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THE ETHIOPIAN TEENAGERS' FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN ON THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) OCTOBER 20, 2004

Recommendations and Action Plan:

We, 200 young people and children who came from 40 different Addis Ababa elementary and high schools, had a long and deep discussion on the issue of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on October 20, 2004 in Africa Hall, Addis Ababa. We came up with the following plan of action and recommendations:

1. To improve maternal health:
 - a. Students, and we young people, need to teach society about the importance of maternal health at every opportunity.
 - b. Sufficient health care centres need to be provided and gender equality must be respected.
2. Concerning combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other killing diseases:
 - a. We young people must forgo harmful western practices that badly influence young people, and we must be responsible.
 - b. The Government and the private sector need to create job opportunities for young people to keep them away from bad situations.
 - c. More efforts and action need to be taken to make people aware of how to protect themselves from malaria and HIV.
 - d. Open discussion must be developed among young people. The Government, NGOs and the UN organisations need to focus efforts on the countryside to create awareness on fighting malaria, HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases.
3. To insure environmental sustainability:
 - a. We young people need to share ideas with others about what we have discussed here. Also, we young people need to participate ourselves, starting with cleaning our own environments, to do anything within our power to achieve this goal.
 - b. The Government, NGOs and the private sector needs to facilitate and support the activities of young people.
4. Concerning reducing child mortality:
 - a. Establish more medical centres in rural areas where medical treatment is currently far away.
 - b. Help street children and exploited children -- both sexually and abused in labour.
 - c. Parents need to raise their children to keep them safe so that early mortality can be avoided.

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5. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger:
 - a. We young people need to sacrifice our own personal interests to eliminate this from our country, Ethiopia.
 - b. We must ensure the sustainability of farming, supporting farms that can be profitable using modern farming technologies. The Government, NGOs, UN organisations and society as a whole need to work hand-in-hand to implement this goal.
 - c. The private sector, the Government and society need to encourage creative young people.
 - d. Everyone needs to support reforestation.

6. To develop global partnerships for development:
 - a. The Government needs to give suitable investment opportunities to all investors, both national and international. They need to have strong political, economic and social relationships with other countries to achieve the goal, developing a global partnership for development.

7. To achieve the goal promoting gender equality and empowering women:
 - a. Females need to have a strong movement to ensure their equality and participation.
 - b. The Government, society, NGOs and UN organisations need to give priority to girls' education, noting that teaching girls means teaching society.

8. To achieve universal primary education:
 - a. In collaboration with society as a whole, the Government needs to build new schools especially in rural areas.
 - b. Awareness needs to be created within Ethiopian society, especially for parents so that they send their children to school. Also, to ensure quality education, the Government needs to give special attention to training teachers.

Young people, society, the Government, NGOs, the private sector, civic associations and United Nations organisations, including us forum participants, must participate in activities to implement and achieve the MDGs. We have had lots of promises but no tangible outcomes. Now what we need is action. Today, we all discussed and assigned tasks for ourselves. We will do our part. The Government, UN, NGOs and the private sector also need to participate in action and help us. Then we will achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

'WE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.'

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