

OPEN LETTER



EMBARGOED UNTIL 6 AM*

02 May 2012

PRIME MINISTER – AUSTRALIANS KEEP THEIR WORD

Dear Prime Minister,

In the year 2000, Australia agreed to play its part in global efforts to halve the number of people living in poverty by 2015. Australians can be proud that, so far, their leaders have kept this promise made in our name.

John Howard promised to double Australian aid in 2005. And the Gillard Government has promised to further lift the levels of Australian aid to 0.5 per cent of our national income by 2015.

This commitment has been supported by both sides of politics, as it should be. This is Australia's promise to the world's poor, no matter who is in Government.

Millions of Australians, young and old, expect this commitment to be maintained. And millions more of those living in poverty are depending on it.

This is a question of whether Australia can be trusted to do what it says it will do.

Reaching the 0.5 per cent target means just 50 cents in every \$100 of our national income will go towards our aid program. This falls short of the global target of 0.7 per cent, but it still means a lot to the world's poor.

Keeping this promise on aid could save the lives of at least 800,000 extra people over the next four years.

Around the world more than 20,000 children still die each day because of diseases that can be easily prevented and treated like diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria.

Millions of people live on less than \$2 a day in our neighbouring countries like Timor Leste, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

The money the Government has promised to spend on aid is desperately needed.

Australian aid levels are not generous by world standards – currently we are below the average when compared to what other rich nations give. We rank 13th on the league table of 23 rich countries that give aid. But what we do give makes a big difference.

Prime Minister, we hear this will be a tough budget and reports say that aid spending is on the hit list. But we cannot balance the books with the lives of the world's poor.

We the undersigned, and the more than 2 million Australian households who generously support aid organisations each year, urge you to keep the promise to increase aid to 0.5 per cent by 2015-16.

It is up to you to prove that when Australia makes a promise, we keep it.

ACFID is the peak council for Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) working for the eradication of poverty through international development cooperation.

14 Napier Close Deakin ACT | p: +61 2 6285 1816 | f: +61 2 6285 1720 | www.acfid.asn.au

Signed:

Geoffrey Rush

Actor, 2012 Australian of the Year & UNICEF Ambassador

Hugh Jackman

Actor & World Vision Ambassador

Deborra-Lee Furness

Actress & World Vision Ambassador

Jimmy Barnes

Musician & UNICEF Ambassador

Missy Higgins

Singer-songwriter & Oxfam supporter

Clare Bowditch

Singer-songwriter & Oxfam supporter

John Doyle (Roy)

Entertainer & UNICEF Ambassador

Tara Moss

Author & UNICEF Ambassador

Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser AC CH

Former Australian Prime Minister

Harold Mitchell AC

Chair, Care Australia

Katie Noonan

Singer-songwriter & Oxfam supporter

Jamie Durie

Entertainer & Plan International Ambassador

The Hon Kristina Keneally MP

Ambassador, Opportunity International Australia

Julie Goodwin

Former Masterchef Winner & Oxfam supporter

Rodney Cox

Victorian Australian of the Year, Fellow for Public Leadership at Harvard University

Professor Adam Shoemaker

Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Education), Monash University

Gabi Hollows

The Fred Hollows Foundation

The Hon John Dowd AO QC

President, ActionAid Australia

Murray Cook

The Wiggles & UNICEF Ambassador

Anthony Field

The Wiggles & UNICEF Ambassador

Jeff Fatt

The Wiggles & UNICEF Ambassador

Greg Page

The Wiggles & UNICEF Ambassador

John Butler

Singer-songwriter & Oxfam supporter

The Hon Dr Meredith Burgmann

President, Australian Council for International Development

Simon McKeon

2011 Australian of the Year, Businessman and Australian Chairman, Global Poverty Project Inc

Rohan Lund

CEO, Yahoo7

Ged Kearney

President, ACTU

Greg Ward

Managing Director and CEO, Macquarie Bank

Rebekah O'Flaherty

Executive Director, Telstra

Lesley Grant

Group Executive, Qantas

Christine Christian

Past CEO Dun and Bradstreet

John Stewart

Managing Director, KPI Consulting

Belinda Rowe

Managing Partner, ZenithOptimedia

Fiona Sinclair-King

Barrister at Law

Michael Gill

Counsellor, Dragoman

Michael Batchelor

Consultant, Deloitte

Deeta Colvin

Consultant, CPH

Most Reverend Mark Coleridge

Archbishop Designate of Brisbane

Most Reverend Philip Wilson

Archbishop of Adelaide

Most Reverend Adrian Doyle

Archbishop of Hobart

The Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt

Dean, St John's Cathedral, Brisbane.

