

Amnesty International commitment to MDG 3

Call to Action made by Secretary General Irene Khan

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On behalf of Amnesty International, a global human rights movement of 2.2 million people, I pledge that Amnesty International will continue to champion gender equality and women's empowerment (MDG3) – an issue that has been a priority for our organization, particularly since the launch of our global Stop Violence Against Women campaign in 2004. Through our campaigns, research and action we will urge governments to urgently eliminate the underlying violations of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights that drive poverty among women and girls. We are determined to:

Expose discrimination against women and girls: I pledge that Amnesty International will continue to expose and condemn discrimination against women and girls in all its forms. Discrimination against women and girls is rampant in all parts of the world. Too often, such discrimination is compounded by other forms of discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, caste or descent, disability, sexual orientation, national origin and/or age. Amnesty International will insist that governments make sure their MDG action plans give particular attention to marginalized women and girls.

Highlight violence against women and girls: A significant obstacle to the achievement of all the MDGs, in particular MDG 2 (education), MDG 3 (gender equality and women's empowerment) and MDG 5 (maternal health), is violence against women and girls. Building on the work of our global campaign to Stop Violence Against Women, I pledge that Amnesty International will continue to expose and condemn such violence and demand urgent action to end it. We will work to ensure effective systems both to prevent violence against women and girls and to provide redress for those who have been attacked. We will demand that governments invest the necessary resources and political will to implement fully the laws and treaties to which they have signed up.

Promote women's right to participation: Gender equality and women's empowerment are key to achieving all MDGs. I pledge that Amnesty International will promote the right of women, especially those living in poverty, to participate actively in the design, implementation and evaluation of MDG action plans. This is crucial to making MDG achievements sustainable.

Campaign against poverty: Mainstream international human rights organizations have been silent for too long about the gross violations of human dignity endured by millions of girls, boys, women and men living in poverty. Amnesty International commits itself to launch a global campaign on poverty and human rights in 2009. With more than 40 years experience of activism we are well placed to galvanize the human rights community into greater action against poverty. I pledge that we will work with people living in poverty, women's groups and development communities to promote the human right to live with dignity.

Amnesty International commends the Government of Denmark for taking this important initiative.

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