

PRESS RELEASE

Africa, G8 and OECD send key messages ahead of Heiligendamm G8 Summit

More than 200 high level representatives from Africa, G8 and OECD countries met in Berlin this week to discuss four key issues affecting Africa, ahead of the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm on 6 – 8 June.

The meeting was hosted by Germany as G8 Presidency and opened by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Ghanaian Foreign Minister Nana Afuko-Addo representing African Union Chair John Kufuor, and Danish Prime Minister Anders Rasmussen. It was also addressed by Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, and the Archbishop of Cape Town The Most Reverend Njongonkulu Ndungane representing civil society.

The key messages from the meeting were:

- **Climate change is a major threat** to development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa. Africa is the continent which contributes least to the problem, and yet which is most vulnerable. More needs to be done both to reduce future emission levels, and to help Africa adapt to the changes – including drought, desertification and flooding – which are already happening;
- **It is now time to invest in Africa.** The world needs to realign its perceptions with the reality of the continent's renewed dynamism, and improved economic performance – with average growth rates exceeding 5% over each of the last 3 years, and now outstripping average global growth rates. Increased investment – both domestic and foreign – will enable Africa to boost its growth rates even further, and accelerate progress towards poverty reduction;
- **Peace and security is essential** to development. Firm leadership is being taken by Africa itself, and the number of conflicts has dropped dramatically. But many people, especially women and children, are still suffering from conflict – particularly in Darfur. More needs to be done both to provide sufficient predictable funding for the peacekeeping operations being undertaken by Africa itself, and to tackle wider issues, such as the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and in resources used to fund conflict;
- **It is time to deliver for women and girls.** Africa's own growth and development agenda can only succeed if the continent is able to draw on all its resources and talents. Discrimination must be eliminated, and equal rights promoted, in Africa as well as globally, so that women are able to participate fully in all aspects of economic, social and political life. More also needs to be done to accelerate gender-specific action on HIV/AIDS, which particularly affects women.

These messages have been endorsed by Africa and its main development partners, and reflect the views of civil society too. They will now feed immediately into the preparations for the G8 Heiligendamm Summit, to which African leaders have been invited, as well as high level political meetings both in Africa and internationally over the rest of the year.

The next meeting of the Africa Partnership Forum will be hosted by the government of Algeria.