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# BASIC POLITICAL DOCUMENT FOR COLLECTIVE ECONOMIC JUSTICE MOBILISATION IN 2025

10 January 2025



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## INTRODUCTION

**This is a call to action for a globally coordinated public mobilisation on economic justice focused on several key moments in 2025:**

- Financing for Development 4 conference in Sevilla, Spain, 30 June - 3 July 2025
- World Social Summit in Qatar, 4 - 6 November 2025
- Climate COP30 in Belém, Brazil, 10 - 21 November 2025
- G20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, 22-23 November 2025

These meetings are set against the backdrop of the Jubilee Year 2025, a once-in-a-quarter-century occasion for debt cancellation. With only five years remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals — a mere 17% are on track — there is a huge gap in public resources.

This collective political document has been developed by a broad group uniting grassroots, national, regional, and global organisations, networks, trade unions, social movements, constituency groups and individuals across the globe.

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# WHY PUBLIC MOBILISATION?



Many civil society organisations, trade unions and social movements are involved in crucial international negotiation processes in 2025, not least in the build-up to the Fourth Financing for Development (FfD4) Conference, the World Social Summit and COP30 in Belém. Our power to win arguments will depend on the visibility and weight of broader public pressure in the Global North and Global South. If there is a powerful collective movement everywhere demanding fundamental change, we can make significant breakthroughs in overhauling the international financial architecture and securing economic justice for all. The urgent pressure to act needs to be felt by every government.

To succeed, we need to show the connections between economic justice and the struggles for climate justice, public services and the human rights of women and the most excluded groups. We need to show that there are alternatives to the unjust and extractive economic system that is driving inequality and contributing to the undermining of civic space. We need to stand together and make our values and demands visible everywhere.

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# POLITICAL NARRATIVE: MOBILISATION FOR WHAT?



Inequality, both within countries and between the Global North and the Global South, is extremely high. Progress in ending poverty has slowed to a crawl and may take more than a century. At the same time, private wealth has exploded in the last decade, as trillions of dollars poured into economies to fight the Global Financial Crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. This has, in turn, massively inflated the wealth of the richest people and corporations, whilst leaving governments in huge debt.

The Debt Crisis is a crisis of humanity. Nearly one-third of the world's countries pay more to service international debts than for health or education. Debts, many of which are illegitimate, severely impact the ability of countries to provide public services and respond to the climate crisis.

The debt crisis actively accelerates the climate crisis. Nations must generate foreign currency

to repay their international debts, leaving many governments little choice but to forge ahead with fossil fuel extraction and investments in industrial agriculture for export, which are two major causes of the climate crisis.

Countries in debt distress are forced to accept the conditionalities and austerity policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, routinely leading to cuts in public spending, violations of rights and increased poverty and inequality.

Women are the first to suffer from austerity cuts in public spending, as they lose access to public services and frontline public sector jobs, and unfairly carry most of the burden of unpaid care and domestic work, which rises when public services fail.

Indigenous people and groups facing discrimination based on their race, work and

descent, sexual orientation, age, location or any other factor are also disproportionately impacted. The active agency of these groups, with mass solidarity from others, must be at the forefront of mobilisations to resist these injustices and demand solutions.

Similarly, children and youth, who comprise more than 40% of the global population, are disproportionately impacted by the various crises, while also having less access to decision-making spaces.

To solve this, the international community must cancel unsustainable and illegitimate debts and create a new debt architecture — new rules, procedures, and governance for sovereign debt under the auspices of the United Nations. This must include new agreements on responsible lending and responsible borrowing. It is worth noting that loans often lack public transparency, enabling political elites in both the Global North and South to syphon off money more easily than they can with money in the core national budget. Unjust economic policies and the misuse of public funds and loans have been a powerful galvanising force for many recent mass mobilisations and protests, particularly in Africa.

Beyond action to address the debt crisis, there is an urgent need to mobilise new global finance to address the climate crisis, including finance to support adaptation and mitigation, invest in a just transition and compensate vulnerable communities that have already incurred loss and damage from climate shocks.

Unfortunately, the negotiations on climate finance at COP29 in Baku in November 2024 fell seriously short of expectations, agreeing to just US\$300 billion a year from 2035, when trillions are clearly required to meet the scale of the climate emergency. Crucially, there is no mechanism to enforce payment of the climate debt by historic polluting countries in the Global North – and, absurdly, much of the climate finance from the Global North is offered in loans that will further indebt countries already mired in debt.

Governments urgently require sufficient resources to provide education, health and other public services, to offer universal social protection and to invest in structural transformation and a just transition to end the climate crisis. If governments lack the money to transition to a green economy, humanity will be unable to maintain our shared planet at a livable temperature — below 1.5 degrees of overheating.

