

3 July 2008

Open Letter to Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, President George W. Bush, Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Chancellor Angela Merkel, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, President Nicolas Sarkozy, and President Dmitry Medvedev

As you travel to the G8 summit in Japan, you know that promises made to help end global poverty could amount to nothing more than a brief footnote in the history books. Without urgent action, the great tidal wave of optimism that was generated the last time the meeting was hosted by the Japanese in 2000 is in danger of dying away.

Through our work with Oxfam, each of us has been involved in the ongoing fight to end extreme poverty. Whether in classrooms in India, orphanages in South Africa, camps in Chad, farms in Ethiopia or health clinics in Tanzania, many of us have witnessed at first hand that aid works; that ordinary people achieve remarkable things every day but also that there is a great deal more that needs to be done.

The Millennium Development Goals set out in 2000 were chosen because they were ambitious, but also because they were realistic and achievable. The same is true of the promise made by you or your predecessors at Gleneagles in 2005 to boost aid levels by US\$50 billion by 2010. The current delays in meeting these commitments are a disgrace. They are not only a let down to the people who campaigned for them but they are a potentially fatal blow to the millions of people who live in poverty simply because of where they were born.

The food and climate change crises should persuade you to raise your game. It is the world's poor who are most vulnerable to increased food prices and it is these same people who are affected worst by the impacts of climate change. Failure to address these issues risks undermining much of the progress that has been made since Japan's Presidency of the G8 in 2000.

We look to you to address the global economic uncertainty, but you must also look beyond your own borders and not turn your backs on the world's poorest people. Only then will you lead the way to a more prosperous and safer future for us all. And we expect nothing less of you.

Sincerely,



Gael Garcia Bernal - Actor, Mexico



Minnie Driver – Actress, Singer, UK



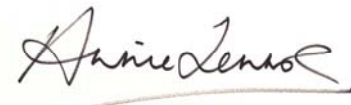
Angélique Kidjo - Singer, Benin



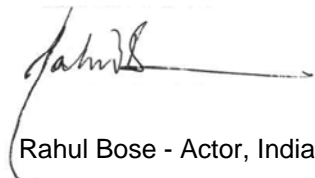
Miguel Bose - Singer, Spain



Colin Firth - Actor, UK



Annie Lennox - Singer, songwriter, UK



Rahul Bose - Actor, India



Emmanuel Jal - Singer, Sudan



Bill Nighy - Actor, UK



Kristin Davis – Actress, USA



Scarlett Johansson - Actress, USA