are already taking on more and more of the security role. There are already 168 000 individuals in the Iraqi Security Forces. The capacity of these forces is constantly improving. We are supporting this process.

The mandate for the multi-national force in Iraq is UN Security Council resolution 1546. That mandate comes to an end at the end of the political process, which is scheduled to be in December of this year. And in any event, under that mandate, we are only in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi government. If they asked us to leave we would do so. I have no problem in principle with the idea for a blue-hat United Nations force replacing the international force in Iraq. The difficulty is likely to be persuading other countries to come on board.

5 July 2005

The challenge to the International Trade System: Why this WTO Round must be successful
Minister of State for Trade, Ian Pearson, at 'Why this WTO Round must be successful', Hong Kong

In the next ten years world output is likely to rise by 50% and world trade by 100%. More than ever we need a truly global trading system - and a system which delivers benefits particularly for developing nations. That is why we are committed to fair trading rules which reduce trade-distorting subsidies and open up markets, but - and this is crucial - rules which do not penalise the poorest. The WTO Doha Development Agenda has the potential to provide a huge boost to world trade. Estimates are in the range of \$250 billion and \$600 billion annually, with most studies suggesting that developing countries stand to gain the most. This additional wealth can make a real difference to delivering the Millennium Development Goals. The World Bank estimates that a pro-poor DDA outcome could reduce the number of people living on less than \$2 a day by 144 million. We are clear what we want to achieve here in December: an agreement that will allow an ambitious, pro-development conclusion to the Round in 2006. As Presidency of the EU, we will be doing all we can over the coming months to turn this vision into reality.

Agriculture is the totemic issue for the Round and we have seen slow but steady progress during the year. There is a lot left to do but I think we can see a way forward. To move along that path it is clear that developed countries will need to make big steps towards dismantling protection of their agriculture sectors through subsidies and tariffs.

But this is not - and cannot be - just an agricultural round. Manufacturing and services amount to 96% of world GDP and 92% of cross-border trade. Negotiations in both areas have been moving slowly this year. Revised Services offers are trickling in but we need more and we collectively need to raise our sights. We are creeping towards an agreed formula on industrial goods. I hope we can finally crack this issue in Dalian next week.

We are making good progress in Geneva on reaching an agreement on trade facilitation. Minimising the costs and the time it takes to get goods to market will benefit us all.

To generate greater wealth and prosperity in the world we will need greater liberalisation in all these sectors. Liberalisation is sometimes seen as big business and rich countries prising open and then exploiting developing countries' economies. But evidence suggests that most countries benefit far more from opening up their domestic markets than from open markets elsewhere. That is a lesson we should all bear in mind when we come to the table in December. For most countries opening up markets is the best way of generating wealth. But it doesn't work in every case. Some countries simply do not have the capacity to trade. By ensuring that the poorest countries have effective Special and Differential Treatment we can help them build the capacity to enjoy the benefits of liberalisation.

Negotiations during the coming months will undoubtedly be tough. But I believe that there is growing political determination around the world - not least here in Hong Kong - to succeed.

4 July 2005

African Union Summit Address

Hilary Benn, Secretary of State for International Development, Sirte, Libya

The history that the UK shares with Africa is one of the reasons why we have put Africa, and the challenge of supporting this great continent in improving the lives of its people, at the centre of both of our Presidencies of the G8 and the EU. A new partnership gives us hope

In Scotland, Edinburgh, last Saturday 200,000 people - the biggest demonstration the city has ever seen were brought together by a shared concern for Africa. They were asking for action: not charity, but justice.

The African Union is leading the way with the ground-breaking African Peer Review Mechanism, beginning with Ghana and Rwanda. Action is being taken to stamp out corruption at the highest level in a number of countries. Africa's future rests in Africa's hands. And that should fill us with hope and confidence. Because Africa has as much potential, creativity, passion and hope as any other continent on the planet. When all of that is set free, everything is possible.

PRESS RELEASES

21 July 2005

£20 million budget support announced for poverty reduction in **Malawi**. DFID is the first donor to disburse budget support to the Government of Malawi since the budget was passed. DFID Malawi stated that the UK is now stepping up its support because of real progress with a sustained period of improved fiscal management by the government. UK budget support is aimed at promoting macro-economic stabilisation. The aid will be used to support the Government's strategy to reduce its domestic debt in order to bring down interest rates and reduce Government's debt service charges. Reducing debt service charges will enable the Government to spend more on growth and development. The decision by Parliament to approve the budget has enabled DFID to release this aid.

UK aid to Malawi will be **around £60m this year**, an increase of £5m from the 2004 -2005 financial year. UK aid is expected to continue to increase in future years if Malawi keeps on track with current progress.

5 July 2005

The UK is to provide **£60m** over the **next three years** to **eradicate polio by end 2005/early 2006**, and to boost the effort to **ensure the world stays polio free thereafter**. The funding is broken down as follows: the UK will immediately and unilaterally plug the remaining funding gap of £20m (\$36m) so that polio can be eradicated. The UK will also give another £40m in 2006-08 towards the cost of vaccinating over 500m children to ensure polio can never break out again.

NEWS

28 July 2005

A **year and a half** after the **end** of the **Community based rainwater-harvesting project in Orissa, India** its **impact continues to be felt**, and its success is **attracting the attention** of the **government**. A modest £900,000 grant by DFID helped UNDP pilot an innovative and workable model in which each panchayat (first tier of local self government) pursues a 'plan' to fight drought in their village. This project covered 284 villages in three drought-prone districts of Orissa. Short-term projects often do not generate significant learning, but a post project impact assessment conducted in March this year produced three distinct lessons:

- Institutions at all levels have to collaborate to effect change;
- Grassroots level participation is key in planning, implementing and sustaining change;
- These changes need to be integrated into existing government programmes for a concerted effort towards fighting poverty.

