



**REALIZING RIGHTS**  
THE ETHICAL GLOBALIZATION INITIATIVE

27 March 2008

Dear Cervical Cancer Action,

I write this letter to express my strong support for comprehensive programs to protect girls and women from cervical cancer in the developing world.

Although we have the tools to prevent this terrible disease, over half a million women are affected by cervical cancer every year. This is a classic disease of inequity, with 85% of the cases and deaths from cervical cancer occurring in developing countries due to limited access to screening and treatment. HIV positive women are at heightened risk. At its core, this inequity in access is an issue of human rights: all people, regardless of where they live, have a right to health.

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family" (Article 25). Fulfilling this basic promise, means that we must ensure that access to new life-saving technologies follows the burden of the disease, not wealth. To make this happen, international donor and political commitments must be made as soon as possible, and multilateral agencies must provide leadership to expedite necessary processes. For this reason, my organization - Realizing Rights - was the first organization to endorse the Global Call to Stop Cervical Cancer. We are very pleased that we have been joined by a growing community of civil society leaders, organizations, and policymakers in endorsing this important agenda.

There are challenges ahead, but I believe that with strong political will and partnership, we can seize this opportunity together to save lives. I am ready to do all that I can to encourage the international support necessary to make these new life-saving tools available as soon as possible to the girls and women who need them most.

Sincerely,

**Mary Robinson**

*President of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative  
Former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights*