



2000  
2015



2015

2000  
2015



# A change of course

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS THROUGH THE LENS OF THE WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY



World March of Women



## 02 presentation

### 02 **PART ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

### 03 **PART TWO: GENERAL CRITICISMS OF THE MDGs**

Summary of the general criticisms

Criticisms regarding the consideration of women in the MDGs

*THE WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY, A TOOL FOR ASSESSING THE MDGs*05

### 05 **PART THREE: DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE GOALS WITH COMMENTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN**

06 Thoughts on Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

08 Thoughts on Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education

10 Thoughts on Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

12 Thoughts on Goal 4. Reduce child mortality and Goal 5. Improve maternal health

14 Thoughts on Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

16 Thoughts on Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability

18 Thoughts on Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development

## 22 ideas for actions

22 Information About the MDGs

22 Evaluating the MDGs

23 2005 Action Calendar

23 Suggested Texts and Sites

## 24 references to world march of women documents quoted in this paper

## presentation

This paper is for women's groups that are members of the World March of Women's national coordinating bodies. It provides information and criticism on the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000-2015).

The Goals are the focus of the evaluation session being held at the United Nations September 14-16, 2005, attended by heads of state of member nations. NGOs are not invited. (They were invited to give their comments in June 2005.) The Millennium Goals are also the subject of the World Trade Organization meeting taking place this December in Hong Kong.

The first section offers a brief introduction to the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The second section presents an overall critique of the MDGs. We present the criticisms expressed by a number of women's organizations, followed by those of the World March of Women.

In the third section, we present each Goal, including the UN's targets and indicators, followed by our critical analysis. Our analysis is based on the values defended in the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity* and its supporting documents, and on other documents produced by the March. As feminists, we do not think that these Goals respond to all our concerns. Indeed, they fall short of the Beijing Platform, and further still from the March's 17 world demands and the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity*.

## PART ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2000, the heads of state of 191 countries approved the *Millennium Declaration*. In the Declaration they affirmed the importance of freedom, peace, security, equality, tolerance, respect for nature and the sharing of responsibilities; of ensuring development and eliminating poverty throughout the planet; and of guaranteeing democracy and good governance.

These sentiments were translated into eight practicable goals to be achieved between now and 2015, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

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

For each goal, the international agencies (UNICEF, World Health Organization, International Labour Organization, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund) defined targets and indicators for measuring progress. There are 18 targets and 48 indicators.

UN-mandated expert working groups have proposed substantial improvements to the MDGs. Those concerning MDG3 (women's equality and empowerment) are very good.

In September 2005, in New York City, member States will conduct an initial assessment of progress in achieving the Millennium Goals. The Revised Draft Outcome Document for this meeting, adopted on July 22, 2005, is a definite improvement on the MDGs themselves. It recalls earlier commitments, including poverty reduction, sustainable development, and conflict prevention/resolution, and, concerning women, states: "The full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential." It affirms that all UN policy must take

the status of women into account and that the effective participation of women in political /economic life and conflict resolution must be guaranteed. If this text were put into application, it would constitute a definite step forward in the implementation of the MDGs. But numerous criticisms have yet to be addressed.

We share the more general concerns of some groups and social movements about the negative impact of the MDGs on the engagement of countries to sign and put into application the various conventions, treaties, and action platforms developed in the wake of the major UN conferences of the '90's, when citizen participation was ensured through parallel forums. The MDGs represent the smallest common denominator, rather than the sum of these commitments, so it is essential we issue a clear and unmistakable call to the UN and the international institutions of Bretton Woods for a change of course. Neoliberalism generates poverty and exclusion and it is absurd to think that this economic system could save humanity from the pitiable state into which it has plunged us. Similarly, in the present context, we cannot deal with poverty without immediately implementing plans to stop militarization and guarantee women in every country the full enjoyment of their rights.

## **PART TWO: GENERAL CRITICISMS OF THE MDGS**

While obviously not in disagreement with the overall content of the Millennium Goals, numerous non-government organizations criticize the fact that there is no analysis of the causes of the main contemporary forms of injustice.

Feminist organizations are of the view that the MDGs do not sufficiently take into account the specific nature of women's condition.

### **Summary of the general criticisms:**

- The MDGs are too generous in scope; too technical; and the vision is too limited.
- The MDGs do not challenge the capitalist system that is at the root of poverty, famine and insecurity. They do not direct the blame to those responsible (multinational corporations, IMF, WB, and WTO) whose measures have resulted in cuts to social budgets and who control infrastructures, the media, technology and trade. They do not propose wealth redistribution. On the contrary, to reduce poverty, they propose to stimulate growth and consumption and open markets, which will further increase the profits of the corporations in developed countries and exacerbate disparity among countries. Many of the indicators for assessing progress of the MDGs have been established by the IMF and WB. How can we improve education and health systems while defending the policies that are weakening them?
- The human rights dimension is missing from the MDGs (note that it is included in the Revised Draft Outcome Document for the September 2005 meeting). We should be discussing rights, not needs. We should address human beings, not target populations and include marginalized individuals: indigenous peoples, refugees, displaced persons, the disabled, trafficking victims, etc.
- The MDGs were developed from the top down, without any citizen participation.
- The MDGs mostly concern poor countries, making them responsible for the effort required to improve their lot. The rich countries who are supposed to be helping them are bound by neither responsibility, timetable nor penalty (here, too, the Revised Draft Outcome Document is more forthcoming). The MDGs propose nothing for the poor who live in "developed" countries.
- Numerous elements are absent: control of drug patents, guaranteed public health system, government transparency, democracy (the Revised Draft Outcome Document does mention it), sustainable development, redistribution of wealth, agrarian reform, labour rights, the approach of indigenous peoples, etc. The Revised Draft Outcome Document for the September 2005 session does speak to some of these points.
- Resources for the achievement of the MDGs are insufficient.
- Until 2015, countries will devote their energy to achieving the MDGs. Yet, most of them fall short of the international instruments adopted at UN conferences, especially those concerning women: the Beijing Platform (1995); CEDAW; Cairo Conference on the Population, etc.; even the Millennium Declaration of 2000 that led to the MDGs. The development aid agencies are likely to follow suit. Pressure must be maintained for application of these instruments.

PROSEMINATION

## Criticisms regarding the consideration of women in the MDGs:

- The MDGs have no gender-based analysis of poverty and other issues.
- Only one MDG specifically addresses women's unequal status when it should be integral to all the MDGs. Equality of the sexes is a condition for the achievement of all the other MDGs: education, health, food, housing, and access to economic resources. Women's rights go unmentioned.
- The MDGs represent women either as pregnant, mothers, or as victims, but not as active agents of development.
- The MDGs have no indicator for women's empowerment.
- The MDGs are silent when it comes to violence against women or the specific situation of women in armed conflict.
- The MDGs do not address reproductive and sexual rights.
- Some countries have achieved the MDG goals but women in these countries still suffer violence and are not guaranteed access to free and safe abortion.
- The issue of maternal mortality should be linked to women's access to quality health services and reproductive health care.
- The MDG on education is too narrow. Education should be a means of transforming attitudes and beliefs, and challenge social norms that perpetuate discrimination and inequality.
- Gender-disaggregated statistics are needed to assess MDG progress and should be included in the country reports.
- Budgets must be allocated for initiatives that concern women.
- Women must participate in the management of natural resources and maintenance of biodiversity.
- Many of the criticisms were incorporated into the Revised Draft Outcome Document for the September 2005 session, including the need to:
  - invest in infrastructures (safe water, transportation, access to energy sources);
  - implement measures to relieve women from household tasks and caring for intimates (children, the sick and the aged), tasks that continue to be considered as the natural and exclusive domain of women;
  - women and men should share unpaid work;
  - respect women's rights to inheritance, property and land;
  - end job discrimination, pay inequity and inequality in the informal labour sector.

