

## Call to End Child Poverty

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17<sup>th</sup> October 2014, Sarvodaya, Colombo, Sri- Lanka

*“Poverty is not accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by actions of human beings.”*

*(Nelson Mandela)*

In an age where 1.1 billion children face life without food, malnourished, with little access to shelter, health facilities and quality education - human progress is inconceivable. There is a cost to this inaction. It compromises the beginnings we give our children and condemns them to a life full of inequalities.

Today, as the world commemorates the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, we remind ourselves that the impact of poverty on children is often irreversible. This should underline the urgency and focus required to end child poverty. It is unfortunate that even with so much social and economic progress, in many societies across the world, poverty continues to be deeply entrenched for many. In these countries, the lives of hundreds of millions of men, women and children are blighted by extreme, profound and multi-dimensional poverty. This is particularly cruel conditioning for children and the generations that will follow them.

Our faith traditions teach us to value the gift that is every child and remind us that in nurturing them we find hope and shared blessings. We, the participants coming from diverse religions, UN agencies, the World Bank, development partners, child-focused NGOs, and Arigatou International initiatives, who met at the End Child Poverty Round Table, commit ourselves to dialogue and action, drawing on the intrinsic strength of our faith-inspired resources. We resolve to build partnerships and make ending child poverty central to global development beyond 2015.

We recognize that this year’s observance comes as the international community is intensifying efforts to formulate the next set of goals to guide global development. These Sustainable Development Goals must prioritize poverty eradication, with particular focus on children. We ask that the efforts of all actors increase in scale, sincerity, depth and scope. Arigatou International aims to contribute to this global effort by launching the End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre, which will be located in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

We note on this day the continuing contribution that faith communities around the world have made in providing the moral grounding required to tackle the development challenges including work toward realization of the MDGs and actual provision of services. We dedicate these efforts to children everywhere and commit to:

1. Raising the consciousness of our communities and constituencies on the plight of child poverty.
2. Engaging in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, supporting theological reflection, prayer and action to mitigate the human and spiritual causes of poverty including greed, hatred, fear and ignorance and contribute to finding lasting solutions.
3. Advocating against structural causes of poverty such as the unequal distribution of resources, corruption, bad governance and violent conflicts.
4. Accompanying and supporting selected sustainable and replicable grassroots projects that aim to enhance quality education and retention of vulnerable children in school; transform violent conflicts that exacerbate poverty; and promote income-generating activities for low-income groups and families.

### **Urgent action is needed!**

We thank Arigatou International for its continued commitment to working with faith communities to end child poverty. We call on governments, intergovernmental bodies, local and international organizations to take up this mantra of ending child poverty in this generation.

**We are convinced that this is possible. We cannot do it alone—together let us end child poverty!**

*Jm*

**Fred Nyabera**

Director, End Child Poverty  
Arigatou International – Nairobi

Statement from the Round Table to End Child Poverty  
**on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2014**



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dedicated service  
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END POVERTY  
**2015**  
millennium campaign

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