



## NGO COMMITTEE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT (FFD)

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To: United Nations Member States  
From: The NGO Committee on Financing for Development

September 9, 2008

Dear Member States,

We write to you concerning the International Conference on Financing for Development (FDD) reviewing the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, that will be held in Doha, Qatar, from 29 November to 2 December 2008.

We urge you to play an active role in putting the concept of odious/illegitimate debts into the Doha Outcome Document.

Official creditor initiatives to cancel debts of heavily indebted countries have had benefits for a few countries, but they have not been sufficient in helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals to which all members of the UN are committed, as well as to secure human rights in all countries. Current predicaments such as high food and fuel prices and future risks such as climate change will leave countries which received debt cancellation vulnerable to new unsustainable and unjust debts. Paradoxically some countries which received debt cancellation must incur new debts to meet the MDGs for lack of grant finance.

Debt cancellation is urgently needed by many low income and middle income countries. Many of these debts are considered odious and illegitimate by civil society stakeholders. In May 2008 civil society groups from all over the world attended a UNDP consultation in New York to discuss how to avoid a new debt crisis and how to place illegitimate/odious debt and creditor co-responsibility into the Doha Outcome Document. A first draft of the Outcome Document was published in July, without mentioning any of these issues.

We support the current NGO campaign in Norway calling on Minister Solheim, minister for environment and development, to take the lead in putting these issues onto the agenda of the FFD process. Responding to the campaign of NGOs, Minister Solheim said that the government of Norway is using the FFD process to advocate for the establishment of an international task force which could pave the way for a UN mechanism that could assess and address illegitimate and unjust debt.

We call on you to address illegitimate/odious debt and creditor co-responsibility in collaboration with the Norwegian Government. We urge you to help introduce some passages on illegitimate/odious debt and creditor co-responsibility into the Doha Document.

If needed, we would be all too happy to present you with more information and material concerning this matter.

Most sincerely,

The NGO Committee on Financing for Development  
Dr. Margaret O. Blamberg, Chair  
Carol Brandt, Vice-Chair

The other signatories of this letter are:

Intervida Foundation – Aurea Ferreres

UNANIMA International – Catherine Ferguson

Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary -- Doryne Kirby,

Medical Mission Sisters -- Philo Morris

Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic and Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers -- Marie Dennis

The International Presentation Association -- Fatima Rodrigo

Africa Development Interchange Network (ADIN) -- Martin Tsoumkeu

The International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences -- Cristina Blanc

Sisters of Notre Dame -- Carol Brandt

VIVAT International – Felix Jones, Zelia Cordeiro