

Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer

Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

9th June 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

cc: Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Rt Hon David Lammy MP, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs; Rt Hon Baroness Chapman, Minister of State (International Development, Latin America and Caribbean).

We are writing as a collective of 84 parliamentarians, economists, academics, campaigners and civil society organisations across the UK committed to international development, ahead of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in Seville from 30 June to 3 July 2025.

At a time when economic instability, global inequality and climate change impacts are escalating, we are calling on you to attend the FfD4 Conference, alongside already confirmed leaders, including President Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister Mark Carney and many others. We also ask you to ensure that the UK government demonstrates that it is ready to lead on debt on the global stage by supporting the call by low and middle-income countries (LMICs) for an agreement at FfD4 to establish an intergovernmental process to agree a UN Convention on Sovereign Debt. This is urgently needed for agreeing just, timely, and lasting debt relief and preventing future debt crises.

A growing number of LMICs are trapped in escalating debt crises, brought about by structural barriers and inequalities, and driven by external debt payments, increasing to levels not seen for over 30 years. According to the UN Development Program, [54 countries are in a debt crisis](#), 32 African countries spend more on debt payments than on healthcare and 25 African countries spend more on debt payments than on education. This is not only economically unsustainable, but also morally indefensible. Without action, debt burdens will continue draining vital public finances in many LMICs, diverting funds from healthcare, education, social protection, and climate action - all of which exacerbate structural inequalities that ultimately impact women, girls and other marginalised groups, who will lose out the most.

We are deeply concerned about the UK's position to systematically block any significant reform of the debt architecture within the FfD4 negotiations thus far. This approach risks putting this government on the wrong side of history and risks further damaging the UK's reputation as a development partner. Last year, the Labour Party's 2024 manifesto made commitments to repair relationships with developing countries and to restore the UK's role on the international development stage. The upcoming FfD4 Conference presents a critical opportunity to turn these promises into action.

Having chosen to further reduce the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget, the UK government must demonstrate real commitment to the global financial architecture reform proposals tabled by LMICs at the upcoming FfD4 Conference to bring about the real world

changes they need - starting with supporting meaningful action on debt. Without substantive global financial architecture reform, these countries risk being pushed further into debt crises. Acting to stabilise the global debt crisis would strengthen Britain's relationships and ability to support inclusive economic development through mutually beneficial trading partnerships.

LMICs are calling for an FfD4 outcome that creates the basis for a new financial architecture that delivers just, timely, and lasting debt relief and prevents future crises by enforcing transparency and accountability in lending and borrowing. The African Union recently held a [Conference on Debt](#), bringing together Heads of State and other senior policymakers. Its declaration explicitly calls for 'strong, far-reaching reform of global debt architecture through the establishment of a UN Framework Convention on Sovereign Debt.'

You have the power to make a significant positive change on unsustainable debt in LMICs. As one of only two major legal jurisdictions for sovereign debt, the UK holds significant ability to act unilaterally and multilaterally for transparent, accountable, and equitable debt processes. Reforming UK debt legislation and supporting global financial reform costs the UK taxpayer nothing, all that is required is your willingness to lead.

We call on you to act decisively and in solidarity with countries most affected by this unjust debt crisis. Support for fair, inclusive, and sustainable financial architecture is not only in the interest of the global majority, it is essential for a just, stable, and liveable future for all.

Sincerely,

1. Adrian Lovett, Executive Director, United Kingdom, Middle East and Asia Pacific, ONE Against Poverty UK
2. Alex Kent, CO-CEO, Restless Development
3. Alexander Knapp, CEO, The AKCGlobal Group
4. Alice Oyaro, CEO, Transform Trade
5. Alison Marshall, CEO, Age International
6. Amy Jankiewicz, Chief Executive, Population Matters
7. Anil Patil, Executive Director, Carers Worldwide
8. Annabel Harris, CEO, Network for Africa
9. Baroness Mary Goudie, Member, House of Lords
10. Bruno Bonizzi, Associate Professor, University of Hertfordshire
11. Camilla Knox-Peebles, Chief Executive, Amref Health Africa UK
12. Caoimhe De Barra, CEO, Trócaire
13. Carla Denyer, Co-leader of the Green Party, MP for Bristol Central
14. Carol Mills, Coordinator, Eastbourne Solidarity
15. Catherine Pettengell, Executive Director, Climate Action Network UK (CAN-UK)
16. Cherian Matthews, CEO, HelpAge International
17. Christine Allen, Executive Director, CAFOD
18. Claire James, Campaigns Coordinator, Campaign Against Climate Change
19. Daniela Gabor, Professor of Economics, SOAS University of London
20. David Hillman, Director, Stamp Out Poverty
21. David Thomson, CEO, All We Can
22. Disha Sughand, Co-CEO, Womankind Worldwide