## THE WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY, A TOOL FOR ASSESSING THE MDGs

Numerous treaties, charters, international protocols (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) Beijing Platform, Final Action Program adopted after the UN World Conference on Population and Development, etc.) contain provisions that go much further than the Millennium Goals. The overall scope of the MDGs is even more restricted than that of the Millennium Declaration adopted in September 2000 as a prelude to the MDGs! As for women, only one MDG specifically concerns them and two treat the situation of mothers and people infected with AIDS.

Is it really necessary, then, to adopt the MDGs? We don't so, and we fear that they will become the unique reference for evaluating relations between rich and poor countries in the years to come.

For us, the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity*, a document written collectively by women of the March and adopted on December 10, 2004, is the basis of our future actions. The Charter describes the world that women want to build. It is a world founded on the values of equality, freedom, solidarity, justice and peace. The Charter is accompanied by two supporting documents explaining the Charter's origin, scope and the conditions that must be met to achieve the world we have proposed.

Between March 8, 2005, and October 17, 2005, the World March is organizing a Relay of the Charter across the planet. During the relay, we're using the Charter to speak to governments, social movements and women's movements to convince them to ally with us. Our action springs from our feminist vision.

Since its inception in 1997, the World March of Women has denounced patriarchy and capitalism as the sources of oppression, domination and exclusion, particularly of women. It takes action to eradicate poverty and violence against women. The political platform of 17 demands that were adopted in 1998 contains practical proposals to achieve these ends.

In 2005, the gaps between rich and poor have deepened. Women are the primary victims of violence and poverty. Capitalism and patriarchy persist and are mutually reinforcing. They generate poverty, violence, expanding militarization world-wide, and insecurity, and are the breeding ground of racism, homophobia and the caste system. Our observation in 2000 is unfortunately still applicable: "At the beginning of this new millennium, unjustifiable and intolerable inequality is still deeply rooted in our societies, between countries in the North and the South and East and West, and within populations of individual countries: between rich and poor, young and old, and rural and urban communities."

## PART THREE: DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE GOALS WITH COMMENTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN

In this section, we will present each of the eight goals individually, with their targets and indicators, and follow with our analysis, drawn from documents produced by the World March of Women: the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity*, the two supporting documents to the Charter, the political platform of 17 world demands and the letter addressed to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in October 2000.

### global action against poverty

At the same time the MDG discussions were going on, an alliance of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), led by OXFAM, issued a Global Call to Action Against Poverty.

Alliance members are demanding:

- fair trade;
- debt cancellation;
- more and better aid;
- national efforts to eliminate poverty; developed and carried out in a manner that is democratic, trans-parent and accountable to citizens.

They suggest that people who support the campaign wear a white band on the days of national mobilization:

- July 1, 2005, during the G8 meeting in Scotland;
- September 10, 2005, for the opening of the UN - Summit to evaluate progress on the MDGs after 5 years;
- December 10, 2005, Human Rights Day, three - days before the sixth ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization being held in Hong Kong.

The campaign was backed by famous musicians who organized huge concerts in July 2005 at the same time as the G8 meeting in Scotland. During this G8 meeting, the announcement of debt cancellation for 18 of the poorest countries of the planet was greeted favourably by campaign activists.

The World March of Women is not a member of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty campaign. We are in agreement with a number of the campaign's proposals and their criticisms of the MDGs, about debt cancellation, for example (see Reflections on Goal No. 8).

We also believe that the social change proposed in our documents and actions, especially in the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity*, and the Relay this year, cannot be achieved without the active participation of women and men in the countries concerned. As an international feminist network, the World March of Women unites nearly 6000 women's groups in 164 countries and territories. We believe that without the organized and active participation of women in all these countries together, the current state of the world will not be changed.

We also stress the need for a feminist analysis of the decisions and actions being undertaken. Poverty, inequality, injustice and violence affect women more than men. This vision is unfortunately absent from the analysis of the alliance that issued the Global Call to Action Against Poverty. Although we support the idea of determining the steps needed to effect short-term change to relieve the deepening poverty of people in some countries (e.g., debt cancellation), we believe we must also propose changes to fundamental paradigms and challenge the social, economic and political systems generating poverty and exclusion.

PROSEMINATION



# Thoughts on goal 1. eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

*"Poverty is the worst problem facing rural women heads of families. It is essentially the result of unequal access to resources, and the control over production, trade and finances by national and multinational financial powers."*

*FEMMES RURALES ET CHEFS DE FAMILLE EN AFRIQUE SUBSAHARIENNE, FAO, FATOU SOW, 1995.*

## Goal targets:

**Target 1.** "Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day."

### Indicators

1. Proportion of population below \$1 (1993 PPP) per day (World Bank)
2. Poverty gap ratio [incidence x depth of poverty] (World Bank)
3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption (World Bank)

**Target 2.** "Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger."

### Indicators

1. Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age (UNICEF-WHO)
2. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (FAO)

Poverty is not a given. As we have mentioned in many World March documents, notably in the first supporting document to the Women's Global Charter for Humanity: "Humanity does not lack for resources or wealth production; rather, we are suffering a serious problem of universal access, responsible management and equitable distribution of these resources and wealth. While a handful of speculators and businessmen around the world become ever richer, the number of the poor and excluded with no access to goods and services essential to the exercise of their human rights, steadily rises."

Multinationals, banks and the super capitalists grab the large part of the wealth produced in the world; middleman looking only to fill their pockets abound. etc. Trade is unjust: people producing raw materials are underpaid, while others speculate on the financial markets, etc. Programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank on indebted poor countries (privatization of State provided services like water distribution, electricity, education and health) have accentuated poverty and inequality (see Thoughts on MDG8).

Attacking poverty means profoundly transforming current structures of production; ending corruption and financial speculation; implementing agrarian reform so peasants become owners of the land they cultivate; and social reform for workers; it means instituting equitable trade rules. In short, it means rethinking the economy so that it serves the greatest number, and making socially productive and environmentally responsible investments (see also Thoughts on MDG8).

This MDG is also reductive because it only aims to reduce extreme poverty and hunger, based on people who live on less than a dollar a day. It is a narrow view of poverty that excludes poor people who live on a little more than a dollar a day, and it does not address the poor living in "rich" countries. In addition, linking wealth to the criteria

of consumption reveals a productivist conception of the economy, where consumption is the sole aim of production and where production must constantly increase, regardless of the impact on people and the environment (see Thoughts on MDG7).

