



# Transforming our World

## For Immediate Release

### **Christians challenged to alleviate poverty**

#### **The Mission-Net congress supports Micah Challenge**

ERFURT. The issue of poverty was raised on the third day of Mission-Net, a pan-European Christian conference. Until 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2012, 2,650 young Christians from 40 European nations are gathered in Erfurt, Germany.

Mission-Net supports Micah Challenge, a global campaign that exists to raise the awareness and support of Christians against extreme poverty and global injustice. Micah Challenge is committed to holding governments accountable to the Millennium Development Goals. The initiative is supported by the Evangelical Alliance and more than 30 organisations in Germany.

The Western nations' access to raw materials in developing countries is often linked with corruption and thus very problematic, said Joel Edwards, International Director of Micah Challenge. As a result, many of the wealthiest countries, in terms of mineral resources, are in fact amongst the poorest nations in the world.

Micah Challenge urges the European Union to ensure greater transparency in transactions within the commodity sector, and the investment of released funds towards poverty alleviation. In support of this initiative, Mission-Net congress participants were encouraged to write a letter that will be presented to Danish EU President Helle Thorning-Schmidt in March 2012.

During an interview, CDU (Christian Democratic Union) Member of Parliament Frank Heinrich from Germany spoke about his involvement in politics. As pastor in Chemnitz, Germany, Heinrich not only presents the gospel but is also involved in social projects and brings Christians and non-Christians together. "I got involved in politics because I had a voice in the community," said Heinrich. He had to find out, however whether politics was really his calling. The German Member of Parliament asked congress participants to pray for politicians, "for a strong head and strong backbone, so that their hearts may stay soft."

Guest speaker Connie Duarte, lecturer at the Theological Seminary of Portugal said that faith in Jesus Christ changes people. "When the Holy Spirit transforms me, it will impact my life and my environment." No longer should my primary aim be to serve myself but rather to serve others. "Other people are no longer seen as objects but rather as precious in the image of God." It is thus important that we raise our voice against injustices, corruption and poverty, said Duarte.



# Transforming World

Congress participants connected with the inhabitants of Erfurt during two outreaches in the city that afternoon. "It is important for us to communicate interculturally what it means to share our lives," said the Director of Mission-Net, Evi Rodemann. In addition to a community festival, the young Europeans presented an interactive programme of music, dance and games. About 350 participants took part in the outreach and despite the language barrier, were able to engage with local residents about God and the world.

Mission-Net is organised by the European Evangelical Mission Association and the European Evangelical Alliance. The chairperson of Mission-Net is Martin Voegelin from Switzerland. More than 150 Christian organisations, mission agencies, Bible schools and theological seminaries as well as various denominations and churches in Erfurt support Mission-Net.

(491 words)

#### **Contact Details:**

Christoph Kiess, Communications

[Christoph.kiess@mission-net.org](mailto:Christoph.kiess@mission-net.org)

Tel: +49 7052 1794328

[www.mission-net.org](http://www.mission-net.org)