

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

Prayer Alert . . .

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

White Band Day 2: Wake up to poverty!



On 10 September, people across the world will unite in the second Global Call to Action Against Poverty mobilisation to demand that world leaders Wake-Up to Poverty Five years on from the Millennium Summit world leaders are meeting, from 14 –16 September, to discuss progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the [United Nations World Summit](#). Thus far, efforts to reach the MDGs have fallen woefully short of what is needed to achieve them. On 10 September, during the second GCAP mobilisation day, thousands of people will be holding breakfast meetings with politicians, all night vigils, rallies outside state buildings, jamborees, petitions and early morning press calls. World leaders will literally be waking-up to the voices of people demanding action to end poverty before they depart for the UN World Summit. These actions will be mirrored in New York on 14 September, the opening day of the Summit, with a stunt including alarm clocks to "Wake-up" the delegates. Millions of people will also be wearing white bands – the symbol of the campaign – to show their solidarity for an end to poverty. Go through the website to find out more [about the campaign](#) and

to be in touch with the GCAP [national coalitions](#). *Let us continue to pray for the leaders of the nations that they will Wake up to Poverty and the needs of those that suffer around the world...*

Muslim group in Scotland agrees with outspoken preacher who tells extremists to leave country

The Reverend David Lacy, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, has minced no words in addressing terrorism in the UK. Labelling radical Islamists as hypocrites who treat their neighbours as "enemies," Lacy called on Muslim extremists to leave the country. He specifically targeted Muslims "who speak out against the UK and have been accused of encouraging attacks on coalition soldiers in Iraq." "If they really hate the British enough to want us dead and bombed, then it is hypocritical of them to stay here," he said. "It seems common sense for them to get out. We want to be a multicultural family, but I think anyone -- from any side or none -- who says he or she wants a lot of British people dead, is being hypocritical by staying here." Apparently, Lacy's comments made some senior figures of the Kirk uneasy. Indeed, The Scottish Socialist Party called his views "absolutely unacceptable." But, according to the BBC report, Ashraf Anjum -- president of the Islamic Centre in Glasgow -- told the Scotland on Sunday newspaper: "He is right. Anyone who comes to this country, whether they are Muslim, Christian, Jewish, or whatever, should obey the law and not attack this country. The overwhelming majority of Muslims will agree with him." www.breakingchristiannews.com *Let us pray that others will speak out against those who preach extremism in any form.*

BBC braced for an orgy of protests

The BBC is preparing itself for a torrent of complaints about its most expensive drama series. Rome, a £58 million epic being screened this autumn, has some of the most explicit and violent scenes ever seen on British TV. Full-frontal nudity, blood soaked brutality and obscene language, pepper the 12 episodes, which claim to be an accurate dramatisation of the collapse of the Roman Republic. The series, which US viewers can see from Sunday, opens in 52BC as the republic is starting to fall apart. It centres around two soldiers returning from the war in Gaul. The series is a co-production between the BBC and US broadcaster HBO. Source: Daily Express www.mediawatchuk.org *As our media once again pushes back boundaries of taste and decency let us continue to seek God for a breakthrough and raise up those who will stand up for Christian values.*

Church of England criticises recent faith schools poll

The Church of England has expressed deep reservations about the recent ICM/Guardian poll which found that 64 per cent of the population opposed faith schools on the basis that they threaten social cohesion. Spokesman for the Church of England Education Division, Nick McKemey, voiced concern about the wording of the survey, claiming that questions were designed to produce a particular answer. "We have deep reservations about the way the questions were phrased, particularly the question 'Schools should be for everyone regardless of religion and the government should not be funding faith schools of any kind'," he said. "The first part of the question does not have to imply the other. The question is misleading, overcomplicated and designed to produce a particular result," explained the Church of England spokesman. Mr McKemey went on to say that there was no evidence whatsoever to support the link between attendance at publicly funded faith schools and subversive or terrorist attitudes. He continued: "Equally, there's no evidence which establishes that publicly funded Jewish and Christian schools have contributed one iota to divisiveness in the wider society." www.christiantoday.com *Let us pray that the points raised will be listened to and seriously considered by those in authority.*

