

# MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

MORE AND BETTER AID    TRADE JUSTICE    DROP THE DEBT  
END CHILD POVERTY IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

## BRIEFING NOTE ON MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

### The Issues

- Over a billion people around the world live in abject poverty. 30,000 people die from extreme poverty every day. Every three seconds a child dies as a result of extreme poverty.
- World poverty is sustained by a combination of factors: injustice in global trade; the huge burden of debt; and insufficient and ineffective aid. Each of these is exacerbated by inappropriate economic policies imposed by rich countries.
- Despite the promises of world leaders, at our present sluggish rate of progress the world will fail to reach internationally agreed targets to halve global poverty by 2015.

### The Opportunity

- This year we finally have the resources, knowledge and opportunity to end this shameful situation. Thousands of people all across the world are coming together to **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** once and for all.
- By mobilising popular support across a string of events and actions, the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** campaign will press the New Zealand Government to fulfill its obligations and promises to help eradicate poverty, and rethink some long-held assumptions.

Key dates this year on which **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** supporters all across the globe have already mobilised:

- July 1st: in the lead up to the G8 meeting held in Gleneagles, Scotland.
- September 10th: in the lead up to the United Nations Millennium Summit held in New York.

And still to come, the third and final international day of action:

- December 10th: in the lead up to the World Trade Organisation meeting in Hong Kong.

### What We Want

**MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY Aotearoa New Zealand** is calling for urgent and meaningful policy change in four critical and inextricably linked areas:

- More and Better Aid
- Trade Justice
- Drop the Debt
- An end to Child Poverty here in New Zealand

# MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY Aotearoa New Zealand

## The Policy Planks

### More Aid

Rich countries, including New Zealand, have promised to provide 0.7% of their gross national income in aid. Some have already reached that target and most others have set a timetable for doing so. However, New Zealand is lagging behind. We give just 0.27% of gross national income and we are one of only six donor countries that do not have a timetable in place to reach the 0.7% target.

#### THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT:

- Must fully commit to spending 0.7% of Gross National Income on overseas aid with a series of milestones for meeting the target by 2015.
- Should advocate for reduction of excessive military expenditure worldwide and for the redirection of those funds to social spending that meets human needs.

### Better Aid

Developing countries urgently need more and better aid to provide them with the resources to reduce poverty. Well-targeted aid can help to provide basic services, spur economic growth, and empower poor communities to find their own paths out of poverty. New Zealand is on the right track towards ensuring that its aid is given in the right way, and we should be encouraging other donors to improve their practices.

#### AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT AID MUST:

- Focus on poverty eradication and fostering human rights.
- Support poor countries' and communities' own plans and paths out of poverty.
- Not be linked to the acceptance of economic policies like trade liberalisation and privatization.

### Drop the Debt

Although New Zealand is not a direct creditor and has cancelled any debts we were owed, we must use our voice within international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to ensure that 100% of the debt of the most impoverished countries is cancelled, without harmful conditions.

#### THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADVOCATE FOR:

- The immediate cancellation of all external debt of the most impoverished countries, without harmful conditions.
- The establishment of a fair and transparent debt arbitration process.

## End Child Poverty In Aotearoa New Zealand

In a country as wealthy as New Zealand, there is no excuse for failing to provide all children with the basic necessities of life – a warm, dry place to live, a healthy diet, medical care, and adequate schooling. We need a plan to be put in place that will ensure that all children have these things, regardless of whether their parents are in paid work or not.

### THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT MUST:

- Establish a systematic plan and timetable to end child poverty in New Zealand.
- Develop a comprehensive range of policies designed to ensure that all New Zealand children must be provided with the basic necessities of life, including warmth, housing, adequate nutrition, healthcare and educational opportunities.
- Ensure that no child is discriminated against in measures to reduce poverty, including discrimination on the grounds of parental employment status.

## Trade Justice

In the Pacific, we need a major rethink of the way rich countries like New Zealand approach trade agreements, so that the real development needs of Pacific Island nations are prioritized. We also need to stop the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank forcing poor countries to open their markets, a policy which has proved so disastrous in many countries over the past 20 years; we need to regulate companies – making them accountable for their social and environmental impact; and we must ensure that countries are able to regulate foreign investment in a way that best suits their own needs.

### THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADVOCATE FOR:

- Fairly negotiated international trade rules that do not undermine people's livelihoods, the rights of poor farmers and workers, or developing countries' rights to determine their own development.
- International trade rules and practices that do not undermine protections enshrined in international agreements on human rights and labour standards, or the environment.
- An end to unfair trade practices that benefit rich and powerful interests, at the expense of poor people.
- The regulation of transnational corporations to ensure the protection of people and the environment.