



G8

Surprising as it is some leaders, including those attending the G8 summit in Japan this July, appear to be just tired of hearing about AIDS. They promise to achieve great goals—like universal access to HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010—then drag their feet when it comes to providing the necessary resources to reach the goal. With only two years to go until 2010, so much more is still needed to turn this goal into a reality.

This year the pressure on G8 leaders to spend money on many things besides the commitments the G8 has already made on universal access will be very great. You can also count on hearing a lot of talk about the world's poor economic situation making these funding choices more difficult. So what can you do to hold the G8 leaders accountable for the promises they have already made on AIDS?

Take action, make the G8's words matter.

What you need to remind the G8:

- AIDS is not over
- Keep your promise - universal access by 2010!
- No false choices: Stop AIDS & Strengthen Health care

Who needs to hear what you have to say:

- If you are from a G8 country, tell your government
- If not from a G8 country, tell the embassy of Japan – the 2008 G8 host country ([click here to find the Japanese Embassy in your country](#))

What is the G8?

The "Group of Eight" or G8, is an international forum composed of 8 country members – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russian, United Kingdom and the United States. A representative from the European Commission also participates. Together, these countries represent approximately 65% of the world's economy.

This international forum was hosted for the first time in France in 1975 to discuss issues of the global economy, and at that time consisted of six country members. The G8 meets annually under rotating country leadership. Each country takes leadership of the forum on the 1st of January and the lead country plans and hosts foreign minister level meetings that then lead up to the mid-year summit which all of the country leaders attend. This year summit will be held on 7-9 July in Hokkaido - Toyako, Japan.



Why is the G8 Important?

Over 20 years ago, AIDS first appeared on the G8 agenda. It has remained on the G8 agenda nearly every year since, but usually only at the insistence of AIDS campaigners. Some have questioned whether the G8 – which only represents leaders from 8 northern countries- is an appropriate venue to advocate for changes in global policy. Others are troubled by the notion that the world's wealthiest nation should hold such sway over the fate of the world's citizen.

Despite these concerns the simple fact is that G8 member states contribute the lion share of resources for development assistance. Further, the meeting of these eight countries brings along with it a media spotlight which offers campaigners a unique opportunity in holding G8 leaders accountable to their priorities and obligations in a very public setting. In the run up to the 2005 Gleneagles Summit in Scotland, for example, the actions of civil society campaigners lead to the commitment of G8 leaders to, "develop and implement a package for a comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care, with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all people who need it by 2010."

Much work is still to be done if the G8 is to keep the promises they made on universal access. To read more about what's happening in preparations for the 2008 G8 summit, including key events, actions and statements, and other important campaigning information please visit www.g8aidscampaign.org.

[Click here](#) to read the first review of the Work of the G8 in the Field of Tackling the Three Pandemics HIV / AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (from G8 Summit in Germany, 2007)

Links

To read more about the G8, please see the following links:

[Official G8 2008 Presidency Website](#) (in Japanese and English)

[G8 information from Wikipedia](#), the free online encyclopedia.

[University of Toronto G8 Information Center](#)