

October 17th, 2007 - GCAP Policy Guidelines

NOTE: These policy guidelines are based on the consensus positions developed in global meetings in Beirut (Feb 06), Brussels (Nov 06) and Montevideo (May 07). National coalitions will however be free to further define their positions according to their local realities and conditions. September 25, 2007

“...that food sovereignty and the right to food are realised;”

Public Policy Change Objectives:

End Poverty and Inequality

The end of poverty and inequality is not only about eradicating poverty but also about changing policies that create global imbalances and changing the assumption that economic growth is sufficient to reduce poverty and inequalities.

Core demands (full detail below):

- **Public accountability, just governance and the fulfilment of human rights**
- **Trade justice**
- **A major increase in the quantity and quality of aid and financing for development**
- **Debt cancellation**

Gender Equality

Women's rights and gender equality are central issues in poverty eradication and in the formulation of local policies, laws and plans. Governments should ensure equality, social justice and stop all forms of violence against women while also upholding women's rights including their political participation and access to resources.

MDGs

Governments must commit to achieving and surpassing the Millennium Development Goals through national MDG-based plans and adopting pro-poor policies. National, sustainable efforts must be taken to eliminate poverty and achieve the MDGs; these efforts must be developed and implemented in a way that is democratic, transparent, and accountable to citizens. National governments must ensure their commitments to achieving the Goals by allocating more resources for basic education, primary health, mother and child health, safe water and sanitation facilities for all. National governments must recognize that meeting the MDGs is a first step toward achieving the goal of eliminating poverty.

Human Rights

We demand that gender equality and women's rights be recognized as a central issue for poverty eradication. Upholding the human rights of all minorities is recognised as fundamental to the achievement of these goals.

Climate Change

All governments must ensure the right of people living in poverty, including indigenous peoples, to natural resources and energy. Rich countries must dramatically cut their greenhouse emissions and provide additional finance (beyond their 0.7 per cent aid commitments) to support developing countries in adapting to the effects of climate change. International commitment is needed to ensure that genuine action on climate change happens. This commitment should abide by the following principles: that the polluters pay for their abuse of climate and environment; that food sovereignty and the right to food is realised; that the production of bio-fuels does not displace the production of food on arable land or lead to the destruction of forests; that there is funding, and free and open access to technologies that mitigate green house emissions; and that people come before profits. (GCAP's Montevideo Communiqué, May 2007)

GCAP's CORE DEMANDS EXPLAINED

Public accountability, just governance and the fulfilment of human rights

All governments and multilateral institutions should be fully accountable to their peoples and transparent in the use of public resources.

- Ensure quality, universal public services for all (health, education, including adult education, water and utilities) and stop privatisation where it causes deprivation and poverty.
- Emphasize, in their health policies, preventive health, reproductive health and actively combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and diseases associated with poverty.

- Ensure gender equality, social justice and stop all forms of violence against women and uphold women's rights including their political participation and access to resources.
- Promote redistributive mechanisms that ensure equity such as land reform, progressive taxation and poverty reduction strategies.
- Implement policies that ensure full and productive employment with special attention to youth employment.
- Fully support effective peace-building and conflict prevention strategies and ensure that post conflict reconstruction programmes enshrine social and economic justice, poverty eradication and public accountability.

All governments should also acknowledge the greater role player by civil society in development:

- Actively involve civil society, including people living in poverty, women, indigenous peoples, minorities, children, youth, persons with different abilities, workers, dalits and displaced persons, people affected by conflict, occupation and disaster, and people living with HIV and AIDS, amongst others, in the formulation, decision-making and implementation of international and national development priorities, policies and plans.
- Enforce the right to information and support freedom of expression including media freedom and freedom of association.
- Ensure civil society participation on the budgetary process.
- Ensure young people are partners, not only targets, in development and decision-making.

All multilateral institutions should be fully accountable transparent in the use of public resources. Their governance must be reformed.

“GCAP calls to establish a just world order in which International Financial Institutions (WB, IMF and WTO) operate within the broad principles enshrined under the UN commitments and human rights obligations to better regulate world economy.” (Beirut Declaration, March, 2006)

“International trade rules and national trade policies should support sustainable livelihoods, promote the rights of women, children and indigenous people and lead to poverty eradication.” (Montevideo declaration, May 2007)

Trade Justice not free trade

Developing countries have the right to determine their own trade policies so they favour their own people.

- End subsidies that lead to dumping cheap produce on international markets.
- National governments must use their influence on the International Financial Institutions and other major funders/sources of finance to make trade rules fairer.

Unfair Trade Deals, including EU-ACP Economic Partnership Agreements, US and Japanese trade agreements, must be stopped. Unfair Trade agreements establish unfair trade relationships that are not suitable for sustainable development in already underdeveloped countries.

While showing our solidarity with social movements, farmers organisations, trade unions, faith-based groups and NGOs from Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, we call on the European Union to: Not impose trade liberalisation and other trade-related terms upon ACP countries; Refrain from putting pressure on ACP countries to sign EPAs this year (2007); Offer non-reciprocal alternatives to ensure that exports to the EU from ACP countries will not be interrupted

Aid

GCAP calls for a major increase in the quantity and quality of aid and financing for development

- Donor countries should meet and exceed the 0.7% of GDP aid target by 2015
- There should be more, better and untied aid.
- International Financial Institutions (IFIs) must stop applying economic policy conditions to financing.

Debt Cancellation

Where debt cancellation measures are inadequate or fail to enable poor countries reach the MDGs and provide basic social services, we support collective developing countries' strategies for the repudiation of all odious and illegitimate debts.

- Donor countries and IFIs must cancel crippling debt immediately to the world's poorest countries.
- Debt cancellation and grants to refugees and foreign students in donor countries should not be counted as aid.
- Debt cancellation should not affect a country's credit ratings adversely.