The consequences of poverty are much broader than hunger: it bars the poor from access to decent housing, health care, studies, energy sources, clothing, culture, recreation, freedom of movement, and participation in social and political life. A poor person often does not know her or his rights or how to defend them. She/he endures discrimination on many fronts.

Women form the majority of the poor. This goal makes no mention of it. Not only are women the first to go without when resources are scarce (families place more importance on feeding a son and sending him to school than they do for a daughter), but they do not have access to the resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty. Women farmers rarely own the land they cultivate because the laws and customs of many countries do not allow them this right. They are rarely acknowledged as the head of the family when it is they who work every day to provide food and care for their family-and even when the spouse is absent. Further, it is hard for women to get access to credit.

*WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY:*

Equity: Affirmations 5, 6, 7

Freedom: Affirmation 1

Solidarity: Affirmations 2, 5, 6

Justice: Affirmations 1, 2, 5

Peace: Affirmations 1, 5

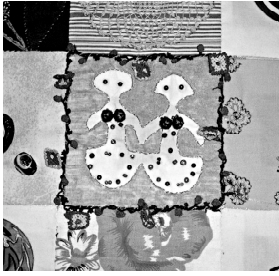
Supporting Documents to the Charter, 1 and 2

Demands of the World March of Women to eliminate poverty

Letter addressed to Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the UN, October 17, 2000

References:





## Thoughts on goal 2. Achieve universal primary education

*"Educated girls who become mothers are more likely to send their children to school, passing on and multiplying benefits."*

*UNICEF, THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2004.*

**Goal target:**

"Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling."

**Indicators**

1. Net enrolment ratio in primary education (UNESCO)
2. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 (UNESCO)
3. Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds (UNESCO)



Equality of girls and boys in education is addressed in Goal 3 on women's equality and empowerment (see further).

Access to education is one of the conditions that enable women and girls to exit poverty. Education provides tools with which to think, act, participate, and protest in order to escape the yoke of oppression and make independent decisions. A woman who has benefited from schooling has more capacity to choose her occupation, decide with whom she wishes to share her life, demand adequate health care, obtain a better paying job, make her voice heard in society, and to fight violence and insecurity than an uneducated woman.

Yet, we find this Goal insufficient.

For one thing, everyone, particularly girls, should have access to all levels of education. To this end, and so that education can truly be a tool for women's empowerment, we must:

- Free girls and women of household tasks so they can attend school and receive training.
- Conduct campaigns urging parents to send their girls to school.
- Implement measures to prevent girls from abandoning their studies. Make sure that girls attend school regularly.
- Ensure that girls have equal access to all existing educational streams, particularly technical and scientific streams.
- Ensure that girls receive training that leads to well-paying and decent employment.

- Ensure that educational programs and manuals are free of discriminatory and stereotypical content.
- Ensure free access to schooling; universal access to school equipment; availability of free transportation for children living far from school or the option of residential schools; and the availability of nutritious and low-cost meals in school cafeterias.
- Ensure that school attendance is compulsory for at least nine years.
- Ensure quality instruction and the presence of female teachers.
- Make certain that schools are welcoming and safe for girls; eradicate all forms of sexual violence and harassment.

We would also like to see a broader vision of education that encompasses continuing training and recognizes knowledge obtained by means other than books and academic training.

*WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY:*

Equality: Affirmation 1  
Freedom: Affirmation 5  
Justice: Affirmations 5

Demands of the World March of Women to eliminate poverty

**References:**





## Thoughts on goal 3. promote gender equality and empower women

*"Discrimination against women has clear social costs. Girls and women in many countries are denied education and healthcare. Millions are subjected to violence and abuse. They are confronted with biased courts and legal systems. They are denied employment opportunities. But just as important as the social costs are the financial ones . . . gender discrimination not only harms millions of individuals worldwide but it also cripples national economic growth."*

*THE COST OF GENDER INEQUALITY, ARTICLE PUBLISHED ON THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA) WEBSITE, 2000.*

### Goal target:

"Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015."

#### Indicators

1. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education (UNESCO)
2. Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old (UNESCO)
3. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (ILO)
4. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (IPU)



Equality between women and men should not be limited to one goal. It should be an element of all the MDGs. It is an essential condition for constructing a world without poverty and violence. It constitutes one of the five values of the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity*. But it will not become a reality if the affirmations connected with the other values are not fulfilled.

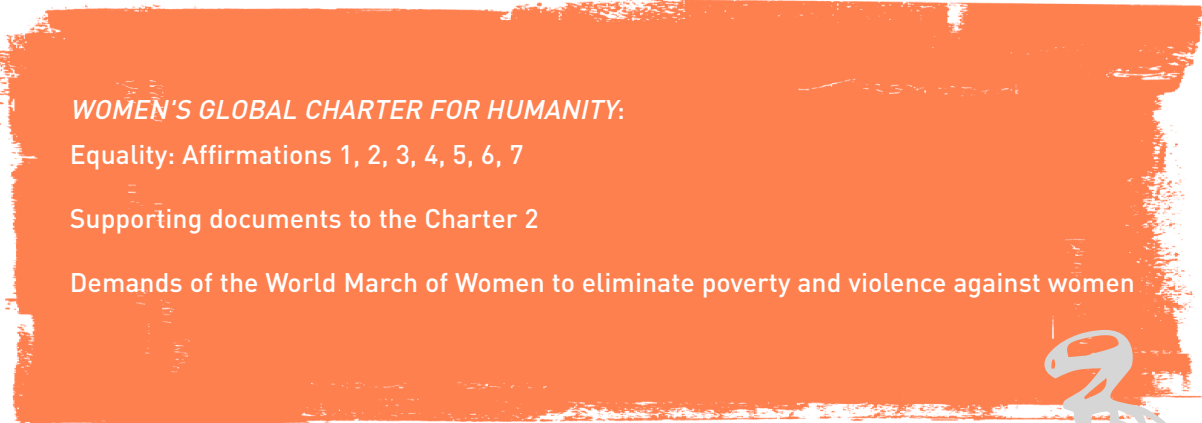
As we wrote in our letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan of October 17, 2000: "Equality is at once an end and a means to achieving our continuing goals of peace, justice and development."

Furthermore, the angle taken by this MDG is very narrow, because only four elements are being used to evaluate it, two concerning education (on this subject see our thoughts on MDG2), and a timid foray into the economic and political realms; "the proportion of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector" and the "proportion of seats held by women in national parliament".

We have a much broader vision of equality. Equality should be established in all domains: education of youth and adults; employment (access to jobs, decent wages, social benefits); decision-making; political/social/economic representation and participation; access to health services, justice and recreation services. Unpaid work should be shared among men and women to give women the time to participate fully in all social/political/economic activities. This work produces wealth and should be included in the calculation of countries' gross domestic product (GDP).

