



# Millennium Development Goals Campaign: time to help others!



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Poland  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland  
[www.onz.org.pl/rozwoj](http://www.onz.org.pl/rozwoj)

PRESS RELEASE

**EMBARGOED TILL 8  
OCTOBER 11 a.m. CET**

## Poland shifts its role to become a donor again

**Warsaw, October 8, 2004** – Based on the success of transformation Poland shifted its role as a pure receiver of development assistance; together with other countries of the region, the country is becoming a responsible partner supporting poorer countries in pursuing of the UN Millennium Development Goals. To build public support for the Polish aid for other countries, a public campaign “Millennium Development Goals: time to help others!” is launched today.

63% of Poles think that Poland should support the development of poorer countries – according to results of the opinion poll on public support for the development assistance, carried out for the first time in Poland. When joining the European Union, Poland took on a commitment to increase development assistance for poorer nations. This goes in line with expectations of the international organizations and rich states that contributed to the Poland’s development following 1989. In 2003, the Polish Government adopted a “Strategy for Poland’s Development Cooperation” in this respect. As soon as this year, the Government will submit a Development Assistance Bill to the parliament. Poland, through the Government as well as international organizations and NGOs, provides aid for other countries not only in financial form but also in the form of technical assistance, sharing valuable experience gained in the field of system, social, and economic transformations. In fact Poland returns to a proud tradition before 1989 when Poland was well known supporting developing countries.

However, the value of Poland’s development assistance in comparison with other EU countries, including our southern neighbors, is quite modest. In 2003, Poland assigned as little as USD 27 million for developing countries (within the Official Development Assistance scheme – ODA) as against USD 91 million provided by the Czech Republic. The funds allocated by Poland for countries under transformation (the Central-East European countries) totaled USD 22 million. According to the commitments taken on by the Government of Poland, our country will increase its development assistance to 0.1% of GDP, i.e. to about USD 230 million (assuming a 4% GDP annual growth rate), in 2006. For comparison, the commitments of the EU members will be 0.33% of GDP from 2006 on. The European Union is the largest donor in the world and assigns USD 37 billion a year for foreign aid (according to data of 2003). As a donor of development assistance, Polish companies and NGOs now enter this market, leading to a potentially boost to the Polish economy.

In most cases, the respondents in the first poll on development assistance indicate moral obligation as the main reason of providing aid of this kind. Those who think that Poland should not provide development assistance for less development countries justify their attitude by an opinion that our country is too poor to help others and every second of them states that we should first solve our own problems. A half of the respondents would agree to the disbursement of PLN 3 a month from their taxes for development assistance for poorer countries and 6% would offer even more. Only every fourth Pole, if having the right to decide, would forbid any disbursement of his/her taxes for development assistance. The poll was carried out on a representative group of adult Poles by TNS OBOP to commission of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The public campaign “Millennium Development Goals: time to help others!” organized by the United

Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland is to initiate in the Polish society a debate on the role of our country as a participant in the global development cooperation and to build public support for the Polish policy of foreign aid. The campaign is to help the Polish community in understanding problems of the poorer part of the world and to introduce the Poles with the Millennium Development Goals, which have been signed by world leaders, including Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of the Republic of Poland.

The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a commitment taken on in 2000 by 189 states to significantly improve the conditions of living all over the world by 2015. The Goals constitute measurable commitments in such fields as reduction of poverty and hunger, improvement of the level of education, promotion of gender equality, improvement of health care, prevention of and combat with such diseases as HIV/AIDS, or ensuring of environmental sustainability. *“The eighth and last Goal is to develop a global partnership for development between rich and poor countries. It is chiefly addressed to well developed states, which are to help the countries of ‘The South in pursuing of the other seven Goals. Such a role has been taken on by Poland and other countries of our region of Europe,”* said Ben Slay, Director of the UNDP Regional Office in Bratislava.

The development assistance is defined as the aid provided by states or international organizations in the form of financial, material, or advisory support for less developed countries (for example Polish experts build independent media in other countries, build schools, water systems, help in fighting HIV/AIDS, teach how to do effective farming, how to establish NGOs). The development assistance is aimed at poverty reduction, promotion of sustainable development, support for democratic reforms and the rule of law, respect for human rights, development of civil society, support for economic growth, crisis prevention, and promotion of global security.

The campaign will include e.g. publication of posters, a TV information spot, press articles, reports, and documentaries and the organizing of Internet discussions, seminars, debates in the media or prepared by NGOs, and students’ debates (by AIESEC). For the campaign needs, an Internet site has been launched ([www.onz.org.pl/rozwoj](http://www.onz.org.pl/rozwoj)). You can find there detailed description of the campaign together with promotion materials and in-depth information on the development assistance, examples of Polish projects.

We invite all the interested media to organize, within their own capacity, discussions, debates, and polemics about the role of Poland in the development assistance. The press office of the campaign offers journalists a variety of information on the campaign and on the development assistance as well as contacts to Ambassadors of Development, i.e. NGO activists, authorities on development assistance, politicians, officials, national and international experts, and experienced volunteers.

The campaign has been prepared in close cooperation with our sponsors: BP Poland company and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), as well as our media partners: the Cinema City network of movie theaters, AMS (a poster publisher), “Gazeta Wyborcza”, Internet portal Onet.pl, Channel 1 of the Polish Radio, Radio Polonia, and TBWA (an advertising agency).

**Press office of the campaign:** Jan Szczyciński, Communications Officer, UNDP Poland, [rozwoj@undp.org.pl](mailto:rozwoj@undp.org.pl), tel. +48 22 576 81 89, mobile +48 609 458 216

#### Sponsors of the Campaign:



#### Patrons:

