

# Oakland Tribune

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## Foreign assistance missed

MANY ISSUES WERE discussed during the presidential campaign. Foreign development assistance was not one of them. It should have been.

So many issues are integrally related to the well-being of people everywhere. While we worry about our shirking buying power, half of the world struggles to survive on less than \$2 per day, thus they are unable to participate in the new global economy.

At the same time we are attempting to keep undocumented people out of this country we fail to remember that most people would rather live with their families if only they could make enough to survive. And, as for national and global security, hungry and desperate people will accept help from whoever offers — us or terrorists.

Lastly, killer infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and drug resistant strains of tuberculosis know no borders but could take relatively little capital investment to manage before they spread and cause global pandemics.

The United States has some good foreign-assistance programs, such as child survival and microcredit. The new administration must reform foreign aid to clearly focus on eliminating global poverty and achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

President-elect Barack Obama should consider a Cabinet level post of director of development and make sure our foreign aid is transparent with measurable goals. We must not let the current economic crisis turn our backs on the world's poor, but rather construct a policy that will show the world the best of our great country.

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