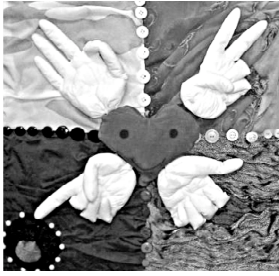
Equality is achieved through the elimination of all forms of discrimination, exclusion and violence against women. No religion, tradition, or custom shall justify discrimination, exclusion or violence.

In the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity*, we have developed our concept of equality; we refer you to all the affirmations listed under equality.



References:





## Thoughts on goal 4. reduce child mortality and goal 5. improve maternal health

*"Every minute, somewhere on the planet, a pregnant woman or a woman who has just given birth dies. The global trend toward a falling maternal mortality rate is stagnating and even reversing in some countries.*

*. . . Out of 529,000 deaths annually, roughly 10% are linked to improperly performed abortions, especially in poor countries."*

ALTERNATIVES INTERNATIONALES, FRANCE, MAY 2005 - SOURCE WHO.

*"Each year, more than 4 million die within 28 days of coming into the world and 6.6 million young children die before their fifth birthday."*

WHO - THE WORLD HEALTH REPORT, 2005.

### Goals targets:

#### Target for Goal 4:

"Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate."

#### Indicators

1. Under-five mortality rate (UNICEF-WHO)
2. Infant mortality rate (UNICEF-WHO)
3. Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles (UNICEF-WHO)

#### Target for Goal 5:

"Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate."

#### Indicators

1. Maternal mortality ratio (UNICEF-WHO)
2. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (UNICEF-WHO)

We are linking these two goals to avoid repetition in our criticism.

The vision driving these goals is narrow, especially MDG5. We do not deny the importance of protecting young children, both boys and girls, and their mothers. But addressing only pregnant mothers, or women in labour or new mothers, restricts women exclusively to the mother role. There is nothing in the MDGs about reproductive and sexual rights, and there is no discernible progress in the Revised Draft Outcome Document for September 2005.

Health is linked to women's economic, social, sanitary, environmental, political and labour conditions.

Poverty deprives numerous women of the living conditions that enable good health (when food is scarce, boys and men are fed first). Poverty also deprives women of access to care and information on their reproductive and sexual rights. The fact that numerous women cannot freely choose whether they will have sexual relations, with whom, when, and in what conditions; cannot protect themselves during sex (see MDG6); cannot decide whether to allow a pregnancy to come to term; cannot use contraceptives or have a safe abortion; and the violence to which they are subjected-all have a heavy impact on their health.

We must aim for free and quality health care for all. Countries should allocate resources to provide such access and break the monopolies of pharmaceutical companies on drugs and patents so they can offer the drugs and vaccines their people need without discrimination. This will be achieved by cancelling debt and ending the structural adjustment programs that severely strain public funds, and by controlling and acquiring intellectual property rights on domestic medical resources.

We must promote the living conditions that allow for good health: prevention, food sovereignty, etc.

Young girls and women should be able to choose:

- their life partner;
- whether or not to bring a pregnancy to term;
- the number of children they desire and the moment they want to have them;
- to protect themselves during sexual relations;
- whether or not they will have sexual relations.

This means fighting:

- against genital mutilation;
- early and forced marriages;
- against rape and sexual violence, including within the couple;
- against forced abortion;
- against sex-selective abortion (abortion of a female foetus);
- against prostitution and sexual slavery;
- against working conditions that maintain numerous women in slavery.

In practical terms, they must have access to:

- information about their rights;
- economic resources to become independent;
- resources to fight the violence that specifically targets them;
- information about contraception;
- free and safe contraception;
- free and quality reproductive care close to home;
- free abortion services under safe conditions;
- prevention services to screen for breast and cervical cancer; information on hormone therapy;
- a healthy and varied diet;
- a clean living environment;
- a healthy living environment;
- working conditions that do not affect their health;
- recreational activities that promote health and protect against sickness.

#### *WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY:*

Equality: Affirmations 1, 4  
Freedom: Affirmations 1, 2, 4, 5  
Justice: Affirmations 5, 6  
Peace: Affirmation 1

Supporting document to the Charter, 2

Demands of the World March of Women to eliminate poverty and violence against women

References:



## Thoughts on goal 6. combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

*"As of December 2003, women accounted for nearly 50% of all people living with HIV worldwide (39.4 million adults).*

*. . . Besides being the majority of those infected, women and girls are now bearing the brunt of the epidemic in other ways too: it is they who principally take care of sick people, and they are the most likely to lose jobs, income and schooling. Women may even lose their homes and other assets if they are widowed.*

REPORT ON THE GLOBAL AIDS EPIDEMIC, JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) JULY 2004.

**Target 1.** "Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS."

### Indicators

1. HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-24 years (UNAIDS-WHO-UNICEF)
2. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate (UN Population Division)
  - a) Condom use at the last high-risk sex (UNICEF-WHO)
  - b) Percentage of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS (UNICEF-WHO)
  - c) Contraceptive prevalence rate (UN Population Division)
3. Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years (UNICEF-UNAIDS-WHO)

**Target 2.** "Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases."

### Indicators

1. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria (WHO)
2. Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures (UNICEF-WHO)
3. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis (WHO)
4. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under DOTS (internationally-recommended TB control strategy (WHO)

Goal targets:



As UNAIDS mentions in its last report, to achieve this goal we must: "address the many factors that contribute to women's vulnerability and risk - gender and cultural inequalities, violence, ignorance". (<http://www.unaids.org/bangkok2004/report.html>).

This is the only goal that speaks of the need for statistics showing the specific nature of women's experience and the impact on them of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is the only one to stress the importance of information on contraception and the use of condoms in high risk sexual relations.

For a feminist analysis of health issues and their link to poverty, see our thoughts on MDG4 and MDG5.

Given the monopoly of a few pharmaceutical laboratories on vaccines, treatments and drug patents, especially AIDS drugs, we affirm the need:

- for a public, free and quality health system;
- to break the monopoly of transnational pharmaceutical companies on drugs that are essential to the survival of the sick;
- to abandon military research in favour of civilian research aimed at creating social programs to promote health, employment and education.

In addition, the link between rape and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, especially in war and armed conflict zones, refers us back to the causes of such conflicts; the interests served by war; and the position of women in these conflicts: the use of women's bodies as war booty; sexual violence; the use of women for the purpose of "ethnic cleaning"; the plight of girl soldiers; and women's role in conflict resolution.

Beyond treatment, we affirm that these pandemics must be fought by:

- ending wars and armed conflicts;
- enacting and effectively implementing laws that prohibit and condemn all forms of violence;
- providing all people with educational and training programs that promote a culture of peace rather than violence;
- upholding women's sexual and reproductive rights.

