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ONE Members Lead Clinton, Huckabee, McCain and Obama to Commit to Visiting Africa

*Presidential candidates respond to **more than 100,000 ONE members** urging them to visit continent as president*

Washington, D.C. – On the heels of President Bush's trip to Africa, ONE members delivered more than 100,000 signed petitions to the presidential candidates urging them to visit Africa if elected. After receiving the petitions, Senator Hillary Clinton, Governor Mike Huckabee, Senator John McCain and Senator Barack Obama promised to make that visit, if elected, and position issues of global poverty and disease as essential foreign policy priorities.

"ONE members are displaying the power of ordinary Americans playing a major role in crafting U.S. foreign policy. When our voices unite with a common purpose, we can truly change the world. ONE will continue to fight for serious changes from our government to save the lives of the world's poorest people," **ONE President and CEO David Lane said.**

The petition drive was a project of ONE Action as part of ONE Vote '08, a nationwide non-partisan initiative made up of volunteers and high-profile political and policy experts working to engage voters and the presidential candidates on issues of global poverty and disease in the 2008 election.

Senator Clinton:

"I applaud [ONE members] activism and share their urgent concern for the challenges of poverty and AIDS, especially in Africa. I want to assure the ONE campaign and all Americans that I am committed to aggressively combating poverty and disease around the world.

"I have called for spending at least \$50 billion over the next five years to fight AIDS worldwide. I have also called for spending \$10 billion over five years to get kids in school around the world, and have committed to the bold goal of ending malaria deaths on the continent of Africa by the end of my second term.

"I am also committed to visiting Africa during my first term as President, to see the progress of our efforts and to assess first hand the necessary strategies to combat disease and poverty. I look forward to working with the ONE campaign and other organizations when I am President to ensure that addressing the needs of the world's poorest countries is an essential component of our nation's foreign policy."

Governor Huckabee:

"The ONE Campaign members have been a significant presence throughout this election season and have done a tremendous job of raising awareness of the plight of the poorest people on earth. I believe it is our moral imperative, as Americans, to continue U.S. leadership in helping those who are most vulnerable. As we were reminded from President Bush's recent trip to the continent, the current

Administration has laid a strong foundation on which I intend to build. I will go to Africa in my first term and will continue to make a difference globally by strengthening such initiatives as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the President's Malaria Initiative and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. As President, together with the efforts of the ONE Campaign, I will help combat global poverty and disease."

Senator McCain:

"I am proud of the volunteer-driven effort behind ONE and the commitment ONE's members have shown toward serving a cause greater than their own self-interest.

"Fighting poverty and disease across the globe is in America's strategic and moral interests. As president, I will establish the goal of eradicating malaria -- which afflicts millions of people in some of the world's poorest nations and stands as the number one killer of children under five in Africa -- from the African continent. I believe that many nations, in Africa and elsewhere, will not reach their true potential without outside help to combat entrenched problems, such as HIV/AIDS. It is critical that we face this crisis head-on, which is why I have consistently supported the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief program, known as PEPFAR. Our commitment must be sustained, and our nation must always be committed to helping people in need in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere cope with the ravages of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

"Aid is not the only way of fighting disease and extreme poverty. I will press nations on the critical importance of good governance and economic and legal reform, because no amount of assistance can succeed when governments fail their people. As president, I look forward to visiting Africa and working with afflicted nations there and elsewhere to communicate that we expect a level of governance, transparency, and effectiveness from them in order to ensure that their aid makes a concrete and positive impact on people's lives."

Senator Obama:

"The ONE Campaign stands as an example of how ordinary people can come together to change the world from the bottom up. I will continue to fight for bipartisan renewal and expansion of the global HIV/AIDS relief program, and look forward to visiting Africa during my first term as President of the United States. Together, we can deepen engagement between the United States and Africa, and work for a world that advances our common security and common humanity."

The campaigns received the petitions signed by voters and ONE members from across America, including from Tuesday's presidential primary states of Ohio (2,599 signers) and Texas (4,379 signers).

The petitions read:

"As a voter in the 2008 Presidential election, I'm asking you to pledge to visit Africa during your first term in office. It is my hope that your trip will increase U.S.-African cooperation, save lives and help build a better, more secure future for millions of the world's poorest people."

The petition delivery added to the pressure [ONE Vote '08](#) has brought to bear this election on the presidential candidates on behalf of those living in extreme poverty across the world. Since its launch in June 2007, ONE Vote '08 has organized voters and ONE members across the early caucus and primary states of Iowa (20,000 members), New Hampshire (15,000 members), Nevada (18,000 members), South Carolina (20,000 members) and Florida (100,200 members) where they have been engaging directly with the candidates on the ground and with their campaign teams about the fight against extreme poverty and global disease. ONE members are relentless advocates for the world's poor, breaking through in a crowded political process and making direct one-on-one contact with the candidates more than 800 times to date.

To amplify this grassroots firepower, ONE Vote '08 utilizes a team of political strategists and policy experts, including national co-chairs and former Senate Majority Leaders Bill Frist and Senator Tom Daschle. ONE educates the candidates and their staffs about ONE's issues and educates them with the data to craft commonsense, effective initiatives to include in their foreign policy platforms. As a result of both the grassroots mobilization and policy-level interaction, presidential candidates are releasing plans that address ONE's core issues in an unprecedented fashion.

In addition to their commitment to visiting the African continent if elected, the leading Republican and Democratic candidates have provided concrete poverty-fighting commitments as part of ONE Action's "On the Record" Challenge. The candidates have produced videos and provided specific answers to questions on HIV/AIDS, malaria, infant mortality, clean water and education in the world's poorest countries. Voters can compare all the candidates' plans at the interactive "On the Record" website, ONEVote08.org/ontherecord. The website features user-friendly web tools to view and discuss the candidates' stances, as well as links to news articles and blogs about the candidates' positions.

On The Record is a project of ONE Action to educate voters about the presidential candidates' plans on issues of importance to ONE Action's members. The "Ask The Presidential Candidates to Visit Africa" campaign is also a project of ONE Action. Only 501(c)(3) activities are funded by The ONE Campaign.

ONE is a grassroots advocacy effort of millions of people, rallying together to press government leaders to fight the emergency of extreme poverty and preventable global disease. For more information, visit www.ONE.org.

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