Repay the climate debt
A just and effective outcome for Copenhagen

We the undersigned groups, including development, environment, gender and youth organisations, faith-based communities, indigenous peoples and social and economic justice movements in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America call on the rich industrialized world to acknowledge its historic and current responsibility for the causes and adverse effects of climate change, and to fully, effectively and immediately repay its climate debt to poor countries, communities and people.

Climate change threatens the balance of life on Earth. Oceans are rising and acidifying; ice caps and glaciers are melting; forests, coral reefs and other ecosystems are changing or collapsing. The existence of some communities is imperilled, while others face growing barriers to their development. Unless curbed, an impending climate catastrophe risks increasingly violent weather, collapsing food systems, mass migration and unprecedented human conflict.

Poor countries, communities and people have contributed least to the causes of climate change, yet are its first and worst victims. At greatest risk are women, indigenous peoples, poor people, small farmers, fisher-folk and forest communities, people relying on scarce water resources, youth and other groups susceptible to harm and health impacts.

A wealthy minority of the world's countries, corporations and people, by contrast, are the principal cause of climate change. The developed countries representing less than one fifth of the world's population have emitted almost three quarters of all historical emissions. Their excessive historical and current emissions occupy the atmosphere and are the main cause of current and committed future warming.

Developed countries have consumed more than their fair share of the Earth's atmospheric space. On a per person basis, they are responsible for more than ten times the historical emissions of developing countries. Their per person emissions today are more than four times those of developing countries.

For their disproportionate contribution to the causes and consequences of climate change, developed countries owe a two-fold climate debt to the poor majority:

- For their excessive historical and current per person emissions – denying developing countries their fair share of atmospheric space – they have run up an "emissions debt" to developing countries; and

- For their disproportionate contribution to the effects of climate change – requiring developing countries to adapt to rising climate impacts and damage – they have run up an "adaptation debt" to developing countries.

Together the sum of these debts – emissions debt and adaptation debt – constitutes their climate debt, which is part of a larger ecological, social and economic debt owed by the rich industrialized world to the poor majority.

Honouring these obligations is not only right; it is the basis of a fair and effective solution to climate change. Those who benefited most in the course of causing climate change must compensate those who contributed least but bear its adverse effects. They must compensate

developing countries for the two-fold barrier to their development – mitigating and adapting to climate change – which were not present for developed countries during the course of their development but which they have caused.

Developed countries, however, intend to write-off rather than honour their debt. In their submissions to the climate negotiations they seek to pass on substantial adaptation costs to developing countries; evading rather than honouring their adaptation debt. And they seek to continue their high per person emissions; deepening rather than repaying their emissions debt, consuming additional atmospheric space, and crowding the world's poor majority into a small and shrinking remainder.

We are concerned that continued excessive consumption of atmospheric space by the world's wealthy at the expense of the world's poor – who need access to energy and resources to build the schools, houses and infrastructure that the rich world already has and continues to benefit from – puts at risk the prospects of any viable solution to climate change and, with it, the safety of all nations and peoples, and the Earth.

As the basis of a fair and effective climate outcome we therefore call on developed countries to acknowledge and repay the full measure of their climate debt to developing countries commencing in Copenhagen. We demand that they:

- Repay their adaptation debt to developing countries by committing to full financing and compensation for the adverse effects of climate change on all affected countries, groups and people;

- Repay their emissions debt to developing countries through the deepest possible domestic reductions, and by committing to assigned amounts of emissions that reflect the full measure of their historical and continued excessive contributions to climate change; and

- Make available to developing countries the financing and technology required to cover the additional costs of mitigating and adapting to climate change, in accordance with the Climate Convention.

Meeting these demands is a basic prerequisite for success in December 2009. Copenhagen must be a key turning point for climate justice – a major milestone on the journey towards safeguarding the Earth's climate system and ensuring a future in which the rights and aspirations of all people can be realized.

Endorsed by:

11.11.11- Coalition of the Flemish North-South Movement, Belgium
5Cs Human Rights Group, Nairobi, Kenya
Acción Ecológica, Chile
ActionAid International
Africa Action, USA
Alianza de Pueblos del Sur Acreedores de Deuda Ecologica
Alianza por la Justicia Climática (Climate Justice Alliance), Chile
Alliance for Global Justice
Alliance of People's Movement, India
Almáciga Grupo de trabajo Intercultural, España, Colombia

