

AFRICA: G8 Bishops Urge Leaders to Focus on Poverty

WASHINGTON, JUNE 26, 2009 ([CISA](#)) -Catholic bishops from eight leading industrialized nations have written to their leaders urging them to take concerted action to fight poverty especially in Africa at the upcoming G8 Summit in Italy.

“Our moral tradition commits the Church to protecting human life and dignity, especially of the poorest, most vulnerable members of the human family. In the faces of poor persons the Catholic Church sees the face of Christ whom we serve in countries throughout the world,” the bishops wrote.

“Ironically poor people have contributed the least to the economic crisis facing our world, but their lives and livelihoods are likely to suffer the greatest devastation because they struggle at the margins in crushing poverty. In light of this fact, the G8 nations should meet their responsibility to promote dialogue with other powerful economies to help prevent further economic crises.”

The bishops in addition urged G8 governments to meet their commitments to increase Official Development Assistance in order to reduce global poverty and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, especially in African countries.

“This requires deepening partnerships with developing countries so that their peoples can be active agents in their own development, participating in political, governmental, economic and social reforms that serve the common good of all. In a particular way it is important to strengthen peacekeeping so that armed conflicts do not continue to rob countries of the resources needed for development.”

The G8 bishops also expressed concern over the impact of climate change on the poor, who have contributed little to ecological degradation. They called for concrete commitments and mechanisms to mitigate additional global climate change and to help poor persons and developing nations adapt to its effects.

“The G8 Summit takes place in the shadow of a global economic crisis, but its actions can help bring a light of hope to our world. By asking first how a given policy will affect the poor and the vulnerable, you can help assure that the common good of all is served. As a human family we are only as healthy as our weakest members.”

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