

No freedom or democracy while extreme poverty persists

27 May 2011: Statement from the International Movement ATD Fourth World on the Deauville G8 Declaration



The G8's commitment for the values of freedom and democracy will remain half-baked while extreme poverty continues to persist in all corners of the globe. According to ATD Fourth World, one of 50 NGOs accredited to attend the G8 in Deauville, the final declaration issued by G8 leaders fails to address adequately the pressing issues facing nearly one in six people globally and almost one in twelve in Europe.¹

ATD Fourth World is concerned that G8 countries' priority to promote job creation and their pledge to generate strong, sustainable and balanced growth fails to recognise tackling poverty within this overall ambition. This risks the most vulnerable people and populations being left out of economic policies and the widening of inequalities. Of further concern is that the G8's continued consolidation of public finances, particularly in Europe, detrimentally affects people living in poverty through cuts to social protection and basic services that the most disadvantaged populations especially depend on.

- **We urge G8 leaders to put the fight against poverty at the heart of economic growth and job creation policies and for economic recovery efforts to be considered within a human rights based approach as the best way for States to rectify the persistent inequalities, exacerbated by successive crises, which have diminished social cohesion and increased feelings of insecurity and exclusion.**²

Whilst ATD Fourth World commends the G8's continued support of developing countries to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, a commitment to a focus on a rights-based approach remains absent. Such an approach is necessary to reach 2015 goals, and beyond this deadline, to ensure that the benefits of eradicating extreme poverty, as well as on issues of education, gender equality, health and the environment are felt universally, including for the very poorest people and populations.

- **We call on G8 countries, and all those committed to achieving the MDGs, to frame poverty eradication efforts, including the framework beyond the 2015 deadline, in a human rights context to encourage fully inclusive initiatives that leave no person behind and address the specific needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged.**
- **We call on poverty eradication efforts to include the participation of those directly affected by extreme poverty. A "merging of knowledge" of those with first-hand experience of extreme poverty and people's knowledge acquired from academic and policy-making fields is called for. The consensus resulting from such an exercise allows for a better understanding of the root causes of poverty, and obstacles to its eradication, increasing the likelihood that policies will be effective in reaching society's most vulnerable members.**

Notes to editors

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The International Movement ATD Fourth World is a non-governmental organization which engages with individuals and institutions to find solutions to eradicate extreme poverty. It brings together people from all walks of life, starting with people living in the most extreme poverty and has a presence on the ground in 30 countries on five continents. Through its "Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty", an international network of anti-poverty organizations and human rights defenders, it maintains links with people and associations in 155 countries.

¹ Figures from World Bank and Eurostat.

² See report of the UN Independent Expert on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights (A/HRC/17/34)