However, most countries are unable to raise sufficient revenue from taxes, and too often, the burden of paying taxes falls on those who are least able to pay. The wealthiest individuals and companies often pay the least due to unfair tax rules, tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance. As a result, the top 1 percent and 0.1 percent grow richer — despite the fact that they contribute as much to climate change as half of humanity.

Multinational companies and ultra-rich individuals dominate economic and political processes, enabling them to continue the over-exploitation of natural resources, environmental degradation and land grabs with impunity. Big money distorts elections, buying politicians, political parties and media coverage, and nourishing extreme right nationalist movements to protect the elites and suppress protests by people affected by injustice and inequality.

This unjust economic system is built on an undemocratic international financial architecture embodied by organisations such as the IMF and World Bank. These antiquated institutions, whose governance is little changed from the colonial era, are dominated by the Global North. Despite some shifts in rhetoric, their policies continue to entrench an unjust international order and accelerate inequality.

Economic Justice requires democratic, inclusive and transparent governance. Incremental reforms are no longer sufficient. We demand system change for economic justice — nationally and globally — as a key means for achieving social and climate justice!

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# OUR COLLECTIVE DEMANDS



Below are our collective global demands that may be adapted at the national level according to national contexts.

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## CANCEL THE DEBT AND NEW DEBT ARCHITECTURE

1. **Cancel unsustainable and illegitimate debts** – including those owed to private lenders and commercial banks.
2. **Create a UN Framework Convention on Sovereign Debt** that includes a debt workout mechanism replacing the power of the IMF, G20 and informal groups such as the London Club and Paris Club.

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## END THE RIGGED FINANCIAL SYSTEM TO END GLOBAL INEQUALITY

3. **Create a new International Financial Architecture.** Put an end to the colonial international financial architecture established at Bretton Woods, 80 years ago, and promote a more democratic and representative structure of global economic governance.
4. **Accelerate progress on agreeing to a binding UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation** to close loopholes, stop the race to the bottom, address tax evasion and illicit financial flows and end the use of tax havens.
5. **Establish a UN Convention on International Development Cooperation.** Ensure that donor countries meet or exceed their 0.7 percent ODA commitments and comply with the principles of aid effectiveness. Create new Special Drawing Rights with an allocation based on needs and not quotas.
6. **Address inequalities at the national level,** especially in budget allocations, expenditure priorities, gender transformative budgeting, internal tax policies and the development of time-bound plans and budgets to implement universal social protection. Strengthen regional cooperation and the coordination of policies that seek to overcome inequalities.

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## PUBLIC SERVICES AND END PRIVATIZATION

7. **End austerity measures,** including public sector wage bill constraints, and **adequately fund quality public services,** such as **health care, education, and universal social protection.** End labour market deregulation, support decent work including living wages, and adopt fair budget allocations, equitable spending priorities and strong public services to address the root causes of inequality.
8. **End the privatisation and commercialisation of public services** and bring previously privatised services back into accountable public hands. Invest in quality universal public services – including social infrastructure and sexual and reproductive health services — for all.

9. **Tax the richest**, not the poorest. Implement progressive, transparent, gender-transformative tax systems, introduce wealth taxes on the super-rich, and combat illicit financial flows to claw back the public money that has become private wealth.
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## FINANCE CLIMATE JUSTICE

10. **Demand that countries in the Global North pay their climate debts:** Countries with recognised historic responsibilities for pollution must pay their climate debt to countries in the Global South through grant-based finance. Recognise that the COP29 agreement of US\$300 billion per year falls far short of the trillions of dollars that are truly required and owed.
  11. **Reject all loan-based climate finance.** You cannot pay a climate debt by giving loans to already indebted countries! Mobilising finance for adaptation, mitigation and a just transition is an existential priority that cannot be delayed.
  12. Fairly **finance decentralized and democratised energy systems** that put power in the hands of communities, not fossil fuel corporations. Those least served by the current failed fossil fuel energy system deserve to be first in line for clean, affordable energy.
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## BUILD RIGHTS-BASED ECONOMIES

