

**G8 Finance Ministers Statement on
Access to Energy Services
for the Millennium Development Goals**

St. Petersburg, June 9-10, 2006

1. We discussed important linkages between energy services and health, education, gender inequality and environmental sustainability, and agreed to take steps to alleviate energy poverty. Lack of access to modern energy services is a barrier to economic growth and can put at risk the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.
2. Increased access to energy services can spur economic and social development provided that policies for economic growth and poverty reduction are in place. We urge national governments and multilateral and bilateral donors to integrate energy issues into poverty reduction and country assistance strategies, including options for the least developed countries to tap their natural resource potential, and develop the energy trade infrastructure between countries.
3. We stress the need to give a specific pro-poor focus to energy strategies, with emphasis on access to modern energy services for the most vulnerable population groups, and on availability of energy and electricity supplies to essential services, such as hospitals and schools. We highlight the importance of increased access to cleaner fuels in household consumption which can reduce air pollution.
4. We underscore the key role of the private sector in providing energy services, and call upon developing countries to reduce barriers to private sector involvement by adopting clear and effective legal and regulatory frameworks. Small-scale private service providers and microfinance institutions can help fill the gap in private financing of infrastructure by serving vulnerable communities.
5. We reaffirm the commitment made at Gleneagles to promote clean energy and achieve sustainable development globally, including by increased access to reliable and affordable energy. We welcome the existing initiatives in the energy sector and look forward to the completion and implementation of the World Bank's Clean Energy Investment Framework and underline that it should give increased attention to improving access to energy services. We encourage the World Bank Group to explore strengthening the existing instruments and evaluate the potential of new instruments to tackle the problem of energy poverty. We welcome the agreement reached on replenishing the Global Environment Facility which can serve as a major tool for developing access to clean energy.

6. We will explore opportunities to intensify our aid efforts to alleviate energy poverty and encourage bilateral and multilateral donors to scale up their assistance in this area. We reaffirm the role of the IMF's Exogenous Shocks Facility in helping poor countries that face higher energy prices and invite further financial contributions. We support the activities of the Global Village Energy Partnership (GVEP), which seeks to increase access to modern energy. We welcome Russia's decision to join other donors by contributing US\$30 million to the GVEP in order to scale up its work in Sub-Saharan Africa.