

MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

TRADE JUSTICE DROP THE DEBT MORE AND BETTER AID

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8,000 campaigners challenge Blair to keep trade pledge to poor

Over 8,000 trade justice campaigners from across the UK today gathered in Westminster to warn Tony Blair that generations of people will continue to live in poverty if his promise to allow poor countries to protect their markets is broken.

This call for trade justice was delivered to hundreds of MPs at the **biggest lobby of Britain's parliament this year**; urging the UK Government to oppose moves to lever open markets in developing countries ahead of crucial World Trade Organisation talks in December.

Richard English, Oxfam's campaigning manager said: "This lobby is a key moment for Make Poverty History and the campaign for Trade Justice. International trade rules must be weighted in favour of poor people and developing countries must not be forced to open their markets. We ask the government to stand by its promises and use its influence to allow developing countries to choose the policies needed to protect the livelihoods of poor people and the environment."

Kenyan campaigner Eliud Ngunjiri, from the Resources Oriented Development Initiative – a partner with the UK aid agency CAFOD added: "East African industries have twice collapsed in the past from our countries opening their markets. Which rich nation has not grown wealthy by protecting its own industries? Kenya should be allowed to develop at its own pace. I urge MPs to get your government to support us."

Ruchi Tripathi, Head of Food Rights for ActionAid UK, said: "We have seen the impact of inappropriate liberalisation on communities in developing countries. For example Indian silk weavers and sari makers' livelihoods being destroyed by cheaper imports from abroad and in some cases lives being lost. We are heading for a development disaster unless rich countries allow poor countries to protect their industries and people."

John Hilary, Director of Campaigns and Policy at War on Want, said: "At this 11th hour of the talks, we need the government to ensure developing countries are allowed to protect their industries, farmers and services. The UK Government's actions have completely failed to match its anti-poverty rhetoric."

The mass lobby for Trade Justice is part of an unparalleled mobilisation of hundreds of millions of ordinary people around the world who are demanding Tony Blair and other world leaders make radical changes to the way world trade is currently managed so it benefits poor people and the environment and not just the rich and powerful.

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For photos of the lobby visit www.makepovertyhistory.org/lobby

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Notes for Editors:

The Trade Justice Movement

- The Trade Justice Movement (www.tim.org.uk) is a coalition of more than 70 UK organisations, including campaign groups, trade unions, faith groups and environmental and development organisations, with a combined membership of over 9 million people. The Trade Justice Movement is one of the networks at the core of Make Poverty History (www.makepovertyhistory.org) - an unprecedented coalition of more than 500 organisations calling for trade justice, drop the debt and more and better aid.
- The Trade Justice Movement's Mass Lobby of Parliament in June 2002 was the largest-ever such event with 346 MPs lobbied. This was followed in 2003 by the biggest national lobby of MPs when more than 500 parliamentarians were lobbied in their constituencies ahead of the last WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún, Mexico, when talks collapsed. In April 2005 the coalition staged the biggest mass protest of the UK election campaign when over 25,000 people filled Whitehall at an all-night vigil.
- The World Trade Organisation (WTO) holds its sixth Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, China from 13 to 18 December 2005. The EU represents the UK at the WTO as a trading bloc with a common trade policy. European Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson negotiates on behalf of European member states.

MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

- **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** is a unique UK alliance of over 500 charities, trade unions and campaigning groups supported by leading public figures and celebrities who are all mobilising around key opportunities in 2005 to drive forward the struggle against poverty and injustice working in partnership with the Global Call to Action against Poverty.
- The campaign was launched on 1 January 2005 and will run until the end of the year.
- 2005 is particularly important as the UK chaired the G8 meeting of powerful countries from 6-8 July and holds the 6-month presidency of the European Union.
- MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY challenges the government to deliver trade justice, drop the debt and deliver more and better aid in order to eradicate global poverty.
- 1 July was the first international 'White Band Day'. Millions of people wore the white band and iconic buildings in each continent were wrapped in the symbol of the global campaign to make poverty history. White Band Day 2 took place on 10 September around the world and White Band Day 3 will take place on 10 December just ahead of the WTO meeting.
- 250,000 people attended the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** rally in Edinburgh on 2 July forming a huge white band around the city centre.
- For further information; photography; copies of our 'Make History' report on global poverty; a full list of coalition members; and for details of our key challenges to government visit the media section of the website: www.makepovertyhistory.org/media. **Photography:** Username: comic, Password: 12qwklm