Note the improvement incorporated into the Revised Draft Outcome Document for the September 2005 Summit that calls for: "treatment and enhanced access to affordable medicines"; and "strongly condemns all violations of human rights of women and girls in situations of armed conflicts and the use of sexual exploitations"; and calls for women's active participation in conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

*WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY:*

Justice: Affirmation 6  
Peace: Affirmations 4, 5

Supporting document to the Charter 1 and 2

Demands of the World March of Women to eliminate poverty and violence against women

**References:**







## Thoughts on goal 7. ensure environmental sustainability

*"Women's key roles, responsibilities and intimate knowledge of plants and animals sometimes remain "invisible" to technicians working in the agriculture, forestry and environmental sectors, as well as to planners and policy-makers.*

*The lack of recognition at technical and institutional levels means that women's interests and demands are given inadequate attention. Moreover, women's involvement in formalized efforts to conserve biodiversity is slight because of widespread cultural barriers to women's participation in decision-making arenas at all levels. Moreover, women's involvement in formalized efforts to conserve biodiversity is slight because of widespread cultural barriers to women's participation in decision-making arenas at all levels."*

*WOMEN - USERS, PRESERVERS AND MANAGERS OF AGROBIODIVERSITY FAO, December 2001.*

### Goal targets:

**Target 1.** "Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources."

**Indicators**

1. Proportion of land area covered by forest (FAO)
2. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area (UNEP-WCMC)
3. Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1,000 GDP (PPP) (IEA, World Bank)
4. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita (UNFCCC, UNDESA/Statistics Division) and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) (UNEP-Ozone Secretariat)
5. Proportion of population using solid fuels (WHO)

**Target 2.** "Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation."

**Indicators**

1. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural (UNICEF-WHO)
2. Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural (UNICEF-WHO)

**Target 3.** "By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers."

**Indicator**

Proportion of households with access to secure tenure (UN-HABITAT)



The waste of natural resources, the destruction of the environment and pollution are the consequence of excessive industrial and commercial exploitation of natural resources in the service of unbridled consumption. So that forests and mines can be exploited and more land made available to the agro-industry, land formerly used for subsistence food crops is destroyed. Now crops are grown for export, often genetically modified to increase returns. One of the results

is impoverishment of rural peoples who now must buy their food; another is their displacement, depriving them of the resources essential to their survival. Furthermore, the large corporations hold patents on living organisms, and have acquired intellectual property rights over natural resources that do not belong to them. Such overexploitation leads to deforestation, desertification, climate change, floods, forest fires and non-biodegradable, invasive waste, etc.

Finally, it results in an exodus from the countryside to the cities where people live under deplorable conditions.

As for fossil fuels, they are the source of war, expropriations and pollution.

To "reverse the loss of environmental resources," as this MDG asserts, we must reverse the existing capitalist logic (see Thoughts on MDG1). We must reformulate the economic system to satisfy the basic needs of the majority of people: a clean living environment; healthful and nutritious food; access to safe water close to home; education; health; transportation; and culture. We must promote the use of renewable and non-polluting energy, environmentally friendly transportation; and moderate use of natural resources. Science must be put to the service of people, not the dominant interests.

People living on the land, who have always used its resources, should not be dispossessed of this heritage. Agriculture should first and foremost guarantee the country's food sovereignty. In peasant communities, women are usually responsible for feeding their family and the community. They have intimate knowledge of the earth, seeds, plants and ecosystems. This knowledge should be recognized; it is one of the keys to sustainable development, which starts with local and national development.

#### *WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY:*

Equality: Affirmations 5, 6, 7

Freedom: Affirmation 1

Solidarity: Affirmations 2, 5, 6

Justice: Affirmations 1, 2, 5

Peace: Affirmations 1, 5

Supporting document to the Charter 1 and 2

Demands of the World March of Women to eliminate poverty

References:





## Thoughts on goal 8. develop a global partnership for development

*“Extensive data from around the world show that IMF-imposed austerity and economic reform programs have stripped many women of what meager health and education benefits were once available to them. Women’s formal sector unemployment has increased due to IMF-induced recessions, privatizations, and government cutbacks.”*

FACT SHEETS, 50 YEARS IS ENOUGH.

**Target 1.** “Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.”

**Target 2.** “Address the special needs of the least developed countries. Includes: tariff and quota-free access for least developed countries’ exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction.”

**Target 3.** “Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly).”

**Target 4.** “Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.”

*Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS).*

### Indicators

#### Official development assistance (ODA)

1. Net ODA, total and to the least developed countries, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors’ gross national income (OECD)
2. Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation) (OECD)
3. Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied (OECD)
4. ODA received in landlocked developing countries as a proportion of their gross national incomes (OECD)
5. ODA received in small island developing States as a proportion of their gross national incomes (OECD)

Goal targets:



**Market access**

1. Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and from the least developed countries, admitted free of duty (UNCTAD,WTO,WB)
2. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries (UNCTAD,WTO,WB)
3. Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their gross domestic product (OECD)
4. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity (OECD, WTO)

**Debt sustainability**

1. Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative) (IMF-World Bank)
2. Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative (IMF-World Bank)
3. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services (IMF-World Bank)

**Target 5.** "In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth."

**Indicator**

Unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 years, each sex and total (ILO)

**Target 6.** "In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries."

**Indicator**

Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis (WHO)

**Target 7.** "In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications."

**Indicators**

1. Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population (ITU)
2. Personal computers in use per 100 population and Internet users per 100 population (ITU)

This goal is very broad in scope, comprising numerous targets and indicators.

The language of this MDG is ambiguous. A partnership involves equal partners, especially when their aim is to set up "an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system." But, the countries this goal refers to (least developed countries) are not in a position of equality, either within the international organizations that govern finance, the economy and trade (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, etc.), or in regional trade negotiations (free trade treaties, Free Trade Area of the Americas, European Union treaties, among members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, etc. ).

Relations among countries are in fact related to their economic and military power. They are governed by the rules of neoliberalism. The USA and Europe, by subsidizing agricultural production, are able to export their goods at such a low cost they can be sold at a lower price than the production costs of crops grown by the peasants in poor countries. Pharmaceutical companies, with the means to acquire patents on drugs and natural products, even when they are not the original manufacturers of these products (e.g., different varieties of rice, and substances used for natural medicines), protect their sales for many years and sell them at prohibitive prices to the detriment of the majority's health.

These sales are highly profitable to a few increasingly rich transnationals and individuals, deepening the gap separating them from the most disadvantaged people.

In addition, the debt poor countries have contracted with rich countries over the years places enormous strain on their national budgets. When international organizations demand that poor countries "restructure the debt," they also demand a drastic reduction in public spending. This results in devastating cuts to education, health, roads and energy budgets. These reductions were catastrophic to the poorest members of society, especially women and children (see Thoughts on MDG1 and MDG3).

Yet, except for target 5, with an indicator of youth employment (both sexes), none of the targets and indicators of this MDG take into account the fact that women are discriminated against in terms of impact of the debt, access to technology and communications, and drugs. They are sacrificed when it comes to access to jobs, care, education, and food (see Thoughts on MDGs 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7).

In addition, rich countries are not bound by any conditions or timetable when it comes to respecting their engagements. Yet the Revised Draft Outcome Document for the September Summit invites countries to adopt it. Moreover, this document stresses the necessity of fighting corruption. Nothing, however, is said about the causes of this corruption, or about financial dealings, tax evasion, corporate misconduct, environmental destruction and the ensuing human rights violations. Not a word about respecting biodiversity, fair trade, the need for socially productive and environmentally responsible investment. Just the opposite: it proclaims the intention to "promote greater foreign direct investment flows to developing countries and countries with economies in transition." Measures for ending the trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings simply seem to be window dressing.

