



Glenda Jackson MP

Polyclinics  
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On Thursday last, the Prime Minister made a statement to the House on the G8 Summit.

If you only read, or ever believed press reports on the summiters activities, you would have extended, in my case, a somewhat limited knowledge of which wines went with the various Japanese dishes received at the State banquet, and more than surely any of us will ever need to know about the correct 'placements' around the banqueting table.

What was on the agenda for discussion came a very poor second, as far as the attendant press was concerned, to what was on the dinner plates. Thankfully, the Prime Minister put that right by giving a detailed résumé of what had actually been discussed and what has been achieved.

Central to all attendees, were, as the Prime Minister put it 'the triple shocks hurting the world economy'. The cost of oil, the cost of food, and the cost of money. Rises, affecting every country in the world, but which no individual country can unilaterally solve. It is also the case that no single country can solve the problems of climate change, nor single-handedly eliminate poverty, diseases, lack of education, democracy and human rights.

Firstly, there was agreement that to ensure stability in the international energy market, there has to be not only a better balance between the supply and demand for oil, but new investment in all sources of energy, accelerating world-wide the expansion of renewables. We must become more energy-efficient and reduce oil dependency.

And for the first time, there was agreement by the G8 to adopt a cut of at least 50% in green-house gas emissions by 2050. We know the fastest growing economies, China, India, South Africa, Brazil and others, have been, in the past, somewhat reluctant to commit, but, they have now agreed to continue working with the UN to achieve a climate agreement next year.

There were also agreements on energy efficiency standards, which if globally implemented, could cut by 15% oil consumption and carbon emissions by 20%.

It was this country that brought about the World Bank's climate investment fund, a fund specifically to assist the developing countries find alternative energy sources. The G8 agreed measures, which will provide more than 100 billion dollars to the developing world specifically to tackle climate change.

They also agreed an investment of more than 10 billion dollars for humanitarian aid – feeding those who are starving, and also 'measures for agricultural productivity over the long-term'.

The Prime Minister also made the point that decisions on an international trade agreement at the WTO meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup> 'will be critical', as protectionism, import restrictions and subsidies are the stumbling blocks which cripple the poorest.

Another commitment was more money to tackle disease, poverty and illiteracy - 60 billion dollars over 5 years to tackle infectious disease, universal access to AIDS treatment, an additional 1.5 million health professionals in 36 African countries. To prevent Malaria, 100 million bed nets, and 1 billion dollars of new money, helping 10 million more children to go to school.

This last point will be of particular interest to the children attending our schools in Hampstead and Highgate. They are taking part in a campaign to highlight the lack of education for their 'counterparts' in the developing world.

It's nice to know that where children lead and care, the world's leaders are prepared to follow. And not a glitzy menu in sight!