23. Ellie Chowns, Green Party MP for North Herefordshire
24. Ellen Robottom, Campaign Organiser, Yorkshire and Humber Climate Justice Coalition
25. Emma River-Roberts, Co-Director, The Working Class Climate Alliance
26. Emma Wagner, Co-Chair, Send My Friend to School
27. Fiona Dyer, Community Organiser, Climate Action Durham
28. Fola Komolafe, Chief Executive Officer, World Vision UK
29. Frances Guy, Executive Director, Scotland's International Development Alliance
30. George Graham, Chief Executive, Humanity & Inclusion UK
31. Halima Begum, CEO, Oxfam GB
32. Hannah Bond, Co-CEO, ActionAid UK
33. Heidi Chow, Executive Director, Debt Justice
34. Helen McEachern, Chief Executive Officer, CARE International UK
35. Helen Pattinson, CEO, War Child UK
36. Helena Paul, Co-Director, EcoNexus
37. Henrietta Blackmore, National Director/CEO, Habitat for Humanity Great Britain
38. Jamie Eyre, CEO, Embrace the Middle East
39. Jasmina Haynes, CEO, Integrity Action
40. Jayati Ghosh, Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA
41. Dr. Jeff Powell, Senior Lecturer, Economics, University of Greenwich
42. Jessica Woodroffe, Co-Director, Gender and Development Network (GADN)
43. John McLaverty, Co-Chair, Send My Friend to School
44. Jonny Oates, CEO, United Against Malnutrition and Hunger
45. Katie Hussey, Network Director, Action for Global Health
46. Kavita Prasad, Chief Executive, Sense International
47. Khalid Javid, CEO, Muslim Aid
48. Kirsty Smith, CEO, CBM UK
49. Kitty Arie, CEO, Results UK
50. Laurence Jones-Williams, Executive Director, Rethinking Economics International
51. Linda Walker, Co-ordinator, Greater Manchester Climate Justice Coalition
52. Lorraine Currie, CEO, SCIAF
53. Lorraine Inglis, Global/European Coordinator, Debt for Climate
54. Luiz Vieira, Coordinator, The Bretton Woods Project
55. Lynne Morris, CEO, Toybox
56. Marcos Concepcion Raba, Executive Director, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction
57. Maria Ron Balsera, Executive Director, Center for Economic and Social Rights
58. Mark Smith, Director, Enable-Ed CIC
59. Mark Waddington, CEO, Hope and Homes for Children
60. Martin Drewry, CEO, Health Poverty Action (HPA)
61. Matthew Lake, CEO, Dhaka Ahsania Mission UK
62. Mike Podmore, CEO, STOPAIDS
63. Moazzam Malik, CEO, Save the Children UK
64. Nick Dearden, Director, Global Justice Now
65. Nick Hepworth, CEO, Water Witness International
66. Nick Hinton, Chairman, Britain and Nepal NGOs

67. Nigel Harris, CEO, Tearfund
68. Othman Moqbel, CEO, Action For Humanity
69. Patrick Watt, CEO, Christian Aid
70. Paul Chitnis, Director, Jesuit Missions
71. Peter Taylor, Director, Institute of Development Studies
72. Petter Matthews, Executive Director, Engineers Against Poverty
73. Philip Goodwin, CEO, UNICEF UK
74. Rob Capener, Group CEO, Railway Children
75. Romilly Greenhill, CEO, Bond
76. Rose Caldwell, CEO, Plan International UK
77. Sandra Golding, CEO, ADRA-UK
78. Sara Hall, Co-Executive Director, Positive Money
79. Shabnam Nasimi, CEO, Friends of Afghan Women Network
80. Sheniz Tan, Director, Asfar
81. Tim Wainwright, Chief Executive, WaterAid UK
82. Tjada D'Oyen McKenna, Chief Executive Officer, Mercy Corps
83. Tufail Hussain, Director, Islamic Relief UK
84. Zara Taylor-Jackson, UK Director, Global Citizen