The responsibility of private enterprise for the elements cited above is too important for us to simply trust that they will follow through on their own (two final targets). We ask that governments impose strict rules on them to hold the public interest before their own.

Last, development should not only be viewed from the angle of trade and the economy as this MDG does.

### **Regarding some specific targets and indicators: Debt and development assistance**

In June 2005, in Scotland, representatives of the G8 (grouping the most industrialized countries of the planet) proposed to cancel the debt of 18 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). This announcement partially satisfies one of the demands of the World March of Women. Pressure must be maintained, though, to win total and unconditional debt cancellation for all poor countries.

Even for the 18 countries in question, debt cancellation is not total:

1. these countries were chosen because they had already carried out numerous reforms demanded by their creditors;
2. debt cancellation comes with conditions, like "good governance";
3. cancellation concerns debts incurred with the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the African Development Bank. Debts with other banks and agencies, public and private, were not cancelled;
4. debt cancellation does not mean that the countries concerned immediately have access to funds with which to invest in the sectors most in need: health, education, transportation, energy, etc. ;
5. to make the needed investments (in particular, to achieve the MDGs), these countries must again appeal for international assistance, which is conditional;
6. the cost of debt cancellation is paid for by the ODA budgets of rich countries. These monies will not therefore be invested in the development of the countries in question.

The seven countries also announced an ODA increase equal to US\$50 billion, or double the current amount, to reach 0.7% of the donor countries' budgets. This promise dates back to the 1970s and they should actually triple their assistance if they want to fulfill it. "A large part of ODA goes back to the donor country (purchase of food, drugs, equipment, freight charges, expert missions, etc.) . . . ODA is a huge catch-all. It includes debt repayments, US assistance to Afghanistan and Iraq, and the cost of receiving refugees from Third World Countries," states the Comité pour l'annulation de la dette dans le monde (CATDM)" (CADTM, News release, July 9, 2005: CADTM is calling for an end to the broken promises regarding development assistance (in French).

[http://www.cadtm.org/article.php3?id\\_article=1528](http://www.cadtm.org/article.php3?id_article=1528)

**References:**

*WOMEN'S GLOBAL CHARTER FOR HUMANITY:*  
Equality: Affirmation 6

Supporting document to the Charter 1 and 2

Demands of the World March of Women to eliminate poverty

Letter addressed to Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the UN, October 17, 2000



## Ideas for actions

We will be hearing a lot about the MDGs in upcoming weeks and until 2015. We believe that we must call on our governments to ratify and implement the existing international treaties, and continue our work to bring life to the Women's Global Charter for Humanity. Nevertheless, we think it is important to raise awareness about our criticisms of the MDGs. To this end, we propose some ideas for actions and forums where we can transmit our message.

### information about the MDGs

This is your document! Use it to inform your groups, challenge your government, raise public awareness about the scope of the MDGs in terms of the existing treaties, protocols, conventions and international platforms, especially with respect to the Women's Global Charter for Humanity. For example, take advantage of your government's public announcements about the MDGs to reiterate our demands and talk about the content of the Charter.

### evaluating the MDGs

So that women are taken into account in ALL the MDGs, we suggest establishing gender targets and indicators that governments will consider when assessing their progress with the MDGs:

- women's poverty and the specific forms of assistance provided to them;
- women's access to food, water, health, energy sources, living environment, transportation, information technologies;
- the level of schooling of women, number of girls regularly attending school, success and dropout rates, streams enrolled in, assistance provided for continued studies;
- possession of identity documents;
- time devoted to household labour and caring of intimates;
- representation of women in decision-making positions in the community;
- discrimination in legislation;
- sexist stereotypes in the media, educational materials, language;
- laws governing family code, monogamy, etc.;
- number of women heads of the family and their status;
- status of migrant and indigenous women;
- economic sectors where women work, positions held, nature of contracts;
- existence of free economic zones and the working conditions imposed on women;
- salary gap with men, level of female unionization;
- girl labour;
- access of women to land and the status of women farmers;
- sexual and reproductive rights, access to reproductive health care, contraception and abortion;
- number of women infected with HIV/AIDS and measures taken to protect and assist them;
- types of violence against women, remedies, laws condemning violence against women;
- scale of sex trafficking and prostitution and measures taken to eradicate them;
- state of the environment;
- separation of Church and State;
- the place of the women's movement;
- participation of the people, particularly African women.



## 2005 action calendar

Social movements will hold various actions in the coming months to demonstrate their commitment to ending poverty and violence by attacking their causes.

Participate in these actions on behalf of the World March of Women

### and highlight women's positions:

**September 10, 2005**, before the UN Summit to review the MDGs: the *Wear a White Band Campaign*: <http://www.whiteband.org> of the Global Call to Action.

**September 14-16, 2005, UN**, 2005 review of the MDGs: NGOs and the private sector were invited to present their reactions to the UN General Assembly on June 23-24, 2005. (see: <http://www.un.org/ga/civilsocietyhearings/>). They are not invited to the September summit meeting.

**October 17, 2005, noon**. Use the action you are organizing in your country during the 24 Hours of Feminist Solidarity at the end of the Relay of the *Women's Global Charter for Humanity* to affirm your position on the MDGs and defend the values contained in the Charter.

**October 12-20, 2005, Geneva**, Stop the Agenda of the WTO/multinationals before Hong Kong! Support the appeal of the Geneva Peoples' Alliance, a movement comprising NGOs, unions and social movements that are mobilizing resistance to the preparatory meeting to the World Trade Organization's (WTO) meeting in Hong Kong in December 2005. [http://www.omc-wto.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=5&Itemid=1&lang=en](http://www.omc-wto.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=5&Itemid=1&lang=en)

**December 13-18, 2005, Hong Kong**: Join or support the mobilization of the Hong Kong People's Alliance (HKPA) against the WTO on December 13, 13 and 18 (<http://www.hkpa-wto.org/>) and Via Campesina's Peasants March, set for December 16, in Hong Kong.

## suggested texts and sites

The World March is involved in an open electronic forum initiated by the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights that you can check out at this Web site: <http://www.wgnrr.org/> Discussions will serve as the basis of a document that will be submitted to a workshop scheduled to take place in New Delhi, India, at the end of September during the 10th international meeting on women's health.

Read the text of the Hong Kong Declaration on the WTO, on development and migration, that emerged from the regional conference attended by 70 participants from 16 Asian countries on July 17-19, 2005, at the Web site of Focus on the Global South: <http://www.focusweb.org/main/html/>

A coalition of women's organizations has proposed amendments to the Revised Final Outcome Document for the meeting on September 10, 2005, at the UN (following discussions in July and August): Center for Women's Global Leadership, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), United Methodist United Nations Office, Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) et Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). [http://www.choike.org/documentos/m5amends\\_july22\\_women.pdf](http://www.choike.org/documentos/m5amends_july22_women.pdf)

You can also check out the UN's NGO liaison service: <http://www.un-ngls.org/> that publishes regular news updates on NGO campaigns. The site also offers a list of analytical writings published by various organizations.