13. Radically increase equality, creating **equitable economic systems** designed to deliver sustainable development, human rights, gender justice, and climate justice. All governments should set clear time-bound plans to rapidly reduce economic inequality so that the bottom 40% has the same income as the top 10%. Replace GDP growth and per capita income as dominant economic measures and adopt new metrics for feminist well-being economies, incorporating key inequality, environmental and social indicators and building towards a Nonviolent Economy.
14. **Stop corporate and other elite capture:** Break up multinational monopolies, keep corporate money out of politics, ensure highly progressive corporate taxation, implement triple bottom lines that account for environmental and social impact, and eliminate investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms.
15. **Stop promoting private investment**, to the detriment of public investment, as well as 'innovative financing mechanisms' that only seek to commodify nature and development.
16. **Pursue full employment and strengthen labour rights:** Implement economic strategies deliberately aimed at full employment while strengthening labour rights and standards to ensure decent work and living wages. Tackle gender, ethnic, descent and racial discrimination at the workplace, including related pay gaps.
17. **Promote trade justice.** Reform the multilateral trading system to strengthen developing countries' policy space for socio-economic transformation

through agricultural, industrial, and labour policies aimed at resolving commodity dependence, strengthening local economies, advancing full employment and decent work, and transitioning to a sustainable energy base. This includes reforming investment regimes to curb financial speculation, ensuring taxation of multinational corporations and eliminating all clauses that limit the capacity of the state to regulate the economy in the public interest.

18. **Corporate accountability.** Strengthen national and international regulations of global supply chains through the development of a binding UN treaty to regulate corporate power and mandatory due diligence legislation.
19. **Feminist Economic Justice.** Economic policies foster systemic gender discrimination and result in women bearing the costs of austerity, financial crises and privatisation through unpaid care work. Governments must recognise unpaid care work as valuable economic activity and reward care workers with fair compensation and benefits.
20. Promote women's economic rights — including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources — by **fully implementing the Beijing Platform for Action**, including reducing military expenditures and ensuring that the private sector complies with national and international law.
21. **Strengthen civil society participation and civic space** to ensure public funds are not used for repressive state apparatuses and networks of patronage; instead, focus funding on direct support for community-level action by civil society groups, including support for feminist civil society organisations.

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## KEY PRINCIPLES OF OUR COLLECTIVE MOBILISATION



- **Global South Leadership:** The mobilisation is led by the **Global South**, with active participation of youth groups, indigenous communities and communities discriminated by race, work and descent, gender, sexuality, age and location, supported by mass solidarity from other actors who demand economic justice.
- **Decentralised:** Participating organisations and movements choose which messages and mobilisation moments best align with their priorities and themes.
- **Coordination:** A loose mechanism with strong leadership from the Global South, balanced regional participation, and participation by constituency groups, movements and networks.

- **Mobilisation:** This collective economic justice mobilisation supports existing advocacy processes and campaigns at the national, regional and global levels. Our joint work focuses on public mobilisation and communications.
- **Basic values** include an open, inclusive, universal, equitable, anti-colonial, anti-racist, feminist and rights-based approach in support of transformative economic justice.

## WHO?



If you are reading this and agree with our analysis and demands, we invite you to join! We already include a broad range of economic justice and climate justice organisations, trade unions, national and grassroots organisations, constituency groups, social movements, youth activists, women's rights organisations, as well as regional and global networks.

## HOW AND WHEN?



**Our focus is on public mobilisation** — combining different elements shaped by the participating organisations, movements and people, such as:

- Actions on the streets – from small stunts to mass mobilisation
- Online campaigns
- Work with media and mass communications

The mobilisation is about mass public engagement. It is designed to reinforce, not compete with, existing advocacy processes and specific campaigns.

There will be four key joint moments for coordinated national and global mobilisation:

- Financing for Development 4 Conference in Sevilla, Spain, 30 June - 3 July 2025
- World Social Summit in Qatar, 6 - 8 November 2025
- Climate COP30 in Belém, Brazil, 10 - 21 November 2025
- G20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, 22-23 November 2025

Other days or events at national, regional and global might be used to mobilise as well, for example:

- Negotiations for the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation
- The next round of negotiations for a binding UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights
- International Women's Day, 8 March 2025
- Commission on Status of Women CSW69/Beijing+30, March 2025
- ECOSOC Youth Forum, April 2025

- High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development, July 2025
- UN General Assembly 2025, September 2025
- Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development at ECLAC, April 2025
- 2nd Summit of Presidents of the Amazon, Colombia 2025
- CELAC Summit 2025, Colombia
- WTO Public Forum, September 2025
- UNCTAD ministerial, November 2025
- Key African Union and ASEAN meetings
- Key national budget moments

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## POPULAR COMMUNICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS



We recognise that this political document contains many demands, and that sharper messaging and slogans will be needed to be effective and have a successful, popular mobilisation.

All the demands are important, but we need a galvanising idea to connect them.

Public messages will be developed in early 2025 based on this full political narrative document and the demands herein. Campaigners and communications colleagues from multiple organisations will be involved – with help from a communications agency from the Global South. If you are interested in helping with this, please let us know!

**Contact details for further information:**

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