**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Should developed countries provide foreign aid to developing countries?**

Foreign aid or (development assistance –DA) is often regarded as being too much, or wasted on corrupt recipient governments despite any good intentions from donor countries. In reality, both the quantity and quality of aid have been poor and donor nations have not been held to account.

There are numerous forms of aid, from humanitarian emergency assistance, to food aid, military assistance, etc. Development aid has long been recognized as crucial to help poor developing nations grow out of poverty. In 1970, the world’s rich countries agreed to give 0.7% of their GNI (Gross National Income) as official international development aid, annually. Since that time, despite billions given each year, rich nations have rarely met their actual promised targets. For example, the US is often the largest donor in dollar terms, but ranks amongst the lowest in terms of meeting the stated 0.7% target.

In the coming decade, the gap between rich nations and poor nations will grow and appeals for assistance will multiply. How peoples of rich nations respond to the plight of those in poor nations will depend, in part, on how they come to view their duty to poor nations.