## women's global charter for humanity

### EQUALITY

---

MDGS 2, 3, 4, 5

**Affirmation 1.** All human beings and peoples are equal in all domains and all societies. They have equal access to wealth, to land, decent employment, means of production, adequate housing, a quality education, occupational training, justice, a healthy, nutritious and sufficient diet, physical and mental health services, old age security, a healthy environment, property, political and decision-making functions, energy, drinking water, clean air, means of transportation, technical knowledge and skills, information, means of communication, recreation, culture, rest, technology, and the fruit of scientific progress.

MDG 3

**Affirmation 2.** No human condition or condition of life justifies discrimination.

**Affirmation 3.** No custom, tradition, religion, ideology, economic system or policy justifies the inferiorization of any person or authorizes actions that undermine human dignity, and physical and psychological integrity.

MDGS 3, 4, 5

**Affirmation 4.** Women are full-fledged human beings and citizens before being spouses, companions, wives, mothers and workers.

MDGS 1, 3, 7

**Affirmation 5.** All unpaid, so-called feminine tasks related to supporting life and social maintenance (household labour, education, caring of children and intimates, etc.) are economic activities that create wealth and that should be valued and shared.

MDGS 1, 3, 7, 8

**Affirmation 6.** Trade among countries is equitable and does not harm peoples' development.

MDGS 1, 3, 7

**Affirmation 7.** Every person has access to a job with fair remuneration, in safe and sanitary conditions, and in which their dignity is respected.

### FREEDOM

---

MDGS 1, 4, 5, 7

**Affirmation 1.** All human beings live free of all forms of violence. No human being is the property of another. No person may be held in slavery, forced to marry, subjected to forced labour, trafficked, sexually exploited.

MDGS 4, 5

**Affirmation 2.** All individuals enjoy collective and individual freedoms that guarantee their dignity, in particular: freedom of thought, conscience, belief and religion; freedom of expression and opinion; to express one's sexuality in a free and responsible manner and choose the person with whom to share one's life; freedom to vote, be elected and participate in political life; freedom to associate, meet, unionize and demonstrate; freedom to choose one's residence and civil status; freedom to choose one's courses of study and choose one's profession and exercise it; freedom to move and to be in charge of one's person and goods; freedom to choose one's language of communication while respecting minority languages and a society's choices concerning the language spoken at home and in the workplace, and to be informed, learn, discuss and gain access to information technologies.

**Affirmation 4.** Women are free to make decisions about their body, fertility and sexuality. They have the choice about whether they will have children.

MDGS 2, 4, 5

Affirmation 5. Democracy is rooted in freedom and equality.

### SOLIDARITY

---

MDGS 1, 7

**Affirmation 2.** All human beings are interdependent. They share the responsibility and the intention to live together and build a society that is generous, just and egalitarian, based on human rights; a society free of oppression, exclusion, discrimination, intolerance and violence.

MDGS 1, 2, 7

**Affirmation 5.** A society's economy serves the women and men composing that society. It is based on the production and exchange of socially useful wealth distributed among all people, the priority of satisfying the collective needs, eliminating poverty and ensuring the balance of collective and individual interests. It ensures food sovereignty. It opposes the exclusive quest for profit to the detriment of social usefulness, and the private accumulation of the means of production, wealth, capital, land, and decision-making power by a few groups and individuals.

MDGs 1, 7

**Affirmation 6.** The contribution of every person to society is acknowledged and paves the way to social rights, regardless of the function held by that person.

## JUSTICE

---

MDGs 1, 7

**Affirmation 1.** All human beings regardless of their country of origin, nationality and place of residence are considered to be full-fledged citizens, with fair and equal entitlement to human rights (social, economic, political, civil, cultural rights, sexual, reproductive and environmental rights), within an egalitarian, fair and genuinely democratic framework.

**Affirmation 2.** Social justice is based on the equitable redistribution of wealth to eliminate poverty, limit wealth acquisition, and satisfy essential needs to improve the well-being of all people.

MDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

**Affirmation 5.** Every individual benefits from social protection guaranteeing her or him access to care, decent housing, education, information and security in old age. Every individual has sufficient income to live in dignity.

MDGs 4, 5, 6

**Affirmation 6.** Health and social services are public, accessible, quality and free of charge; this includes all treatments, and services for all pandemic diseases, particularly HIV.

## PEACE

---

MDGs 1, 4, 5, 7

**Affirmation 1.** All human beings live in a peaceful world. Peace is achieved principally as a result of: equality between women and men, social, economic, political, legal and cultural equality, rights protection, and eradication of poverty, ensuring that all people live in dignity and free of violence, and that everyone has employment, enough resources to feed, house, clothe and educate themselves, is protected in old age, and has access to health care.

MDGs 5, 6

**Affirmation 4.** All human beings have the right to live in a world free of war and armed conflict, foreign occupation and military bases. No one has the right to decide on the life or death of individuals and peoples.

MDGs 5, 6, 7

**Affirmation 5.** No custom, tradition, ideology, religion, political or economic system justifies the use of violence.



## supporting document 1 to the *women's global charter for humanity*

MDGs 1, 6, 7, 8

Women denounce:

- Transnational corporations, giant landowners, banks and financial power holders whose sole objective is to become richer. Through their speculation and continuous quest to increase production and consumption, they wreak destruction on local organizations, small entrepreneurs and small commercial and rural enterprises. They impose difficult working conditions, trample social and union rights, and exploit adults and children; women are over-represented in these worker categories. Their policy destroys the balance between humans and the earth and results in the depletion of natural resources, an energy crisis and environmental destruction.
- International financial organizations' (World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) imposition on poor countries of structural adjustment programs and other measures that result in cuts to public services, spiralling debt and relentless impoverishment.
- The impoverishment of countries, leading to the development of mafias that exploit people and force them to work in despicable, inhuman conditions as extreme as slavery, prostitution and sex trafficking. Millions of women are recruited in this way into networks rife with violence.
- Wars and armed conflict that profit the arms industry, decimate civilian populations, breed impoverishment and injury, and generate hate and terrorism. Women and children form the majority of the victims: sexual violence, forced abortion and sterilization, forTarget recruitment into armies or militias, forced displacements etc. The consequences on their physical and mental health are acute (HIV, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, numerous and long-lasting injuries).

## supporting document 2 to the women's global charter for humanity - The world march of women's conditions and demands to make this world possible

### MDGS 1, 3

For identical or equivalent work, women receive remuneration equal to that of men and enjoy similar rights and benefits.

Household labour, education, and caring of children and intimates is shared equally among women and men. Those who carry out this work benefit from social rights.

Women have equal access to property, land and credit, regardless of their civil status.

Measures are adopted enabling women and men to balance their paid work with family, social, political and cultural responsibilities. The principle of equal opportunity is a foundation stone.

### MDGS 1, 8

Provisions are established to eliminate tax evasion, tax havens and fraud.

