



G-8 COMMITMENT TO HELP STOP POLIO FOREVER

1. In 1988, the world's health ministers unanimously committed to eradicating polio. The G-8 countries took up this challenge and together with partners from public and private sectors have raised over \$3.3 billion to fund polio immunization campaigns around the world. Already, millions of children have been spared the crippling effects of polio, and if the World Health Organization-led global Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) succeeds, polio will be eradicated globally by 2005. Only one other major disease -- smallpox -- has been eliminated.
2. But there are risks ahead. Polio is still present, in varying degrees, in six countries: India, Pakistan, Egypt, Afghanistan, Niger, and Nigeria. Polio has now reemerged in nine countries in Africa. The Polio Eradication Initiative is facing a funding shortfall for 2004-2005. We are within striking distance of closing this gap, and sustaining the efforts will allow immunization campaigns to continue and will bring us closer to our goal of a polio-free world. The gains we have made against this disease will disappear if we do not act now. Key to our success will be an increased engagement and commitment of the polio-endemic countries.

Our Commitment:

3. We will take all necessary steps to eradicate polio by 2005.
4. To ensure that polio does not reemerge, we will work to ensure the full integration of necessary measures in national health strategies and structures in the post-eradication period through 2008.
5. We are pleased that the financing gap for 2004 has now been closed through our efforts and those of others. We are determined to close the 2005 financing gap by the 2005 G-8 Summit through contributions from the G-8 and other public and private donors.
6. We urge governments that have pledged money for polio eradication to turn their pledges into real contributions. We will work to ensure that contributions are made in a timely manner so as to enable budgeting and planning for effective immunization campaigns from now through 2005.
7. We will also remain engaged with the governments of the six polio-endemic countries and the nine countries in which polio is now spreading to urge them to take stronger steps to contain and destroy the polio virus. We will also engage other donors and organizations to help support and encourage these countries.

8. The G-8 welcomes the resolution on polio eradication passed by the Organization of the Islamic Conference Summit held in Malaysia, from 16-17 October 2003, as another example of partnership in the effort to eradicate polio.
9. The G-8 recognizes the excellent work of the Polio Eradication Initiative and the special contribution made by Rotary International, through direct financial contributions and the engagement of thousands of volunteers throughout the world.