

# Commission for Africa

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## Tony Blair, UK Prime Minister

It is 20 years since Live Aid gave that incredible mobilisation of public support to do something about the tragedy in Africa. So I hope very much that the commission will cover these issues, will come up with specific solutions in relation to development, conflict resolution, governance, economic questions that allow us to gather international support behind the Commission's recommendations. I have said on many occasions that I believe Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world and I think it is right that we continue to treat this as an absolute priority over the coming years.

## Prime Minister Meles of Ethiopia

I welcome Prime Minister Blair's initiative to establish the African Commission. While Africa has made a lot of progress over the past decade or so, there have been a number of notable failures too. This Commission will give us the opportunity to review what has worked and what has not worked, with a view to coming up with better alternatives.

It is a Commission composed of Africans and non-Africans and therefore it is better placed to come up with a package that takes into consideration the views of all the partners of development in Africa.

## K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa:

Africa needs just the sort of international commitment demonstrated by the UK Prime Minister in his announcement of a Commission for Africa. I look forward to working with the Prime Minister and other Commissioners to agree the way forward to achieve poverty reduction in Africa.

Gordon Brown, UK Chancellor of the Exchequer:

This new Commission for Africa is a call to action born out of shared anger at the plight of many millions of people around the world who live on the knife's edge of bare existence.

2005 is a crucial, defining year; a year of challenge but also a year of opportunity. Unless we take action now, we will not meet the millennium development goals in sub-Saharan Africa until 2147, AND not 2015 as we have promised. The Commission will provide us with the opportunity to build on what we have learnt from the success and failures of the past, and to make progress with new policies, including our proposal for an international finance facility - helping to inform the UK's agenda for Africa during its G8 and EU Presidencies.

Hilary Benn, UK Secretary of State for International Development

Half of all Africans are living in absolute poverty. We are not moving fast enough to achieve the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals. This is simply unacceptable. Today's launch of the Commission for Africa shows the commitment of leaders and peoples across the world to work together to lift Africa out of poverty. If we set our minds to this, we really can do something to ensure that the next generation of Africans have the sort of opportunities that we take for granted.

US Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker

The Commission for Africa formed by Prime Minister Blair will be an important initiative to monitor what has taken place in the last few years and what should take place in the next few years. This reflects an international effort which supports the heartfelt belief of African leaders that vision and drive must come from within Africa. Now is an opportunity to provide a commitment and support to that vision. I look forward to being a part of this significant endeavour.