

GET ALL THE  
TIME YOU NEED.**NOW GET 1000  
WHENEVER MINUTES!**  
WITH FREE NIGHTS  
AND WEEKENDS \$45.99/MONTH

# The Washington Times

[www.washingtimes.com](http://www.washingtimes.com)

## U.N. urges U.S. to keep aid vow

By Edith M. Lederer  
ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Published January 18, 2005

NEW YORK -- In the coming decade, more than 500 million people can escape poverty and tens of millions can avoid premature death if the United States, Japan and other rich countries keep their promises to vastly increase development aid to the world's poorest countries, a United Nations-sponsored report said yesterday.

The report spells out the investments needed to meet U.N. goals adopted by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in 2000 to tackle poverty, hunger and disease mainly in African and Asian countries where 1 billion people live on a dollar a day or less and 1.8 billion more live on just \$2 a day.

"The system is not working right now -- let's be clear," said professor Jeffrey Sachs, head of the U.N. anti-poverty effort and lead author of the report. "There's a tremendous imbalance of focus on the issues of war and peace, and less on the dying and suffering of the poor who have no voice."

"The overwhelming reality on our planet is that impoverished people get sick and die for lack of access to basic practical means that could help keep them alive and do more than that -- help them achieve livelihoods and escape from poverty," said Mr. Sachs, who heads the Earth Institute at Columbia University.

As an example, he said, providing nets to cover beds and keep out mosquitoes in impoverished African and Asian countries could save the lives of a million children this year who otherwise will die from malaria.

"We have the world's eyes focused on the tsunami of the Indian Ocean, but the world continues to overlook the silent tsunamis of deaths from malaria which take every month the number of people that died in the Asian tragedy," Mr. Sachs said. "Every month, 150,000 children in Africa, if not more, are dying from the silent tsunami of malaria, a largely preventable and utterly treatable disease."

Mr. Sachs was appointed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2002 to head the Millennium Project and develop a plan to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The resources needed to meet the goals are within the means of the world's richest nations and their \$30 trillion economy -- \$12 trillion just in the United States, Mr. Sachs said.

In 1970, the world's nations agreed to provide 0.7 percent of their gross national income for development assistance. So far, only five countries have met or surpassed the target -- Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Six others have made commitments to reach the target by 2015 -- Belgium, Finland, France, Ireland, Spain and Britain -- and the report urged all developed countries to set similar timetables.

The United States right now spends only about 0.15 percent of its gross domestic product on development aid, although President Bush has increased the amount.

"The required doubling of annual official development assistance to \$135 billion in 2006, rising to \$195 billion by 2015, pales beside the wealth of high-income countries -- and the world's military budget of \$900 billion a year," the report said.

It recommended that the international community designate a significant number of well-governed low-income countries for "fast-track status" to receive the massive increase in development aid this year.

Poorly governed poverty-stricken countries such as Belarus, Burma, North Korea and Zimbabwe, which are accused of wide-scale human rights abuses, shouldn't get large-scale aid, the report said. But Mr. Sachs said several dozen well-governed poor countries could be put on the fast track. The report names Mali, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mauritania and Yemen.

Copyright © 2005 News World Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

---

[Return to the article](#)



[Click Here For Commercial Reprints and Permissions](#)

Copyright © 2005 News World Communications, Inc.