

Lambeth walk to demand world leaders to keep their promise to end poverty

24th Jul 2008

The Archbishop of Canterbury will today (Thursday 24th July) lay down a challenge to world leaders on behalf of the worldwide Anglican Communion and other faith groups: you must keep your promises on aid and development as failure to do so will lead to further starvation. The Archbishop will welcome the efforts of the UK government, and the Prime Minister in particular, in leading the community of nations in the EU and at the UN in tackling global poverty and inequality, and in raising awareness through the 'Call to Action' to accelerate progress to deliver the goals.

The Archbishop will add a new challenge, urging world leaders to invest in and strengthen their partnership with the Church worldwide, so that its extensive delivery network for education and health care, alongside other faiths, is fully utilised in the eradication of extreme poverty.

The walk and rally are being organised in partnership with Micah Challenge, an international movement working to engage the Church worldwide in speaking out about global poverty and the MDGs.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has described the event as "a poignant public act of commitment by the Anglican Communion and other faith groups to continue to put pressure on those who have the power and resources to help end extreme poverty across the globe. It will be about pledging, as a Church, to play our part in continuing to develop lasting solutions. It will also be a walk where we will be in step with those who know at first hand the impact that the unfair distribution of the world's resources can have on daily living and life opportunities."

On the same day, in other parts of the world, the Anglican Communion is joining in the call on world leaders. In the United States, the Episcopal Public Policy Network and Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation are co-ordinating a 'Virtual March for the MDGs' to coincide with the London event. Supporters are being encouraged to send emails to Congressional inboxes in Washington, D.C. asking politicians to share the Church's commitment to the MDGs and seeing an end to extreme poverty. Meanwhile, in Canada, members of the Diocese of Ontario will visit members of Canadian parliament to lobby their politicians on the subject of the MDGs.

The initiatives will each contribute to the international backdrop for the UN meeting on 25th September, when the UN Secretary General is hosting a review of progress towards the MDGs.

ends

Notes to editors

An operational note on the walk and rally is appended below. For further details, please contact Ben Wilson at the Lambeth Conference Communications Office, telephone 01227 828048 or 07989 984271. For enquiries about Micah Challenge please contact Charis Gibson on 020 7207 2117 or 07917 050 126.

The Lambeth Conference is one of the global Anglican Communion's 'Instruments of Communion' and takes place every ten years at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is an occasion when bishops can meet for worship, study and conversation. For more information, see: www.lambethconference.org

Micah Challenge is a coming together of people, in 40 different nations, who want to take up the challenge laid down by Old Testament prophet Micah, and speak out against the injustice of global poverty. Micah Challenge is working with churches, charities, and others to help people think differently about global poverty, and to empower them to pray, act together and speak out for its alleviation.

Micah Challenge UK's members include: African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance (ACEA), Alpha International/Holy Trinity Brompton, BMS World Mission, CBM UK, Christian Aid, Christian Medical Fellowship, Christian Today, Evangelical Alliance, Faithworks, Global Connections, New Frontiers, Oasis, Shaftesbury Society, SPEAK, Tearfund, World Vision UK. See www.micahchallenge.org.uk for more details.

The Millennium Development Goals are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental stability
8. Develop a global partnership for development