

POLITICAL DEMANDS

Financing Our Right to the Future:

FfD4 Must Center People, Planet, and Human Rights



Artwork by Lucio Zago

The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) is a critical moment to reimagine and rebuild a global financial system that has consistently failed to uphold human rights or respond to worsening crises. Today's financial architecture, designed to benefit wealthy countries and corporations, deepens inequality, debt, and ecological crises while excluding the Global South from decision-making.

Now is the time for transformation.

Grounded in the realities of communities across the Global South, we urge UN Member States and institutions to center human rights, reject austerity, and democratize global governance. A reimagined financial system must reflect the voices of those most affected and deliver on the right to a just and sustainable future.

1. Endorse the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation

FfD4 must endorse the UN Tax Convention to dismantle colonial legacies in tax governance, eliminate gender bias, and end the race to the bottom in corporate tax rates. Commit to public country-by-country reporting and a global asset register to tackle tax evasion and illicit financial flows.

2. Establish a UN Convention on Sovereign Debt for Debt Cancellation and Restructuring

Support the launch of a fair, transparent UN process for cancelling and restructuring debt, especially illegitimate and unsustainable debts. Debt payments must not come at the cost of public services or climate action.

3. Prioritize Gender-Transformative Fiscal Systems and Reject Austerity

Fiscal systems must be progressive, intersectional, and reject austerity. Commit to public investment in care, health, education, and social protection. Align with calls to tax the ultra-rich to fund gender-just public services.

4. Ensure Greater Democratic Governance and Stop Corporate Capture

Demand IMF, World Bank, and MDB governance are aligned with the UN Charter and human rights. Shift power to the Global South, eliminate vetoes, and ensure inclusive participation. Stop corporate capture by limiting lobbyist access and resourcing civil society engagement.

5. Innovative Financing Anchored in Equity and Reparative Justice

Finance must be framed as a matter of justice—not charity. Support solidarity levies to address colonial and climate debts. Reject privatization and financialization of essential services. Ensure all private sector engagement is held to human rights standards and aligns with the UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights.

6. Embed Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) in Financing

Ensure climate and development finance is grant-based and rooted in historical responsibility. Stop the use of debt conditionalities to impose austerity or “green” extractivism. CBDR must guide debt restructuring and debt sustainability assessments.

7. Robust Accountability with Intersectional Human Rights Indicators

Establish civil society-led monitoring and national financing frameworks that use gender, disability, and climate justice indicators to measure real impacts and enforce transparency.

8. Establish Equitable Trade Policies in Alignment with Human Rights

Protect countries’ right to shape trade and industrial policies for local development. Ensure trade negotiations are inclusive and agreements contain binding labor and environmental standards that support sustainable development and rights.

9. Establish Regulatory Mandates under the UN for Global Financial Actors and End the Disproportionate Influence of Exclusive, Non-Transparent Bodies

Create UN mechanisms to regulate credit rating agencies, hedge funds, and bondholders. Explore a public credit rating agency and expand equitable access to Special Drawing Rights. Reject roles for exclusive, elite-driven institutions like the Financial Stability Board and Bank for International Settlements.

This statement was developed and led by ESCR-Net members including Dejusticia, MENAFem, SEATINI, Asia Peoples’ Movement on Debt and Development, Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR) and the Economic Policy Working Group members.

ESCR-Net – International Network for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, is a member-led network connecting over 300 social movements, Indigenous Peoples’ groups, and human rights organizations and defenders from 76 countries. Since 2003, the Network has provided a space for members to connect their struggles across regions to address systemic challenges, including the harmful human rights impact of the global debt crisis and the increasing influence of corporations and economic elites in policy and other decision-making spaces.

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