



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**Main Committee**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**International Development Assistance**

**SPEECH**

**Tuesday, 19 October 2010**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Tuesday, 19 October 2010	<b>Source</b> House
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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Sidebottom, Sid, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

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**Mr SIDEBOTTOM** (Braddon) (4.42 pm)—Sunday, 17 October 2010 was recognised throughout the world as the United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and it gave me and, I hope, others time to reflect on our own relatively good fortune and to be generous to those in our region who face extreme levels of poverty. I met recently with members of the Burnie RESULTS group, which emphasised the high levels of poverty in the Asia-Pacific region. RESULTS volunteers are advocates working throughout the world to create the political will to eradicate poverty. The Asia-Pacific region, for the record, has 60 per cent of the world's population who live in extreme poverty. It is to no-one's advantage that this situation be allowed to continue. The Australian government has a healthy record in its support for poverty eradication programs. Indeed, the Gillard Labor government is committed to meeting its share of the funding for the Millennium Development Goals.

Australia's aid budget is structured to support the Millennium Development Goals. The government is supporting the goals in a practical sense through a staged increase in overseas aid to 0.5 per cent of gross national income by 2015, cancellation of a \$75 million debt for Indonesia and a \$210 million contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. That is up from \$145 million in the 2008-10 period. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has prevented an estimated 5.7 million deaths. These increases in funding go some but not all of the long way to reducing poverty, but every little bit helps.

Improving people's health will mean fewer families will face a loss of income because fewer breadwinners will be affected by the diseases of poverty, like AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. I join with many people who care about what happens to our neighbours to ask all donor countries, including our own, to follow the lead of the most generous donor nations like Sweden, Norway and Luxembourg and work actively towards achieving the UN recommended level for overseas aid of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. I know my own government is working towards achieving this goal in a practical way and has a record to be proud of. It would also agree that it looks forward to being able to do more. I would like to conclude with a quote from the *Lancet* of May 2010 in relation to the global fund:

The (Global) Fund is the great success story of multilateral foreign policy this past decade. What makes it different from most good causes is the certainty of a return on investment. ... There is no sector of government expenditure that gives a better human return.