

# Make Poverty History:

## *More and better aid*



*"We are clearly heading into an election campaign. There is every reason in the world for every one of us, including our political leaders, to embrace the targets of the Make Poverty History campaign. This issue needs to be raised at every all candidates' meetings, in every riding, and in every possible fashion, to get Canada to embrace a schedule by which the 0.7% target will be reached. I call on all parties to explicitly state in their party platforms their commitment to reach 0.7% in the immediate future, preferably by 2010. Canadians want this. Our leaders should act."*

– Stephen Lewis speaking at Carleton University, Ottawa, November 22, 2005

## **We need an increase in overseas development aid**

More and better aid is needed to help end extreme poverty and hunger...to enable every child to attend elementary school...to reduce child mortality rates...to improve maternal health...to create decent jobs...and to begin to slow down and halt the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The Make Poverty History Campaign urges Canada to take action by:

- reaching the UN target of 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015 by committing to a timetable to increase aid by 12% in each of the next 3 years and by 15% thereafter;
- enacting legislation to make ending poverty the exclusive goal of Canadian foreign aid in a way consistent with our human rights' obligations;
- removing conditions on aid by ending the tying of aid to Canadian exports and privatization in recipient countries.

In Canada, we have seen a steady erosion in overseas aid to 0.28 per cent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP), far below the average of developed countries.

## **Party Positions**

All opposition parties (the Conservatives, NDP and the Bloc Québécois) have expressed their commitment to meeting the 0.7% target and to legislation ensuring that ending poverty is the primary focus of Canada's foreign aid.

## **Bloc Quebecois**

The BQ proposes that the federal government introduce a plan to fight poverty in the world by increasing the levels of its international aid and respecting its dialogue concerning debt reduction of the world's poorest nations.

## **Conservative Party**

The Conservative campaign platform includes a commitment for Canada to reach the internationally agreed-to target for aid spending of 0.7% of GNI by 2015. However, the Conservatives also tie aid to conditions, such as privatization schemes and free trade agreements

## **Liberal Party**

Recent Liberal announcements would only bring our foreign aid contribution to 0.32 per cent of GDP by 2009. Paul Martin agrees in principle to the 0.7% target, but says he is not prepared to set a firm target that he may not be able to reach by 2015. While the Liberal government has moved towards decreasing the amount of aid tied to Canadian exports, it still supports World Bank guidelines that impose structural adjustments and privatization schemes on nations receiving foreign aid.

## **New Democratic Party**

The NDP has urged the Prime Minister to adopt targets and a timetable for meeting our overseas aid commitments. The NDP also proposes that Canada increase foreign aid by 12% until 2010, bringing Canada to the OECD average, and thereafter, by 15% until 2015, reaching our long-stated 0.7 per cent goal. The Party says no to aid tied to conditions, including conditions linked to World Bank policies of privatization.

## **Ask the candidates**

Will your party back the commitment for Canada to increase foreign aid to 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2015?

Will your party remove stipulations of privatization and cuts to social spending, as part of the Canadian aid package funded through multilateral channels such as the World Bank?

Will your party remove the stipulation that Canadian aid be tied to exports of Canadian goods and services?



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