

# Ending Extreme Poverty, A Road to Peace

## CALL TO ACTION

In May 2006, human rights defenders from four continents, and from diverse social backgrounds, met in Montreal to explore ways of strengthening the movement to eradicate extreme poverty. They reviewed the results of a wide consultation with NGOs, trade unions, United Nations Member States and specialized agencies, which had been mandated by a UN General Assembly Resolution<sup>1</sup>. At the end of the meeting, they launched this appeal to all those striving for peace and justice to support efforts to widen the impact of **October 17<sup>th</sup>, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**.

- > **We are in solidarity** with all those who are fighting throughout the world to eliminate extreme poverty.
- > **We want to contribute** to promoting respect for the dignity of all people, and their effective access to human rights.
- > **We want to join efforts** to enable those living in extreme poverty and exclusion to participate fully in their societies, including the commemoration of **October 17<sup>th</sup>, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**.
- > **We ask** all members of civil society, local and national authorities, and the United Nations to:
  - *Consider those in extreme poverty as the first to take action in the fight against poverty;*
  - *Ensure that people living in poverty fully participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programmes that concern them, and that are inspired by a commitment to a world without poverty - a world where the rights to family life, decent work, social, cultural and political participation are respected;*
  - *Support events organized each October 17<sup>th</sup> to ensure that the participation of people with direct experience of poverty be at the heart of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty;*
  - *Participate in an ongoing, long-term dialogue with people who, in refusing to accept extreme poverty, are building peace.*

### This appeal is launched by:

Diego **Arizala**, Colombia; Micheline **Belisle**, Collective for a poverty-free Quebec, (Qc) Canada; Évelyne **Boisvert-Beauregard**, Youth Organizer, Canada; Jean **Bouchard**, Canada; Brigitte **Bourcier**, France; Eugen **Brand**, Director General, ATD Fourth World; Joan F. **Burke**, SNDdeN., Chair, NGO Committee on Social Development, CONGO, New York, USA; Silvio **Campana Zegarra**, Ombudsman, Cusco, Peru; Virginie **Charvon**, France; Bruno **Couder**, Deputy Director General, ATD Quart Monde; Jean-Michel **Defromont**, France; Susie **Devins**, Deputy Director General ATD Fourth World; Lillo **Di Pasquale**, Switzerland; Gabrielle **Erpicum**, France; Ben **Fehsenfeld**, Tapor (Children's Branch ATD Fourth World); France **Fournier**, (Qc) Canada; Daniel **Genevois**, Amnesty International France, France; Philippe **Hamel**, Burkina Faso; Claude **Heyberger**, France; Mark **Hogan**, Director of Saint Vincent's Trust, Ireland; Ivy **Hollandais**, Mauritius; Betty **Johnson**, Philippines; Louis **Join-Lambert**, Germany; Fidelma **Joyce**, Policy liaison officer, Combat Poverty Agency Ireland; Urs **Kehl**, Canada; Bernadette **Lang**, Canada; Bérengère **Le Sonneur**, James **Leblanc**, Canada; Renée **Lefebvre**, France; Corine **L'Enflé**, Teacher Mauritius; Nina **Lim Yuson**, President ATD Fourth World; David **Lockwood**, Haiti; Bert **Luyts**, Belgium; André **Martel**, (Qc) Canada; Lissette **Martel**, Canada; Franck **Mathieu**, Journal Résistances, France; Tomasz **Medynski**, Poland; Monique **Morval**, Canada; Bertha **Moshi**, Teacher, Tanzania; Sarah **Ortega**, Philippines; Titinga Frédéric **Pacéré**, Lawyer, International Criminal Tribunal (Arusha, Tanzania), Writer; Cristiana **Peruzzo**, Italy; Jacques **Petidor**, Informal education technician, Ministry of Education, Haiti; François **Philiponeau**, France; Joseph Larcher (Ricarl) **Pierre-Louis**, President of Anouska Village, Mauritius; Grazyna **Pisarczyk**, Director of Social Services, Kielce, Pologne; Julian **Quispe Durand**, Peru; Benoit and Véronique **Reboul-Salze**, Canada; Huguette **Redegeld**, Vice-President, ATD Fourth World; Fabienne **Renou**, France; Carolyn Rogers, Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition, (Sk) Canada; Hélène **Rozet**, France; Guy **Ryder**, General Secretary, International Confédération of Free Trade Unions; Vicki **Soanes**, New Zealand; Rosanna **Sta Ana**, Philippines; Aimée **Turcotte**, Community Organiser, (Qc) Canada; Marco **Ugarte**, Vice-President, ATD Fourth World; Alberto **Ugarte Delgado**, Peru; Cassam **Uteem**, Former President of Mauritius; Mieke **Van Dyck**, Haiti; Thierry **Viard**, France; Laurence **Vilain**, Canada; Stuart **Williams**, Ireland.



