



MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN
VOICES AGAINST POVERTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Laurel Hart, *Religions for Peace*, www.religionsforpeace.org
Tel: +080-3479-2292 (Japan, through 8/29)
Tel: +212-687-2163
lhart@wcrp.org

Mr Ajit Sahi, UNDP (Asia)
Tel: +91-11-4145-0381
ajit.sahi@undp.org

Mandy Kibel / Anand Kantaria, UNDP (Global)
Tel: +212-906-6242/6783
amanda.kibel@undp.org
anand.kantaria@undp.org

**FAITH IN ACTION: NEW TOOLS AID RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES
TO END POVERTY**

-- Tools Address UN Millennium Development Goals --

(KYOTO, JAPAN, August 26, 2006) – *Religions for Peace* and the Millennium Campaign today launched a resource toolkit to help religious communities advocate for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General of *Religions for Peace*, and Salil Shetty, Director of the Millennium Campaign, introduced the initiative at the *Religions for Peace* World Assembly.

“Religious communities working together hold a vital key to the achievement of the MDGs,” said Dr. Vendley. “To remain silent while poverty kills so many violates the fundamental teachings overwhelmingly shared by the world’s religions. By taking action together, the world’s religious leaders can help eliminate poverty.”

Contained in the UN Millennium Declaration signed by 189 nations, the eight MDGs to be achieved by 2015 include: eradicating extreme poverty, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality and hunger, and combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

The new resource is designed to assist religious communities in raising awareness, advocating, training and conducting outreach to achieve the MDGs. The toolkit will be available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic; and distributed and used by the *Religions for Peace* global network of more than seventy national and regional affiliated inter-religious councils and groups.

“The *Religions for Peace* World Assembly culminates a long standing commitment of the world’s faith leaders to making the Millennium Development Goals a reality. The launch of the MDG Toolkit offers a practical guidebook moving forward and underlines this commitment,” said Mr. Shetty. “The moral power of faith leaders is vital in reminding governments to keep their promise to the Millennium Goals.”

The *Religions for Peace* Eighth World Assembly convenes more than 800 senior religious leaders from every region of the world and all major faith traditions. Founded in 1970, *Religions for Peace* is now the largest coalition of the world’s religious communities.

The Millennium Campaign informs, inspires and encourages people’s involvement and action for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. An initiative of the United Nations, the Campaign supports citizens’ efforts to hold their government to account for the Millennium promise.