The Right Rev John Harrower OAM

Bishop of Tasmania

Bishop Philip Huggins

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Rev Shayne Blackman

National Administrator, Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress

Rev Alistair Macrae

President, National Assembly, Uniting Church in Australia

Mr Stuart McMillan

Moderator, Northern Synod, Uniting Church in Australia

Rev Dr Brian Brown

Moderator, Synod of NSW/ACT, Uniting Church in Australia

Rev Kaye Ronalds

Moderator, Synod of Queensland, Uniting Church in Australia

Rev Rob Williams

Moderator, Synod of South Australia, Uniting Church in Australia

Isabel Thomas Dobson

Moderator, Synod of Victoria & Tasmania, Uniting Church in Australia

Signed:

Rev Ron Larkin

Moderator, Synod of Western
Australia, Uniting Church in Australia

Rev Tim Costello

CEO, World Vision Australia

Andrew Hewett

Executive Director, Oxfam Australia

Norman Gillespie

CEO, UNICEF Australia

Jack de Groot

CEO, Caritas Australia

Dr Julia Newton-Howes

CEO, Care Australia

Ian Wishart

CEO, Plan International Australia

Dimity Fifer

CEO, Australian Volunteers
International

Misha Coleman

CEO, Anglicord: Anglican Overseas
Aid

Nigel Spence

CEO, ChildFund Australia

Adam Laidlaw

CEO, WaterAid Australia

Jackie Perkins

Executive Administrator, Quaker
Service Australia

Marc Purcell

Executive Director, Australian Council
for International Development

Archie Law

Executive Director, ActionAid
Australia

Rev Dr Kerry Enright

National Director, UnitingWorld

Malcolm Gledhill

Chairperson, Relief & Development,
UnitingWorld

Bill Whittaker AM

National Association of People Living
with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA)

Maria Deveson Crabbe

CEO, Marie Stopes International
Australia

Glenyce Johnson

Chair, Marie Stopes International
Australia

Bill Bowtell AO

Executive Director, Pacific Friends of
the Global Fund to Fight AIDS,
Tuberculosis and Malaria

Wendy McCarthy AO

Chair, Pacific Friends of the Global
Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and
Malaria

Brian Doolan

CEO, The Fred Hollows Foundation

Paul Power

CEO, Refugee Council of Australia

Suzanne Dvorak

CEO, Save the Children Australia

Alistair Gee

Executive Director, Act for Peace -
National Council of Churches
Australia

Chris Sadler

Chairman, Opportunity International
Australia

Dermot O'Gorman

CEO, World Wildlife Fund Australia

Joanna Hayter

CEO, International Women's
Development Agency

Geoffrey Armstrong

Executive Director, Global
Development Group

Mary Hawkins

President, International Women's
Development Agency

Michael Ahrens

CEO, Transparency International
Australia

Christine Franks

Chair, Habitat for Humanity Australia

Jo Brennan

CEO, Habitat for Humanity Australia

Michael Rose

Chairman, ChildFund Alliance

Mohamed Mayat

Country Director, Islamic Relief
Australia

John Jeffries

National Director, CBM Australia

Matthew Maury

National Director, TEAR Australia

David Pearson

Chairman, Global Development
Group

Greg Thompson

Executive Director International,
Transparency International

Mick Turnbull

Chair, Baptist World Aid Australia

John Hickey

CEO, Baptist World Aid Australia

Peter Jennings

Executive Officer, Union Aid Abroad-
APHEDA

Professor Dennis Altman AM FASSA

Director, Institute of Human Security
La Trobe University

Dr. Michael Henry

Chair of Oxfam Australia

Michael Lynch

CEO, Australian Business Volunteers

Cam Walker

CEO, Friends of the Earth (Australia)

