

Listen to the most vulnerable, church alliance urges World Bank head

News

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(ENInews)--The Geneva-based Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) on April 25 urged the World Bank, under newly-appointed president Jim Yong Kim, to include faith-based organizations in its decisions and listen to "those most affected by poverty, hunger, disease and injustice."

In a letter of congratulations to Kim, who takes office on July 1, EAA Executive Director Peter Prove noted that the alliance supported an initiative while Kim was director of the World Health Organization's HIV/AIDS department that pledged to treat three million people with anti-retroviral drugs by 2005.

Such initiative and leadership is required now as wavering financial commitments seem to jeopardize progress made so far in tackling the pandemic, the letter stated, according to an EAA news release.

Prove noted the World Bank's "support for community engagement in the HIV response," demonstrated through its research with the U.K.'s Department for International Development on evaluating community response to HIV and AIDS. Such leadership should continue "so that resources can be invested in projects that empower local communities and make a significant long-term difference," Prove wrote.

The EAA letter also addressed World Bank leadership in food security, and the importance of increased support for small farms. It also noted that support is needed for "infrastructure to improve storage, preservation and distribution capacities in developing countries in order to reduce post-harvest losses."

Referring to Dr Kim's previous experience in development, Prove notes that, "For those of us working through faith-based institutions and civil society organizations, your appointment conveys hope of more openness to effective approaches in

tackling the root causes of poverty through international policy and practice built on the lived experience of the most vulnerable people and communities."

As a global network of over 80 Christian organizations, the EAA promotes and facilitates advocacy for justice on a defined set of focus issues – currently HIV and AIDS, and food security. Members represent Catholic, Evangelical, Orthodox and Protestant traditions.