



RESOLUTIONS

CONSIDERED BY THE NAACP
RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE
PENDING REVIEW BY DELEGATES
TO THE 98TH ANNUAL NAACP
CONVENTION

2007



9. NAACP Supports Myriad of Federal Legislative Initiatives to Fight the Emergency of Global Disease and Extreme Poverty

President and CEO

WHEREAS, every three seconds a child dies from extreme poverty; and

WHEREAS, 1 billion people around the world live on less than \$1 a day; and

WHEREAS, every year, 10 million children die before their fifth birthday – that's one every three seconds – nearly all of them from preventable causes. Also, more than 500,000 mothers die each year from complications during child birth, and tens of millions more suffer from pregnancy related illnesses and injuries; and

WHEREAS, 12 million children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Africa and that number is expected to climb to 18 million by 2010; and

WHEREAS, education is a powerful investment we can make to fight poverty, yet worldwide over 77 million children are not enrolled in primary education programs, more than half of whom are girls; and

WHEREAS, over one billion people lack access to clean water and 2.6 billion do not have access to basic sanitation. Every 15 seconds, a child dies from problems caused by lack of clean water; and

WHEREAS, for decades, many impoverished countries were spending billions of dollars each year repaying debts to donor countries and international financial institutions. Many of these loans were given for political reasons during the Cold War to prop up particular governments, and in many cases, were wasted by corrupt and unaccountable regimes. These large debts became a serious impediment to poverty reduction and economic development. Countries began taking on new loans to repay old ones; and

WHEREAS, for the world's most impoverished countries, the cost of debt overshadows their ability to provide access to clean water, education and basic healthcare. Some countries spent as much as 25-30% of their annual budgets servicing their debt, more than was spent on education and healthcare combined; and

WHEREAS, for every dollar African countries receive in aid, they still pay out \$2.30 in debt service; and

WHEREAS, women's share of the labor force is increasing in almost all regions of the world. However, although 60% of farm workers in Africa are women, they receive less than 1 percent of the total credit available to agriculture. Despite the key role women play in developing countries, women tend to work in the lowest paid sectors, have less stable incomes, work longer hours, have less access to training and education, and have fewer economic opportunities than men; and

WHEREAS, programs to treat these problems are relatively inexpensive; AIDS drugs can now cost as little as \$1 a day; a bed net can save a child's life for 5 years by preventing the contraction of malaria and costs only \$5; you can put a child in school for a month for \$13; a well provides clean, safe drinking water for 20 years at a cost of only \$20 a person; and

WHEREAS, increasing U.S. efforts to provide for basic needs like health, education, clean water and food would transform the futures of an entire generation in the world's poorest countries; and

WHEREAS, debt cancellation, making trade fairer, and anti-corruption measures in a comprehensive package to help Africa and poor countries everywhere beat global disease and extreme poverty would also have a tremendous impact on future generations globally; and

WHEREAS, international development assistance reflects the best American tradition of compassion, generosity, and helping others help themselves; and

WHEREAS, only 1.2% of our Nation's federal budget is currently allocated for international affairs, which includes diplomacy and development funding. Less than ½ is used to alleviate extreme poverty; and

WHEREAS, America's international affairs funding is 17% less today than it was during the height of the Cold War, yet the current global challenges are far more complex; and

WHEREAS, by contributing our proportionate share – roughly 1% of the U.S. Federal budget - to an effective partnership with the world's nations, we can help put 77 million children into grade school; prevent the death of 5.4 million children from poverty-related illnesses and save 400,000 women from dying in childbirth each year; provide clean water to an additional 450 million people and basic sanitation to 700 million around the globe; and save 16,000 lives a day by fighting HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and

WHEREAS, directed to honest governments, private charities and faith-based organizations, this support would provide the tools and resources to really make a difference; and

WHEREAS, American efforts, where undertaken, are already paying off. Thanks to the leadership role the U.S. has taken in supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, as of December 2006, insecticide-treated bed nets were provided to more than 18 million families, an increase of 135% over the past year. These simple, inexpensive bed nets prevent the spread of malaria, a deadly disease, particularly among children; and

WHEREAS, by increasing our efforts, we will not only save the lives of millions of people – we will also transform our image globally. It will increase our national security, protect our economy and build a better, safer world for us all; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the ONE Campaign to Make Poverty History, the NAACP is actively engaged in the fight against global disease and extreme poverty.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP supports federal legislation and initiatives to fight global disease and extreme poverty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP strongly supports the *Jubilee Act*, which is expected to be introduced in the 110th Congress later this year, which calls on the U.S. Treasury to support 100% cancellation of bilateral and multilateral debts for those countries that need debt relief to meet the Millennium Development Goals; calls for an audit of other outstanding debt claims, to determine the odious and illegitimate origins of impoverished country debts; prohibits specific structural adjustment conditions including the imposition of user fees on health and education and mandated privatization of water; contains a provision that governments should allocate 20% of their budgets on social services and development, including education and health care; and finances debt cancellation through the IMF and World Bank's existing resources to the extent possible; supports responsible lending practices to make it impossible for vulture funds to sue countries with insurmountable debt; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP supports legislation introduced by Senators Clinton (NY) and Smith (OR) (S. 1259) and Congresswoman Lowey (NY) and Congressman Shays (CT) (H.R. 2092) known as the "*Education for All Act*" which would authorize additional funding for universal basic education – tied to strong standards of accountability and performance – to the tune of \$1 billion in fiscal year 2008, and growing to \$3 billion by fiscal year 2012; prioritize funding for eliminating school fees and expanding access to education, training teachers and building infrastructure, promoting civic education and life skills training and supporting initiatives that reach the most disadvantaged populations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP supports the *Global Resources and Opportunities for Women to Thrive Act* (GROWTH Act), to be introduced in the 110th Congress later this year by Congresswomen Lowey (NY) and Ros-Lehitenin (FL), which proposes important change to U.S. international assistance

and trade programs to prioritize economic opportunities for women living in poverty worldwide and promote women's ability to start and grow businesses through continued support for women's enterprises after the initial microcredit loan, so their businesses will grow and employ other women; enhance women's land and property rights so they can use their assets as collateral for loans, even prove ownership rights if they need compensation in the event of a disaster; increase women's access to better employment and improve wages and working conditions for jobs dominated by women by increasing women's skills and informing them of their workplace legal rights, and ensure that the benefits of trade agreements reach poor women in developing countries through programs like trade capacity building and training for women entrepreneurs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP supports the *Global Child Survival Act*, which is expected to be introduced by Congresswoman McCollum (MN) and Congressman Shays (CT) in the 110th Congress later this year. This important legislation would double current funding for child survival and maternal health programs, require an integrated U.S. strategy for improving child and maternal health, and establish guidelines for child survival programs. With an increase in funding and coordination, children and mothers would receive interventions like vaccinations, antibiotics, and vitamin A that can make a difference between life and death in developing countries; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NAACP supports improvements and reforms in America's trade rules, the US commodity programs and strengthening US international food aid so people in poor countries can have the chance to earn their way out of poverty. These changes can be made in the reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Specifically, we are calling for changes to current policy to: provide a transition for American farmers to alternative forms of support that are more beneficial and equitable and do not distort trade in ways that fuel hunger and poverty in other countries, strengthen international food aid in ways that encourage local food security and increase international food aid to ensure the first Millennium Development Goal of reducing hunger by one-half is achieved by 2015.