UK Christian Lawyers call meeting over concerns for Religious Hatred Law

Christian Lawyers in the UK have called a meeting on September 7th at a central London venue after concerns have arisen that the UK Government will use the Parliament Act to force through the proposed Religious Hatred legislation this coming autumn. The law, which is similar to one already in force in Victoria in Australia, will ban incitement to hatred on the basis of religion. Whilst many believe in principle the law is a good idea, Christian lawyers in the UK are so concerned about the loose wording of the law that, in the wrong hands, the law could easily be used against Christians engaging in legitimate evangelism and preaching - as has already happened to two pastors in Australia where the law has been in force for some years. Those pastors were found guilty of the 'crime'. The association, the Lawyer's Christian Fellowship, have recently published a letter inviting Christians in the UK from a wide spectrum of denominations to gather at Westminster Chapel at 1pm on the 7th of September where the meeting will be led by cross bencher peer, Baroness Cox. The Christian lawyers believe that Churches and Christians should act now to put as much pressure as possible on the Government to change its mind. (See also Prayer Alert 36) www.assistnews.net *Continue to pray as this bill progresses that these concerns will be clearly heard and that they reconsider the wording of the bill in there light.*

20,000 to gather as Greenbelt Christian Festival begins

20,000 people are expected to gather at the annual Greenbelt Festival 2005, which will commence today and will continue from 26-29 August at Cheltenham Racecourse. Following the growth of the Festival over the past 32 years, the organisers will gather people under the theme "Tree of Life", and participants are to be made to think about the origin of the festival and how it can be grown into life beyond those four days in August. Greenbelt is an independent Christian charity working to express love, creativity and justice in the arts and contemporary culture in the light of the Christian gospel. The Greenbelt Festival is set to be one of the highlights of the Christian Festival summer, and a huge range of activities will be on display at the festival, from music to performance and visual arts, to comedy and worship and literature. www.greenbelt.org.uk www.christiantoday.com *As the thousands of young people gather let us pray that they will not just enjoy the music but they will receive an anointing from God Himself through those that minister...*

Thousands pay respects to victim of race attack

They wanted to remember the 18 years that Anthony Walker lived, not the foul manner in which he died. They asked for a service that would celebrate his life and not dwell on the racists who ended it with an axe. There was standing room only as 3,000 people gathered to pay respects to a young man who, until a month ago, was almost unknown, but who is now, inevitably, referred to as the "new Stephen Lawrence". The Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev James Jones, spoke of the revulsion on Merseyside at the racism that motivated Anthony's murder. "Young people especially feel the shame of what has happened," he said. "Anthony was a young man full of promise and a committed Christian. He is being celebrated as an example to other people." Pastor Daniel, a family friend, acknowledged the anger being felt throughout the city. "How long will it take our society to learn? (See also Prayer Alert 34) www.timesonline.co.uk *Praise God for the witness of the Walker family and for the testimony of Anthony's life! May it not be wasted!*

EUROPE

Floods and fires in continental Europe

Severe floods continue to afflict countries across Central and Eastern Europe – Austria; Switzerland; Bavaria; Germany; Bulgaria; Moldova, Croatia and Slovenia causing loss of homes and in some cases deaths while serious fires rage in Spain and Portugal. *Pray that God will help the emergency services, that there will be cooperation between countries and that God would give wisdom to the UK Presidency of the EU to know what assistance/coodination to provide. Pray that Europeans would turn to God and put their security in Him alone.*

EU membership negotiations for Turkey and Croatia

Negotiations on the terms of Turkey's membership of the EU were scheduled to open at the beginning of October. However, several existing Member States are now firmly opposed. It is also unclear whether Croatia's application for membership will be allowed to proceed. *Pray for the discussions that will take place between EU Member States in September, that God will be*

sovereign over this issue and that the right decisions will be made. Pray for Turkey and Croatia, for God's purposes for those nations to be fulfilled and for His church in those countries to be protected and strengthened

Thousands mourn monk murdered in church

An estimated 10,000 mourners flocked from all over the world to the funeral of Brother Roger, the apostle of Christian unity murdered in his church in Burgundy last week. Brother Alois, the German Catholic who succeeded Brother Roger as head of the Taizé community, asked the crowd to pray for the 36-year-old Romanian woman accused of stabbing the 90-year-old prior during a church service. "God of goodness, we ask you to forgive Luminita Solcan, who, in an act of wickedness, ended the life of our Brother Roger," he said yesterday. "Like Christ on the cross, we say to you 'Forgive her, for she knew not what she did.' The German President, Horst Köhler, and the French Interior Minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, were among the mourners, many of whom watched the service on a large screen outside the church. Brother Roger founded his community, dedicated to peace and the reunification of the Christian church, in 1940. In recent years, Taizé has attracted pilgrims from all over the world, and its music has become internationally celebrated. www.independant.co.uk *Pray that the principles of 'peace and reunification' will grow to influence even more.*

