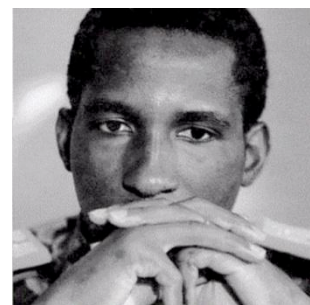


*“The debt cannot be repaid. If we do not pay, our creditors will not die. We can be sure of that. On the other hand, if we pay, it is we who will die. Of that we can be equally sure.”*

**Thomas Sankara, July 1987**

President of Burkina Faso from 1983 till his assassination on October 15, 1987



In commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the death of **Thomas Sankara**, revolutionary leader of Burkina Faso who challenged African nations to stand against debt, **JSAPMDD** reiterates the call for **DEBT REPUDIATION**. We reprint here the Nairobi Statement on Debt Repudiation that debt campaigns from the South and the North issued in June 2006.

## **Nairobi Declaration on Repudiation of Debt**

International Strategy Conference on Debt Repudiation, Nairobi, Kenya, June 2006

We know through history that daring and persisting to struggle for what seems to be the impossible has given rise to major advances in human civilization. It is in this spirit that we gathered here in Nairobi, Kenya June 18 to 20, for an International Strategy Conference on Debt Repudiation.

The call for debt repudiation is based on our common conviction that not only is it unjust to extract “debt” payments from people of the South because of the debilitating and destructive impacts on lives, communities, economies and environment, the debts being claimed from the people of the South are illegitimate and should not be paid. More, we assert that the peoples of the South are in fact the creditors of immeasurable historical, social, economic and ecological debts of the North.

We believe that the struggle against debt is a struggle to change the relations of power, and debt repudiation is an assertion of power from the South.

We are well aware of the huge challenges in promoting the repudiation of debt by governments and peoples of the South. Northern governments, international financial institutions and all those who benefit the most from the predatory, unjust and merciless global financial system will take all efforts to prevent it. Many Southern governments today, whose political will is compromised by interests of Southern elites and further weakened by threats of losing aid and credit and of retaliation from

international financial markets, refuse to consider repudiation and even actively oppose it. Understanding that repudiation is a vital step to end debt domination and controlling our destiny, we embrace these challenges and the requirements for overcoming them.

We must develop and build strong movements in countries in the South capable of waging the struggle in different fronts – in policy debates, in judicial forums and parliamentary arenas, in international processes, and most importantly, in mobilizing an informed and empowered people in various forms of resistance and assertion of alternatives. Northern support for the struggle for debt repudiation is essential, thus we also need to strengthen movements and campaigns in the North. Strong movements in both South and North also serve as the foundations for genuine and effective global solidarity and partnership in our common struggles to transform the global economic order.

We must effect changes in governance. We believe that only truly democratic and independent governments of the South will be able to muster the political will to repudiate the debt and lead their countries on the path to equitable, sustainable, and self-reliant development. The support of sympathetic northern governments is crucial to ending debt domination. Further, a just and democratic global economic order can only be fully realized with democratic and progressive governments worldwide.

We must strengthen cross-border alliances and South-South cooperation not only in the call for debt repudiation but also in building alternative financial mechanisms and economic relations. Inspired by recent initiatives in Latin America and Caribbean, we must begin establishing these alternatives even as we challenge the dominant neoliberal global order. This is vital in order to mitigate and counter the retaliation from the financial markets and the so-called creditors of the South, which may come with debt repudiation.

As we advance our own national and local campaigns, we should also work together in calling for global solidarity with countries going through extraordinary crises and critical moments of struggle.

We do so in support of the people of those countries and with the understanding that their victories are ours too, that their gains contribute to the weakening of the global system of injustice and oppression and demonstrate to the world what can be achieved.

We -- representatives from debt campaigns and related initiatives from more than 35 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America -- are prepared to work together and combine our collective experience, wisdom, skills and strengths, to advance the call for the repudiation of the debt, the debt that is illegitimate, the debt that the peoples of the South do not owe.



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