Dr Jim Green

Chair, Friends of the Earth (Australia)

Christian Nielsen

Trustee Australia and Executive
Director, Live & Learn Environmental
Education

Brother Paul Smith

CEO, Lasallian Foundation

Signed:

Dr. Paul Meyer

Chair, Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS)

Peter Schirmer

Executive Secretary, Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS)

The Venerable Alison Taylor

Archdeacon of Kew, Chair of the Board, Anglicord: Anglican Overseas Aid

Major John Rees

Director, The Salvation Army NSW

Major Graeme McClimont

Divisional Commander, The Salvation Army, Tasmania

Alan McLean

CEO, RedR Australia

Elizabeth Taylor

Chair, RedR Australia

Frank Tyler

Director, Australian Aid International

Marc Preston

Director, Australian Aid International

Guy Winship

CEO, World Education Australia Limited

Kay de Vogel

Convenor, Quaker Service Australia, Management Committee

Mark Cubit

Trustee, Planet Wheeler Foundation and Cubit Family Foundation

Prof. Brien A. Holden PhD, DSc, OAM

CEO, International Centre for Eyecare Education

Prof. Gullapalli N Rao, MD, FRCS, FACS, D.Sc, D. Med

Chairman, International Centre for Eyecare Education

Professor Iven Young

Senior Staff Specialist, Respiratory Medicine, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Chair, Physicians Training Council, CETI

Ailsa Mackinnon RSM

Executive Director, Mercy Works Ltd.

Clary Castrission

President, 40K Foundation Australia

Robert Dunn

CEO, Opportunity International Australia

Naomi Steer

National Director, Australia for UNHCR

Eric Leach

CEO, Every Home Global Concern

Robert McConaghy

Chairman, Every Home Global Concern

Graham Peck

CEO, The Leprosy Mission Australia

Pam Packett

Chair, The Leprosy Mission Australia

Peter Hunt

Chair, Grameen Foundation Australia

Rev John Deane

Executive Director, Anglican Board of Mission – Australia

John Rock

Chairman, Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP)

Dr. P. Ketheswaran, MBBS, FRANCR

President and Chairman, Australian Medical Aid Foundation Ltd

Anne Skipper AM

Chair, Plan International Australia

Dr Satish Nagarajah, MBBS, FRACP

Secretary, Australian Medical Aid Foundation Ltd

Garry Weare

Executive Director, Australian Himalayan Foundation

Catherine Burke

CEO, The Hunger Project Australia

Diane Grady

Chairperson, The Hunger Project Australia

Dr Colin Barlow

CEO, Nusa Tenggara Association

Graham Morrison

Chairman, Chairman, International Nepal Fellowship (Aust) Ltd

Duncan Power

CEO, Grameen Foundation Australia

Kerrie Shaw

Executive Officer, Australian Respiratory Council

Lizzie Brown

CEO, Engineers Without Borders Australia

Phil Clarke

Chair, Engineers Without Borders Australia

Margot Sweeny

Chair, Credit Union Foundation Australia

Peter Mason

Executive Officer, Credit Union Foundation Australia

David Chesterman AM FRAIA FPIA

Chairman, Emergency Architects Australia

Levinia Crooks

CEO, Australasian Society for HIV Medicine

Edwina Wright

President, Australasian Society for HIV Medicine

Dr Joanne Ramadge

CEO, Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia

Glen Arundell

President, Project Vietnam

Delene Evans

General Manager, Australian Doctors International

Signed:

Tom O'Connor

CEO, The Oaktree Foundation

Dr Tim Hanna

CEO, Compassion Australia

Rev John Smith

Team Leader, Mission Leadership
Team, Tasmanian Baptist Churches

Philip Morris

CEO, International Nepal Fellowship
(Aust) Ltd

David Hayes

Chief Executive Officer, Assisi Aid
Projects

Neil McIntosh

Chair, World Education Australia
Limited

Ps. Graham Clarke

Senior Pastor, Barrabool Hills Baptist
Church