Debt cancellation on IMF agenda

The G8 summit in July agreed a proposal to cancel 100% of the debts of qualifying countries to international organisations such as the IMF and the African Development Fund. This has also been agreed by EU Member States. The UK Presidency (of the EU and G8) has said that it will now work to get agreement to this at the World Bank and IMF Annual Meetings in September. *Pray for these meetings that debt cancellation would be agreed.*

EU Agriculture challenges

Agriculture and Environment Ministers meet 9-12 September. Top of the agenda is the proposal to reform the rules for the production and marketing of sugar. But Ministers are likely also to consider the risks to the EU of avian flu. At a meeting of vets in Brussels on 25 August there was no decision that safeguard measures were needed to protect poultry from contagion from migrating birds. *Pray for this second major discussion of the sugar regime that EU Ministers would work for a just outcome for EU producers and producers in developing countries. Pray also that God would give Ministers the wisdom to know whether protective measures against avian flu are necessary and, if so, the ability to agree effective measures quickly.*

EU Counter-terrorism measures

The UK Presidency of the EU should take forward in September the Action Plan to combat terrorism agreed at the emergency meeting of Ministers from the EU Member States (the Council) on 13 July. A raft of measures will be considered by the Council from the beginning of September to ensure that terrorists can be pursued and investigated across borders and that there are effective measures throughout the EU to freeze the assets of those financing terrorism. The Council will consider measures to protect people such as airline and maritime security measures and the protection of road and railways. It will discuss arrangements for sharing information and coordinating emergency responses particularly for terrorist attacks on more than one Member State. The 13 July meeting also called on Member States to agree a strategy to prevent people turning to terrorism. EU Ministers intended that these measures should be agreed and adopted by the end of the year. *Pray that God would give UK Ministers and officials wisdom as they chair the meetings and guide discussions on these measures and that the EU will be able to adopt effective measures to combat terrorism.*

WORLDWIDE

Peace role for Colombian Church

Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe has agreed to allow the Roman Catholic Church to mediate in the conflict with the country's left-wing rebel groups. Mr Uribe acknowledged the efforts the Church had already made towards setting up talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc) and the ELN. He said he hoped the negotiations might lead to a possible ceasefire. Until now, Colombia's government had insisted the Farc must declare a truce before any talks could begin. Mr Uribe announced he would allow the Church to take on an official mediatory role after meeting a group of Colombian bishops. The statement comes a week after three Catholic priests were killed by suspected Colombian guerrillas in two separate incidents. More than 60 members of the clergy are thought to have died in the conflict over the past 20 years. www.bbc.co.uk *Pray that this initiative will lead to a much needed breakthrough for peace and reconciliation.*

'Half Asian children' in poverty

Nearly half of Asia's 1.3bn children live in poverty, denied basic needs, says a new report. India has the largest number of poor children in Asia, with 80% of its 400m young severely deprived, it says. Child aid organisation, Plan, author of the report, has pledged to spend \$1bn on poverty reduction in 12 Asian countries over the next decade. It also wants rich nations to reduce subsidies given to their own farmers and to cancel Third World debt. The "Growing up in Asia" report states that 600m Asian children under the age of 18 lack access to either food, safe drinking water, health or shelter. Of those, 350m were described as "absolutely poor", meaning they do not have access to two or more of a child's essential necessities. www.bbc.co.uk *Let us remember in prayer the needs of the vulnerable young people across Asia that the rich will not ignore their needs and Plan's initiative is just a beginning.*

Annan tours Niger to highlight food crisis

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited skeletal babies in Niger and heard villagers' pleas for help Tuesday, seeking to put attention on 5 million northwest Africans left short of food after their crops were ravaged by drought and locusts. The United Nations was among the first, in November, to warn of the impending hunger crisis in the desert region, but its appeals for aid were largely ignored. A French humanitarian group accused the world body on Monday of responding to Niger's plight with too little, too late. Niger President Mamadou Tandja, who has accused U.N. officials, aid groups and opposition parties of exaggerating his country's problems for political and economic gain, welcomed Annan at the airport in the eastern city of Zinder. "I came to see

myself, to talk to the government, to see what we can do together to improve the situation not only in the short-term, but also in the long-term," Annan told reporters as he began a two-day visit. www.guardian.co.uk *Pray that Annan's visit will have the desired effect.*

