

Children's Forum, 2005

The C8 Children's Forum 2005 in Scotland was a children and young people's version of the G8 meeting. Young people from around the globe travelled to Scotland to debate and take action on the most pressing issues facing young people today.

Young people from 8 of the world's poorest countries met with young people from G8 countries, to debate, discuss and firmly place their issues on the agenda of the G8 leaders. They produced their own recommendations to take to the G8 leaders. Throughout the three-day conference, the young people examined the toughest challenges facing children today. They delivered clear and candid opinions on issues such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and poor access to education.

We, the children of the C8 representing the world's children, welcome the G8 focus on the issues of poverty, HIV/AIDS and Africa. However, we are disappointed that the leaders have not taken full advantage of the momentum of 2005 to make child poverty history once and for all.

In making our C8 recommendations (see below), we placed our faith in the leaders, recognizing that they too were once children. We hoped that their commitment as members of the human race would have influenced their decisions; that they would acknowledge the problems facing children and would feel driven to solve and act on them.

Today is a pivotal moment in history that will never come again. The world has woken up to the reality of poverty and millions are wearing white bands to make poverty history. We are united in this goal and we had hoped the leaders would be too.

We need more than promises - we need actions. We call on the leaders to remove self-interest and work in partnership with young people. G8 leaders should also work with civil society and international organizations to eliminate corruption and effectively implement their decisions for the benefit of all children.

We know that poverty is manmade and therefore man can undo it. We the children are calling for change.

We, as young people affected by the decisions made and issues discussed at G8, have the right to be heard. The C8 has given the leaders an opportunity to hear the voices of young people that may be future G8 leaders one day. We feel that the lack of response to our recommendations will have drastic consequences - children and young people will not trust or forgive G8 leaders.

We, the children, don't want to live in a world of hate. Terrorism, like poverty, is

manmade and can be eliminated. We believe that peace is a powerful instrument that can be used by everyone to fight the world's problems.

Recommendations

We 17 young people from around the world have come together to initiate the C8 – a children's version of the G8 summit. We want the G8 leaders to ensure:

- Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in all countries around the world.
- They act to implement our right to participate effectively in our world. We don't just want to be part of the future; we are the present.
- They fulfill promises made in 2002 at the UN Special Session on Children – A WORLD FIT FOR US.
- That the government and civil society of every country should eliminate corruption and MAKE POVERTY HISTORY.
- Debt relief to all developing countries across the world and promote fair trade practices.
- The creation of a young people's advisory group working in partnership with the G8.

We, children and young people aged between 11 and 18, representing millions of children around the world, make the following recommendations to the G8 leaders.

They are a sign of how young people across our world want the world to become fairer. We want each country to work together in unity for the future prosperity and progress of the human race. In making these recommendations, we place our faith in you – recalling that you too were once a child - and hope that your commitment of being a member of the human race will influence your decisions.

ALL THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INTERRELATED AND HAVE TO BE SEEN IN CONNECTION AND NOT IN ISOLATION.

1. POVERTY – NO MORE!!!

- The G8 leaders must eliminate poverty now.

2. EDUCATION – NOW!!!

- The G8 leaders must ensure free quality education for all.

3. VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN – TIME'S UP!!!

- The G8 leaders must protect children by supporting initiatives to eliminate all

forms of violence against children particularly in the family, school, street, workplace, community, media, war and armed conflict.

4. PARTICIPATION, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE – MORE AND MORE!!!

- The G8 leaders must support the creation of children's commissioners in every country and opportunities for children to participate in decision-making at all levels.
- The G8 leaders must ensure accountability of governments, promoting democracy, equality and representation by gender, race, age, people with special needs, ethnicity and religion.

5. HIV/AIDS - OUT!!!

- The G8 leaders must make Anti-Retroviral drugs and therapy freely available to all. Spending on HIV/AIDS programmes must be strictly monitored so that it reaches those most in need.
- The G8 leaders must support programmes for education to prevent HIV/AIDS and discrimination towards those who are infected and affected. Condoms should be freely available and accessible to all young people.

6. WORKING CHILDREN – WORK ON IT!!!

- The G8 leaders must support programmes for the protection, education and health of street and working children.
- The G8 leaders must ensure the effective implementation of laws for the gradual eradication of child labour.
- The G8 leaders must support and listen to the global and regional movements of working children.

7. HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND SANITATION – ENOUGH FOR ALL!!!

- The G8 leaders must support children's participation in monitoring the protection of the natural environment to support safe sustainable development for the future.
- All the G8 leaders must implement the Kyoto Protocol.
- The G8 leaders must support governments to establish clean water and quality sanitation facilities in schools and communities.

8. HEALTH AND NUTRITION – HAVE IT!!!

- The G8 leaders must cancel debt and promote fair trade to assure funds are generated for comprehensive free health services and nutritious food so that children do not die of preventable diseases such as malaria and TB, and that

children live healthy lives.

- The G8 leaders must promote the use of safe and effective alternative medication. We are worried about the present and the future. We do not just think about ourselves. We think about the world now and tomorrow. We want to make this world habitable, fair and happy.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN BRING ABOUT THIS CHANGE NOW. LET'S WORK TOGETHER!