AMAN - Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago, Indonesia
American Jewish World Service (AJWS), USA
Analysis, Dili, Timor-Leste
Anti Debt Coalition (KAU), Indonesia
Arid Lands Institute
Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)
Asia Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN)
Association for Taiwan Indigenous Peoples' Policies (ATIPP)
ATTAC - Argentina
ATTAC - France
ATTAC - Japan
Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network
Bali Collaboration on Climate Change
BanglaPraxis, Bangladesh
Berne Declaration, Switzerland
Bharatiya Krishak Samaj, India
Boro People's Forum (BPF)
CADPI (Centro Para La Autonomia Y Desarollo de los Pueblos Indigenas), Nicaragua
Campagna per la Riforma della Banca Mondiale (CRBM), Italy
Center for Human Rights and Development, Mongolia
Centre for Civil Society Environmental Justice Project, South Africa
Centre for Society and Religion, Sri Lanka
Chile Sustentable, Chile
Christian Aid, UK
CIRUM Culture Identity and Resources Use Management, Vietnam
CODE Consultancy on Development, Vietnam
Community Research and Development Centre (CREDC), Nigeria
Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia
Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), Philippines
Core Centre for Organisation Research and Education, India
CREED Citizens' alliance in Reforms for Equitable and Efficient Development, Pakistan
Defendamos la Ciudad, Chile
Defensores del Bosque Chileno
Development Fund, Norway
Down to Earth (DTE), Indonesia
Eagle Clan Arawaks of Barbados and Guyana
Earthlife Africa, South Africa
Ecologistas en Acción, Spain
Economic Justice and Development Organization (EJAD), Pakistan
Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Fellowship of Christian Councils, South Africa
Economic Justice Network of FOCCISA, Southern Africa
Environmental Investigation Agency, USA
Environmental Rights Action, Nigeria
Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh (Equitybd)
FASE - Solidarity and Education, Brazil
Federation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Asia (FITPA)
Fiscalía del Medio Ambiente (FIMA), Chile
FOCO Foro Ciudadano de Participación por la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos, Argentina
Focus on the Global South, Thailand
Friends of the Earth International (with 77 member groups)

Fundacion Solon, Bolivia
Global Exchange, USA
Global Forest Coalition
Global Youth Climate Movement
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters JPIC, USA
IBON Europe
IBON Foundation, Philippines
Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples North East Zone (ICITP-NEZ)
Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF), India
Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples (IKAP), Thailand
Indigenous Peoples Caucus of the Greater Caribbean
Indigenous Peoples Development Facilitators Forum (IPDFF)
Indigenous Peoples' Forum of North East India
Indonesian Society for Social Transformation (INSIST), Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR)
Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR), Indonesia
International Forum on Globalization
IWA (Indigenous World Association)
Janice Howard
Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement- International, Togo
Jubilee Debt Campaign, UK
Jubilee Montana Network
Jubilee South
Jubilee South Africa
Jubilee South-Asia/Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (JS APMDD)
Jubilee USA
Jubileo Sur-Americas
Kediri Bersama Rakyat, Indonesia
Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre, Nigeria
La'o Hamutuk - Timor-Leste Institute for Development Monitoring
LDC Watch, Global
Maleya Foundation
Marcha mundial de las Mujeres, México- Zona Centro
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, USA
Montagnard Foundation, Inc.
Movimento pelas Serras e Águas de Minas, Minas Gerais, Brasil
Mujeres para el Dialogo, A.C.
Naga Women's Union, Manipur
National Alliance for Human rights and Social Justice (HR Alliance), Nepal
National Fisheries Solidarity Movement Of Sri Lanka
National Forum of Forest People & Forest Workers, India
National Network of Indigenous Women
NEPAD, Centrafrique
Netherlands Centre for Indigenous Peoples
NGO Forum on the ADB
Nicaragua Network, USA
North East Alliance on Trade, Finance and Development, North East India
Ocean Revolution
Ole Siosiomaga Society Incorporated (OLSSI) in Samoa, the Pacific
Oxfam International
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum

Participatory Research & Action Network-PRAN, Bangladesh
Pax Romana-IMCS Asia Pacific
Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), Philippines
Practical Action UK
Q'eqchi Council of Belize
Rapa Nui Parliament
REBRIP - Brazilian Network for the Integration of Peoples
Red Nacional Género y Economía (REDGE)
Red Wamani - (IMP)
Resource Institute of Social Education-RISE, India
RNDD Niger
Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN), Nepal
Rural Women's Liberation Movement, India
Rural Workers Movement, India
Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (SATIIM)
Sawit Watch, Indonesia
Shimin Gaikou Centre (SGC), Japan
Siembra, A.C.
Society for Rural Education and Development
Society for Threatened Peoples International
Solidarity Workshop
SONIA, Italie
South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE), Nepal
South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, South Africa
SPERI, Vietnam
Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), Liberia
Sustainable Energy and Economy Network, USA
Tamil Nadu Dalit Women's Movement, India
Tamil Nadu Women's Forum, India
TARA-Ping Pu, Taiwan
TEBTEBBA - Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research & Education
The European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad)
The Grassroots Policy Network (Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs), USA
The Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN)
The Right to Food Network (RtFN), Nepal
The United Confederation of Taino People, Caribbean
Third World Network
Ulashi Sreejony Sangha (USS), Bangladesh
Vanessa Miller
Watch Indonesia!
Women Environmental Conservation based in Uganda - Karamoja and other indigenous organizations
World Development Movement (UK)
World March of Women, Kenya
World Rainforest Movement
Yayasan Tanaman, Flores, Indonesia
Zero Corruption Coalition, Nigeria

Total number of endorsements as of 12 June 2009: 232