Kenyan Churches unite to oppose historic new constitution

Mainstream Christian Churches in Kenya are rising up to reject the Country's Revised Constitution - the Wako Draft which began print this week under heavy security. The Churches are emphatically campaigning for a 'No' vote in a forthcoming November referendum on the revised Constitution, which has been put together by Attorney General Amos Wako. There is huge opposition to the Draft which is seen as a betrayal to the people. It drastically revises an original document put together by the National Constitutional Conference (NCC) last year - popularly known as the Bomas Draft. The Anglican Church has backed the sentiments of the other mainstream Churches in Kenya. Bishop Kenneth Ochiel of South Nyanza's said the Church would not accept the new constitution since it elevates one religion by the inclusion of Kadhi's courts - Islamic religious courts. "Since there is freedom of worship, all denominations should be treated equally. That is why we will block all attempts to include the Kadhi's courts in the constitution," he said citizens wanted restrictions on the president - apparently in reaction to the abuse of executive powers under former heads of state Daniel arap Moi and Jomo Kenyatta. Therefore the Bomas Draft transferred much of the power vested in the presidency to a newly-created post of prime minister. However, the New Wako Draft, put together by recommendations from the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) includes revisions allowing for a powerful head of state and a prime minister with little authority. www.christiantoday.com *Pray for the Kenya nation that the leaders will not betray the people but hold firm to democracy.*

PRAISE REPORTS

UK's largest Christian youth initiative - Merseyfest a huge success

Merseyfest, the UK's largest Christian youth initiative which took place in Liverpool from 14–21 August, was heralded a huge success by organisers. Merseyfest Chairman Phil Pawley said: "Merseyfest has been a brilliant week. A massive thank you to everyone who was involved in Merseyfest and to all of our partners who helped make this event a massive success!" Merseyfest organisers called on youths and churches to continue the good work put into motion by the festival. A statement on their website said: "If we only see Merseyfest as a great event, we have missed what it is really about. Merseyfest is a catalyst for many local churches and communities to continue to be involved in regeneration across our region for the long-term. "Our passion is to see this vision for transformation multiply across the region, and that this week of activity was the vehicle to start inspiring many about what can be achieved." www.christiantoday.com *Praise God for this gathering and the practical good works. May they prove to be a living example of Christ Himself.*

World Youth Day: Biggest worship service on German soil

The Roman Catholic World Youth Day has ended in the biggest worship service ever on German soil. More than one million participants from 200 countries celebrated an open air mass with Pope Benedict XVI near Cologne, August 21. During the six day "festival of faith" the pontiff also paid a visit to the oldest synagogue in Germany and met with Jewish, Muslim and church leaders. In the Cologne synagogue, which dates back to Roman times, the Pope denounced the holocaust and any emerging anti-Semitic tendencies. He called on Jews and Christians to cooperate in the defence of human rights and the sanctity of life. The Ten Commandments provided a common heritage. In a meeting with Muslim leaders he denounced terrorism and called for an honest religious dialogue. The Pope also received 20 representatives of non-Catholic Churches. www.assistnews.net *Praise God for this gathering of young people and pray the Lord will encourage them in their walk of faith.*

LOOKING AHEAD

9th – 11th September: *The Lawyers Christian Fellowship National Conference:* this year we will meet at Hothorpe Hall in Leicestershire. Teresa Conradie will be giving the keynote speech (Teresa is chairman of the South African Christian Lawyers' Association) and Rev. Simon Robinson addressing the theme: "The truth will set you free." www.lawcf.org

10 September: *White Band Day 2.* During the second GCAP mobilisation day, thousands of people will be holding breakfast meetings with politicians, all night vigils, rallies outside state buildings, jamborees, petitions and early morning press calls. Also go through the website to find out more [about the campaign](#) and to be in touch with the GCAP [national coalitions](#).

21st September: Churches representing over 560 million Christians world-wide are being invited to mark the *United Nations International Day of Peace*, as an *International Day of Prayer for Peace* – for a second year running. The initiative calls on Christian churches all over the world to arrange for services or vigils on 21 September, as well as to include prayers for peace in their services on the Sunday before or after that day www.ekklesia.co.uk

5th October – 3rd November: *30-Days of Prayer for the Muslim World.* For the latest "30-Days" news and for prayer materials during Ramadan 2005 www.30-days.net

29th October: *Trumpet Call III* - Back to the NEC Arena for a third National Trumpet Call Day of Prayer. Make sure the date is in your diary www.worldprayer.org.uk