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22 September 2005

### **G8 Showed "Unity of Purpose" to Development, Bush Official Says**

#### **Countries agreed on aid vision at Gleneagles summit, Simon tells forum**

By Kathryn McConnell  
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The commitment by the Group of Eight (G8) to aid poor countries' development illustrated a "unity of purpose" between the United States and other donor countries, according to a Bush administration official.

The aid pledge the G8 made at its annual summit in July illustrated that "we are coming together on a vision of development," said John Simon, director of relief, stabilization and development at the National Security Council. (See [related article](#).)

Simon spoke September 21 at a Washington forum co-sponsored by the Center for Global Development (CGD) and the United Kingdom-based Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

The G8 is Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia. The European Commission also participates in G8 summits.

Simon described features of the agreement reached at the summit for seeing measurable results from aid and for devoting more money to improvements in infrastructure.

He said there was agreement that the Monterrey Consensus is working. The consensus reached at an international financing for development meeting in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002 says that each aid recipient country is responsible for adopting its own policies -- such as for fighting corruption, improving governance and improving investment climates -- to enhance its development.

The United States has nearly doubled from the 2000 level the amount it devotes to foreign aid, Simon said. In addition, the United States has shown leadership in adopting effective aid policies and programs, including the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), a program to fight the global spread of HIV/AIDS and new models to create more business opportunities for entrepreneurs, Simon said.

The MCA rewards poor countries that adopt policies that rule justly, encourage economic freedom and invest in people. (For more information, see [Millennium Challenge Account](#).)

He said a target of 0.7 percent of national income to development assistance is an "arbitrary" mark. The target is endorsed by development activists and has a history that dates back more than a half century, according to the CGD.

The United States, more effectively, does increase aid to countries where it sees results and shifts resources to areas with new or expanding needs, he said.

He said the key to further progress in development will be a successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round of trade talks. (See [related article](#).)

Also at the forum, Andrew Rogerson, a research fellow with ODI, said the Bush administration does not receive enough credit in parts of Europe for its commitment to development.

He said some perceived differences between the United States and Europe are more a matter of vocabulary being used, not of actual content.

Rogerson identified several areas of development needing attention in 2006, including even more emphasis on measuring progress being made in good governance, and balancing security needs in fragile states with development assistance needs. Other areas, he said, are the role the United Nations should play in development, and the need to take a long-term view of aid efforts.

Michael Clemens, a CGD research fellow, predicted at the meeting that within four years or five years countries will abandon the Millennium Development Goals agreed to at the United Nations in 2000 because they do not provide enough focus on countries' actual achievements.

He said some poor countries are making progress in providing more economic opportunities and in increasing school enrollments but still falling short of the goal benchmarks.

The forum preceded the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund taking place September 24-25 in Washington.

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