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January 26, 2005, Wednesday

SECTION: COMMENTARY**KR-ACC-NO:** K4727**LENGTH:** 498 words**HEADLINE:** Winning the global war on poverty**BODY:**

The following editorial appeared in the Miami Herald on Tuesday, Jan. 25:

Five years ago, world leaders rightly pledged to decrease sharply extreme poverty and prevent the deaths of millions of women and children threatened by preventable illnesses by 2015. Now an international team of development experts has provided a valuable road map to achieving those goals. The issue isn't only about compassion, because poverty, hunger and lack of hope are incubators for the twin plagues of lawlessness and terrorism.

The team's U.N.-sponsored report, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, asks wealthy nations to live up to their promise to double development aid to poor nations. To be invested effectively, that aid should target developing countries with proven commitment to good governance.

"Lawless countries led by corrupt leaders are incapable of investing resources in health, education and roads," said **Jeffrey Sachs**, an economist who led the three-year Millennium Project. "Increased international support should go to countries that have demonstrated good governance ... and are trying to open up their economies, to reform their political systems and to combat corruption."

The 3,000-page report's recommendations must be welcomed even as they may be debated. They come at a time when, shaken by Asian tsunamis, governments and individuals worldwide have responded with generous aid. Yet 150,000 children a month still die of preventable malaria alone. That along with hunger and maternal deaths are among the "silent tsunamis" that **Sachs** notes assail Africa and other poverty-stricken regions.

If the worthy Millennium Goals are to be achieved, there is no time to waste. World leaders set to meet in a July summit of industrial nations and again at the United Nations would do well to vet the plan and commit to specific action. Today, development aid from the world's wealthiest nations adds up to 0.25 percent of their collective gross national products; the United States, the richest among them, provides proportionately the least, 0.15 percent, or only 15 cents per \$100 of national income. Meanwhile, five nations already contribute 70 cents per \$100 of national income, the 2015 goal set at the 2000 U.N. Millennium Summit.

Yes, that aid must be well spent. Poor countries must be willing to reform their governments, apply the rule of law and contribute their own resources to reducing poverty _ and they should be held accountable for results by donors. The report recommends instituting 17 cheap "quick fixes" this year. For example, handing out \$5 insecticide-treated bed nets could drastically decrease malaria deaths. It also recommends projects to put countries on the path to self-sufficiency. The goal is to get poor countries on a path to prosperity and off of aid. Global leaders must act now.

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