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## New war against poverty

PARIS: Some of the world's most famous sites, from the Australian port of Sydney to the dome of London's St Paul's Cathedral, were draped yesterday with white banners, the symbol for a global anti-poverty campaign, kicking off five days before the G8 summit.

It was dubbed White Band Day, an event being marked in 72 countries that called on world leaders to fight poverty by giving more and better aid and cancelling debt, according to the organising movement, Global Call to Action Against Poverty.

Besides the huge public displays, the campaign also had a personal touch, with supporters donning white bracelets, armbands and headbands.

In Portugal, volunteers handed out white wristbands in front of government buildings in Lisbon.

And in Greece, the daily Ta Nea offered readers a plastic white bracelet emblematic of an effort to "make poverty history." The white-band operation was originally launched in January during the 5th world social forum in Brazil by aid organisations from every continent, including the British group Oxfam, the Catholic charity Caritas and One World Africa.

Africa is slated to be at the top of the agenda of next week's summit of the Group of Eight industrial powers, when leaders of most of the world's richest nations will meet July 6-8 in Scotland at the Gleneagles golf resort near Edinburgh.

In northern Spain, that message was unfurled in a white banner outside Bilbao's famous Guggenheim Museum of modern art, declaring "2015: No excuses."



In Sydney, anti-poverty activists wearing white armbands, spread out a banner declaring "Let poverty become ancient history." That sentiment was echoed on the other side of the globe in London, where a banner around the dome at St. Paul's Cathedral declared "Let's abolish poverty."

In Vienna, a 300-metre white banner calling for one voice against poverty was draped across the city's historic center.

As one activist in Prague put it: "The world will not be free as long as people die each day from poverty," said Tomas Lebeda, an organiser for the group Glopolis.

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