

Mr. J.P. Balkenende
Prime Minister
Ministry of General Affairs
P.O. Box 20001
2500 EA The Hague
The Netherlands

<i>Date:</i>	Amsterdam, 27 March 2009
<i>Re:</i>	G-20 summit April 2 nd , London
<i>Contact:</i>	Wiert Wiertsema, tel. 020-530 66 00, e-mail: ww@bothends.org

Dear Mr. Balkenende,

On the 25th of March Both ENDS organised an international expert meeting and a public debate in The Hague to discuss the scope for a so-called 'Green New Deal' in the light of the unfolding global financial and economic crisis. From the rich discussions at these meetings a number of concerns and policy recommendations emerged which we like to share with you in this letter.

1. While the financial crisis caused an immediate threat to the international financial system and the global economy, various other crises – e.g., the energy crisis, the climate crisis, the food crisis, and the water crisis – have similarly grave consequences. Though these consequences are not yet always apparent, many scientists foresee huge financial costs by the time that the consequences of these crises have spread around the globe. For that reason the participants of the The Hague meetings urge all governments present at the G-20 summit – including the Dutch and EU governments – to give equal priority to solutions for not just the financial crisis, but for all the other urgent crises mentioned.
2. Around the world, governments appear to have no other choice but to bail out financial institutions and other companies at an unprecedented scale. To many people this translates as a 'socialisation' of massive losses due to private sector institutions taking irresponsible risks. The participants of the meetings in The Hague felt that this bail-out should be matched with guarantees for a similar 'socialisation' of future profits of these institutions, to ensure that all people share in the benefits resulting from their sacrifices for the current bail-out schemes.
3. The governance structures of global financial institutions need to reflect democratic principles. For that purpose it is recommended by the participants in the The Hague meetings that the various EU member states – including The Netherlands - should give up their separate seats in the governing boards of the World Bank and the IMF. The EU should speak with one voice at these institutions, and could do so by taking up only one seat. Vacated seats at the governing bodies should be made available to developing countries, in particular Africa.
4. Another suggestion that all participants at the meetings shared is that the US dollar should be replaced by a new global currency based on a basket of other national and regional currencies. It is suggested that the SDR may serve this purpose.

5. Especially in many developing countries the perception is strongly rooted that current global (financial) institutions are dominated by powers and ideologies originating from the industrialised countries of the North. While there is no sense of 'ownership', the people in these countries nevertheless are severely affected by the impacts of the current global financial and economic crisis. The participants in the The Hague meetings feel that for sustainable solutions to this crisis, solutions developed by local people in developing countries themselves – also referred to as 'glocal' solutions - need to be taken on board. As part of sustainable solutions to the crisis the G-20 governments are therefore urged to incorporate visions and policy recommendations from developing country governments and civil society.
6. The participants of the The Hague meetings are worried that environmental and social standards for stimulus packages in response to the crisis are considered as costs. For that reason the G-20 summit is strongly urged to define these standards not as costs, but to firmly include them in current and future packages as indispensable investments for the future sustainability of our societies, including the financial and economic systems.

We hope that you will take these considerations into account in your interventions at the G-20 summit, taking place in London on April 2nd. We very much look forward to your response on these issues, and wish you success and wisdom in the deliberations you will take part in.

Yours sincerely,

Danielle Hirsch
Director Both ENDS

Cc:

Mr. Wouter Bos, Minister of Finance
Mr. Maxime Verhagen, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation
Ms. Jacqueline Cramer, Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning
Ms. Gerda Verburg, Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality