



Resolution on Humanitarian and Development Foreign Assistance

WHEREAS the people of the United States are a generous and caring people who support international humanitarian and development assistance for the most vulnerable people of the world;

WHEREAS such programs have enhanced American power and influence around the world;

WHEREAS in 1970 the United States signed a United Nations Resolution in setting a target of 0.7 percent of GNP contribution to official development assistance that has not yet been met;

WHEREAS in 2000 the United States committed to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty embodied by the Millennium Development Goals;

WHEREAS in 2002 President George W. Bush refused to join European nations in agreeing to meet the 0.7 percent target by 2015;

WHEREAS as of 2003 at Stockholm, Sweden, the United States helped sponsor the development of and agreed to the identified "23 Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship," which principles and good practices underscore the vital requisites that humanitarian aid be needs-based and provided in a neutral, impartial and independent manner and eschew political or religious biased, non-neutral humanitarian donations;

WHEREAS the United States contributes the least aid (0.22 percent in 2005) in terms of GNP percentage of all the industrialized nations in the world;

WHEREAS President George W. Bush has politicized foreign assistance programs to conform to a political agenda and religious preferences that have eroded our international standing, particularly in developing and emerging countries, where the vast majority of the world's people live;

WHEREAS the policies and practices of President George W. Bush and his administration in directing foreign aid based on political and religious agendas directly conflict with the 23 Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship as agreed in 2003 in Stockholm, Sweden;

WHEREAS President George W. Bush has dramatically shifted the focus of US foreign assistance programs to be aligned with short term strategic interests of his administration;

WHEREAS the world's most vulnerable people -- 2.7 billion people who struggle to survive on less than two dollars a day -- suffer from desperate poverty and withering needs for basic necessities, and are left without our help, which help could be provided in an appropriate, neutral, impartial manner;

WHEREAS America's own security and safety depends on a world where poverty is eradicated and the innate dignity of individuals everywhere are protected, no matter how poor or voiceless;

WHEREAS America's own security and safety is served by being perceived as assisting the world's vulnerable according to their needs and as a principled agent of change to alleviate needless suffering and mortality, rather than being perceived as nation which provides aid to only those from whom we seek to curry favor or strategic, political or religious advantage or support; and

WHEREAS in September the House of Representatives passed HR 1302 Global Poverty Act of 2007 which requires the President to establish a unified, comprehensive foreign aid policy to promote the reduction of global poverty, the elimination of extreme global poverty, and the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of reducing by one-half the proportion of people worldwide, between 1990 and 2015, who live on less than \$1 per day;

THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad calls upon the President and the Congress to enact policies that provide aid to the world's most vulnerable based on their needs, and which drive the nation's humanitarian efforts in a manner which is neutral, impartial and will serve to end bias in the provision of humanitarian and development aid;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad calls upon the President and the Congress to reaffirm the commitment of the United States and its foreign policies to the 23 Principles Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship as developed in 2003; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad calls upon the President and the Congress to join the international community's support for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by committing to achieve the 0.7 percent target by 2015.

Drafted by Carolyn Sauvage-Mar and Randy Ackley, Democrats Abroad-India. Originally submitted for discussion at Heidelberg March 2007; reviewed by the Executive Committee of Democrats Abroad in May 2007 with requests for clarification; revised resolution supported by ten Asia-Pacific Region country committees or forming committees in September 2007; and submitted in this slightly amended version for formal consideration at the global meeting of Democrats Abroad in 2008.