

ATD
FOURTH WORLD

INTERNATIONAL
MOVEMENT
ATD
FOURTH WORLD

Founded by
Father Joseph Wresinski
(1917-1988)

NGO in consultative
status with Ecosoc,
Unesco, Unicef, ILO and
the Council of Europe

MOUVEMENT
INTERNATIONAL
ATD
QUART MONDE

Fondé par
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ONG ayant
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l'Ecosoc, de l'Unesco,
de l'Unicef, du BIT
et du Conseil de l'Europe

MOVIMIENTO
INTERNACIONAL
ATD
CUARTO MUNDO

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22 March 2010

Open letter to the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy

Dear President,
Dear Heads of State and Government,

ATD Fourth World works daily alongside families living in poverty, who are faced with difficulties in all areas of life. Despite their efforts, they feel that their situations are worsening.

We hoped that the European Council would set itself more ambitious goals in terms of fighting poverty in the Europe 2020 Strategy “for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”, since the Lisbon Treaty states that, “the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights” (Article 1a) and “shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection” (Article 2).

ATD Fourth World would therefore like to ask the European Union to reaffirm its aims in this area during the spring summit.

The setting of quantitative targets is certainly a positive element. However, it is essential for the Heads of State to decide upon a clear goal, in order that real progress can take place. Furthermore, these targets must be verified and they must take into account the reality of poverty as experienced by people living in it.

→ **ATD Fourth World therefore asks the European Union to create a full set of performance indicators to monitor the fight against poverty and social exclusion.** These performance indicators should be evaluated on an annual basis by the European Parliament and Council. They should be published annually on 17th October, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

The performance indicators should be adopted at the same time as the establishment of the European Platform Against Poverty, in the context of reinforcing the Open Method of Coordination, and should include targets and indicators to monitor the fight against poverty and social exclusion. They should include the existing indicators in different areas (housing, education, income, employment and health). They should set targets linked to the EU’s public ambition to reduce poverty, ensuring that these targets and indicators include those for whom the enjoyments of rights is hardest to make effective.

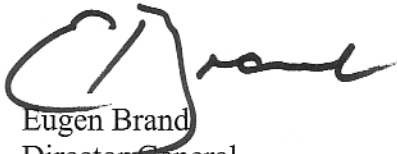
→ In addition to the monetary indicator which sets the financial poverty threshold at 60% of median income, **we also call on the EU to monitor the number of people below the levels of 50% and 40% of median income.**

Experience has shown us that those most affected by poverty are very hard to reach. Monitoring the 60%, 50% and 40% rates would make it possible to ensure that everyone benefits from poverty reduction policies, not merely those who are closest to the poverty threshold.

- **We invite the European Union to establish a partnership programme with people living in poverty and with the civil society organisations in which they choose to play an active part.** The fight against poverty and social exclusion must include the participation of people living in long-term poverty, as they are the best-placed to say, in consultation with other stakeholders, whether policies are effective or not.

We look forward to receiving your reactions to our proposals.

Yours sincerely,



Eugen Brand
Director General
International Movement ATD Fourth World

Copies to:

President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso

Current President of the Council of the European Union, José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero

Current President of the Council of the European Union for Social Affairs, Trinidad Jiménez García-Herrera