Effective means for combating corruption and arbitrary actions are established.

Military research is abandoned in favour of civilian-oriented research. The arms industry is dismantled and converted for use in health, employment and educational programs.

### MDGS 3, 4, 5, 6

Spouses are equal within the couple and the family.

Women and men are responsible for contraception. They have access to reliable and impartial information about contraception and how to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases, and to a free, safe and quality health system.

Women have the right and power not to comply with patriarchal social and cultural imperatives that impose a model of behaviour requiring them to be pretty, submissive, silent and industrious.

### MDG 3

Women possess their own identity papers.

Measures are adopted to eliminate gender inequality among children and adults.

Women have equal representation in a global democratic system where people are represented in an egalitarian manner, which genuinely defends everyone's interests, establishes peace and eradicates poverty and violence. This body guarantees peoples' sovereignty and their self-determination; it protects their territories from occupation and safeguards their natural wealth. This system operates with transparency and its activities are controlled by the members of the societies that created it.

### MDG 7

Biological and cultural diversity is maintained as a social good. Traditional medicine is recognized and valued in every society. The knowledge in this domain of women of all ages, peasant women and indigenous peoples, and of all other communities and populations is recognized and valued.

### MDG 1

Every individual has access to social security through universal public programs.



## demands of the world march of women to eliminate poverty

### MDGS 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

p-1 That all states adopt a legal framework and strategies aimed at eliminating poverty. [...]

This legal framework must include measures to guarantee the economic and social autonomy of women through the exercise of their rights. It must include provisions for adopting laws, programs, action plans, and national projects specifically to ensure that women suffer no discrimination in their rights, and that they have access to the following ...

**MDGs 7, 8****p-2 The urgent implementation of measures such as:**

The Tobin Tax; revenue from the tax would be paid into a special fund:

- earmarked for social development;
- managed democratically by the international community as a whole;
- according to criteria respecting fundamental human rights and democracy;
- with equal representation of women and men;
- to which women (who represent 70% of the 1.3 billion people living in extreme poverty) would have preferred access.

The investment of 0.7% of the rich countries' gross national product (GNP) in aid for developing countries . . .

An end to structural adjustment programs;

An end to cutbacks in social budgets and public services; . . .

**p-3 cancellation of the debt of all third world countries, taking into account the principles of responsibility, transparency of information and accountability**

We demand the immediate cancellation of the debt of the 53 poorest countries on the planet, in support of the objectives of the Jubilee 2000 campaign.

In the longer term, we demand the cancellation of the debt of all Third World countries and the setting up of a mechanism to monitor the debt write-off, ensuring that this money is employed to eliminate poverty and to further the well-being of people most affected by structural adjustment programs, the majority of whom are women and girls.

**p-4 The implementation of the 20/20 formula between donor countries and the recipients of international aid.**

In this scheme, 20% of the sum contributed by the donor country must be allocated to social development and 20% of the receiving government's spending must be used for social programs.

**p-5 A non-monolithic world political organization, with authority over the economy and egalitarian and democratic representation of all countries on earth (ensuring parity between poor countries and rich countries) and equal representation of women and men.****ECONOMIC ISSUES**

The World March expects to contribute to setting up a world economic system that is fair, participatory and socially cohesive. It puts forth a more structural demand for a Council for Economic and Financial Security to take charge of:

- redefining the rules of a new world financial system geared toward a fair and equitable sharing of the planet's wealth, toward social justice and the improved well-being of the world population, specifically for women who make up more than half of this population;
- exercising political control over financial markets;
- "disarming" markets, preventing them from damaging societies and systematically creating instability, insecurity and inequality;
- ensuring diligent regulation and monitoring of economic, financial and commercial organizations;
- exercising democratic control over commercial trade or, in other terms, applying "zero tolerance" on the criminal tendencies of the economy.

". . . AMONG THE CONDITIONS FOR ACHIEVING THIS GOAL, THE WORLD MARCH'S DEMANDS FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE ARE:

- the elimination of all tax havens (there are about forty havens including Gibraltar, the Cayman Islands, Liechtenstein, etc.) whose very existence constitutes a form of legalized theft by allowing financiers, companies, political leaders, etc. to hide "their" money and to avoid paying taxes and obeying the laws and regulations of States;
- the end of banking secrecy, an anti-democratic practice that constitutes another form of legalized theft;
- the redistribution of wealth currently monopolized by the seven richest industrialized countries.



## demands of the world march of women to eliminate violence against women

### MDGS 4,5, 6

**V-2.** That States recognize, in their statutes and actions, that all forms of violence against women are violations of fundamental human rights and cannot be justified by any custom, religion, cultural practice or political power. Therefore, all states must recognize a woman's right to determine her own destiny, and to exercise control over her body and reproductive function. (added in 2001: right to abortion and contraception, freedom from forced sterilization, and the right to have children).

**V-3.** That States implement action plans, effective policies and programs equipped with adequate financial and other means to end all forms of violence against women.

### MDGS 1,8

LETTER ADDRESSED TO KOFI ANNAN, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UN, OCTOBER 17, 2000

"...Capitalist markets and multinational corporations have proven for a long time, Mr. Annan, that they are fully capable of generating inequality in the world and totally incapable of reducing poverty, particularly among women. The world economy has suffered from a "democracy deficit" for a long time. We do not think the UN should develop an equal partnership with private enterprise. The UN's first partnership is with the peoples, whose interests it must champion. We believe the UN should develop the means to assert its political authority and to demand respect for values and practices associated with fundamental human rights and with civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. To act in any other way is to damage the UN's seriousness, credibility and legitimacy."

### *Legislating against poverty*

If governments are serious in their commitment to "making the right to development a reality for everyone [including women], and to freeing the entire human race from want," one thing they could do is adopt a legal framework and national strategies aimed at eliminating poverty. "...

*explore the idea of setting up a world council for economic and financial security* to redefine the rules for a new world economic system. "... to stop the international political community from leaving everything to the market forces and waiting-in vain for globalization to be profitable for all and for humanity's wealth to be shared in solidarity. Such a council could ensure that the political take precedence over the economic.

### increase the UN's proactive role vis-à-vis the world bank, IMF and WTO

"... We are asking the UN, and you in your position as Secretary-General, to demand from these institutions who shape globalization today that they put respect for fundamental human rights first and subordinate profits and competition to the values adopted by the Millennium Assembly: *freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility* for managing economic and social development."



*A Change of Course, The Millennium Development Goals Through the Lens of the Women's Global Charter for Humanity*, is a document published by the World March of Women (WMW), with the support of NOVIB.

RESEARCH: Saleema Hutchinson, Brigitte Verdière

WRITING: Brigitte Verdière

TRANSLATION: Nicole Kennedy

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Tutti Frutti, Anne Côté

PUBLICATION DATE: August 2005

World March of Women, 110 rue Sainte-Thérèse, #203  
Montréal (Québec), Canada H2Y 1E6

WEB SITE: <http://www.marchemondialesdesfemmes.org>

E-MAIL: [info@marchemondiale.org](mailto:info@marchemondiale.org)