A secretariat for this appeal is located at  
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95480 • Pierrelaye • France  
[www.atd-quartmonde.org](http://www.atd-quartmonde.org)

This appeal can be signed up until the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007.  
It will be submitted to the United Nations and made public on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007.  
It can be signed on line on the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty website: [www.oct17.org](http://www.oct17.org)

1. In 2005 The UN General Assembly requested an assessment of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (Resolution A/RES/60/209)

On December 10<sup>th</sup> 1948, the peoples marked by two world wars affirmed in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**:

"Disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts [...] The advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people [...] All human beings should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."



On October 17<sup>th</sup> 1987, defenders of human rights from across the world, marked and outraged by extreme poverty, gathered in Paris in response to a call from Joseph Wresinski (Founder of the International Movement ATD Fourth World in 1956), to:

- Pay homage to the victims of hunger, ignorance and violence.
- Affirm their conviction that poverty is not inevitable.
- Proclaim their solidarity with those around the world who struggle to overcome it.



On December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1992, aware of the urgent need to put an end to poverty and extreme poverty, the United Nations recognized October 17<sup>th</sup> as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

## TOO MANY MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD FEEL UNRECOGNIZED AND EXCLUDED

*"When you have nothing, you are no longer treated like a human being. You aren't important to anyone."*

Too many people on this earth daily face intolerable conditions:

*"Hunger, ignorance and all the violence - I can't stand it any more!"*

Although they are outraged, many people remain silent:

*"What good is it? Who cares what I think?"*

On October 17<sup>th</sup>, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, more and more men, women, and children gather together every year to raise their heads and find renewed hope:

*"Rare is the day when you can speak of poverty without shame. When I saw all those people coming together, when I sat down with people that I had never dared to approach, when I spoke up in front of everyone, it gave me a sense of courage, of strength. That day, I realized that all these people wanted us to count for something."*

## EVERYONE COUNTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

Many want to see an end to the discrimination, the indifference, and the rule of the survival of the fittest that generate extreme poverty<sup>2</sup>, the *most ruthless killer and greatest cause of suffering on earth*. It is a scourge in all societies and undermines peace within and between nations. In 2000 the Member States of the United Nations expressed their determination to eliminate extreme poverty, and placed it at the top of the Millennium Development Goals<sup>4</sup>.

The struggle against poverty will be sustainable, with lasting effects, only if it is based on the experience, the know-how and the participation of those who confront it every day: children deprived of a future, adolescents condemned to menial work or forced idleness, men and women subjected day after day to crushing humiliations, families destroyed by hunger, fear and uncertainty.

If the dignity of every person is to be recognized, people of all origins, convictions and beliefs will need to take action, and refuse to accept this injustice.

## OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

*"Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights be respected is our solemn duty.»*

Joseph Wresinski

Every October 17<sup>th</sup> these words inspire countless peaceful gatherings and acts of solidarity. They motivate those who feel excluded by society to participate in the Day's events. They give them renewed courage to continue their struggle against the intolerable conditions of extreme poverty, and not to give up. These words mobilize people from all sectors of society to join forces with those who until now have been excluded to rebuild and change our democracies, our attitudes, our behaviours, and our lives together.

2. According to a Gallup poll of 53,749 people from 68 countries, 26% of the world's population ranks poverty and the growing gaps between the rich and the poor as its biggest concern. This percentage rises to 40% for people polled in Latin America and Africa. The second greatest concern, terrorism, lags far behind, with 12%, followed by unemployment, warfare, and economic problems. Source - Quebec newspaper Le Devoir March 27, 2006.

3. World Health Report, "Bridging the Gaps", 1995

4. "We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty" stated in the UN Millennium Declaration (September 2000).

# COUNT ME IN!

- > **I am in solidarity** with all those who are fighting throughout the world to eliminate extreme poverty.
- > **I want to contribute** to promoting respect for the dignity of all people, and their effective access to human rights.
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  - Participate in an ongoing, long-term dialogue with people who, in refusing to accept extreme poverty, are building peace.

Date : ..... Signature

Last Name ..... First Name .....

Occupation (optional) .....

Address .....

City-Town ..... Post Code-zip .....

State-County ..... Country .....

E-mail ..... Tel .....

**Please keep me up to date on this appeal.**

**I would like to support this appeal by:**

- Distributing it; please send me ..... copies.
- Participating on October 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Supporting it financially.

**I would like to do more.**

Please send me more information on Anti-poverty actions I can join

This declaration can be sent to : ATD Quart Monde • 107, avenue du Général Leclerc • 95480 Pierrelaye • France

Or

- For Africa: ATD Quart Monde Région Afrique - 01 BP5384, Ouagadougou 01, Burkina Faso
- For Asia: ATD Fourth World - 84/1 Soi Kingplu, Saint Louis 3, Sathorn Tai, Bangkok, 10120, Thailand
- For Latin America and Caribbean: Cuarto Mundo, Apartado Postal 1084, 01901 Guatemala Ciudad, Guatemala.
- For North America: ATD Fourth World - 589 Greenwood Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4J4B1, Canada