The project processes, which were put in place four years ago, are still robust. The local capacity built during this project has played a key role in improving livelihoods opportunities of villagers. This project has empowered the local panchyats and increased their confidence. They are now taking direct ownership of the development process in their villages. The training and capacity building component of the project has made them more aware of government grants that they can access. The key challenge for the government is to find ways to use the lessons of the project to inform government policy and programmes.

- DFID India homepage: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/asia/india.asp>

27 July 2005

DFID has **agreed a second Institutional Strategy Paper** with the **Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**. DFID will give OHCHR **£10.18m** over the **next four years** in support of their essential work on human rights around the world. The OHCHR was created in its present form in 1997. It is a department of the UN Secretariat, and the High Commissioner is appointed by the UN Secretary-General.

- OHCHR Institutional Strategy:
<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/isp-ohchr.pdf>

21 July 2005

During 2004, DFID established a **framework for assessing the way multilaterals work**, the **Multilateral Effectiveness Framework**, known as the **MEFF**. This is because about half of DFID's budget goes to multilateral agencies, and DFID is increasingly asked to provide evidence that this is a good use of resources. In order to reach the MDGs, DFID believes it is important to improve the effectiveness of the multilateral system for aid and development.

23 international organisations have now been assessed, including 5 Multilateral Development Banks, 12 UN organisations, 5 humanitarian agencies and the European Commission. DFID officials conducted the assessments, in consultation with the organisations themselves. It is the **first objective, comparative study of this kind**.

The **main results** of the study include the following:

- Multilateral agencies have made great strides in improving the way they work, but there is still room for improvement;
- The pace of reform varies between agencies, with some of them undertaking 'big bang' reforms and others adopting a more incremental approach;
- It may take some time for the reforms to be fully implemented;
- There are common weaknesses regarding:
working more closely with national strategies, systems and procedures;
systematic monitoring of results and impact at country level reporting on the results achieved.

DFID will use the information to:

- focus efforts on strengthening areas of weakness;
- work with other bilateral aid agencies to jointly advocate further improvements;
- track future progress over the next three years.

- Multilateral aid effectiveness framework FAQs: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/news/files/meff-faq.asp>
- DFID's assessment of multilateral aid effectiveness: an overview of results:
<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/meff-results.pdf>
- The 'MEFF' methodology: a review of DFID's multilateral effectiveness framework:
<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/meff-methodology.pdf>

20 July 2005

Hilary Benn issued a **statement** on the **Niger humanitarian crisis** highlighting his concern about the deepening nutritional crisis in Niger. DFID was one of the first donors to respond to the UN Flash Appeal issued in **May**, when **£0.5 million** was given to the **World Food Programme**. Following a DFID humanitarian assessment mission to Niger, a **further £1.5 million** has now been given to **humanitarian NGOs** providing emergency feeding and medical care. The **total contribution (£2 million)** is equivalent to 22% of the original UN appeal and will deliver emergency nutritional therapy for up to 30,000 malnourished children, health care for up to 700,000 people, and food assistance for up to 250,000 people. There is now a substantial humanitarian operation underway. Hilary Benn urged other donors to work together with the Government of Niger and humanitarian agencies to ensure that needs are met and lives are saved as quickly as possible.

8 July 2005

The **joint Progress report** by the **G8 Africa Personal Representatives** on **implementation** of the **Africa Action Plan** is **now available**. It **outlines** the **progress** the G8 have made **since** the **Evian** Summit in 2003 collectively and through individual contributions. At the G8 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada, in 2002, G8 leaders agreed an Africa Action Plan (AAP) to support Africa's development. This welcomed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an

historic opportunity to overcome the obstacles to development in Africa, and set out how G8 countries would enhance their engagement with African countries in support of NEPAD. The G8 reviewed progress against this at the 2003 Summit in Evian, France, and committed to review progress again in 2005.

- Progress report by the G8 Africa personal representatives on implementation of the Africa Action Plan: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/g8-africa-progress-report.pdf>

The UK Government also produced a bilateral **UK Progress Report against the Action Plan**. This focuses specifically on what the UK has achieved with African and international partners since the 2003 Evian Summit.

- G8 Africa Action Plan: UK Progress Report 2005: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/uk-africa-action-progress.pdf>

1 July 2005

An **International Advisory Group** has been **set up to take forward the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)**. Peter Eigen, the founder and Chairman of Transparency International, the anti-corruption NGO, will lead it. EITI is a global coalition of governments, companies, and civil society organisations that works to fight corruption and promote openness in the oil and mining revenues generated by developing countries. The **International Advisory Group** has been **established to internationalise the leadership of the initiative**, and to consider how to clearly determine which countries are, and are not, implementing the initiative. The Group will consist of senior representatives from countries implementing EITI, companies, NGOs, and donors. The group will be supported by a Secretariat in DFID, with help from the World Bank and the IMF. The Advisory Group will report to the next international EITI conference in 2006.

The following governments, companies, and organisations have accepted invitations to sit on the International Advisory Group:

- Governments: Azerbaijan, France, Nigeria, Norway, USA
- Companies: Anglo American, BP, Chevron
- Civil Society: Open Society Initiative, Global Witness, Central African Bishops Conference (Cameroon), The Coalition for Improving Transparency in the Extractive Industries (Azerbaijan)
- Investors: F&C Asset Management

EITI website: www.eitransparency.org