

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 15, 2025

Canadians join global movement for debt justice with Jubilee 2025 petition drive

Christian organizations urge Canadians to sign petition supporting global debt cancelation in historic Jubilee year

(Toronto – Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit) - Canadian Christian organizations, led by KAIROS Canada, are calling on Canadians to join a global movement to end the mounting global debt crisis by signing the Canadian petition for Jubilee 2025.

[The petition](#), which aims to collect 100,000 signatures in Canada by the end of 2025, will be combined with a global initiative urging world leaders to cancel unjust debts, establish a United Nations mechanism for debt resolution, and prevent future cycles of crushing debt. The global goal is 10 million signatures, working with ecumenical and civil society partners around the world, focusing on debt cancellation, international financial reform and climate justice.

In Canada, [KAIROS Canada](#) is leading the campaign in collaboration with [Citizens for Public Justice](#), [Development and Peace – Caritas Canada](#), and the Office of Religious Congregations for Integral Ecology (ORCIE). [The Canadian Council of Churches](#) has been active in developing the campaign and will be inviting its member churches to support it. The Canadian focus of the campaign also includes Indigenous rights and justice in Canada and globally as an integral part of economic and ecological justice and debt reform.

Pope Francis inaugurated the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope on December 24, 2024. The Global Ecumenical Jubilee Committee and [Caritas Internationalis](#) quickly followed with the launch of the [Turn Debt into Hope](#) campaign for Jubilee 2025. This is a worldwide ecumenical movement advocating for systemic change to address global economic inequality and the burden of unjust debt.

Canada is hosting the G7 Leaders' Summit in June 2025 in Kananaskis, Alberta. KAIROS and its partners will leverage this event as an opportunity to urge Canada to include debt cancellation and debt restructuring in the agenda, and advocate for their implementation. The global campaign will call for debt cancellation at the G20 Leaders' Summit in South Africa and the Climate Change COP30 in Brazil this year.

The idea of Jubilee has deep roots in faith traditions and scripture themes of forgiving debts, caring for people and the land, and ending poverty and inequality.

The Jubilee 2025 campaign is inspired by the Jubilee 2000 campaign, which mobilized millions of people of faith world-wide and achieved significant goals, including the cancellation of USD \$100 billion of debt in 36 low-income countries.

From 1998 to 2001, the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI) led Canada's Jubilee 2000 debt cancellation campaign with support from The Canadian Council of Churches and a working group of churches, inter-church coalitions, ecumenical agencies, and faith-based organizations.

CEJI was the country's most successful faith-based advocacy campaign. It mobilized 640,000 Canadians to petition for debt cancellation for low-income countries. The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative's success led to the creation of KAIROS in 2001.

Many countries in the Global South are currently facing a new debt crisis. Although billions of dollars in global debt were cancelled in 2000, the global financial system was not restructured to prevent future crises. The current debt crisis is exacerbated by rising interest rates, inflation, conflict, climate change, inequities and other contributing factors.

According to a [2024 report from German NGOs Erlassjahr and Misereor](#), 130 countries in the Global South are navigating a "slightly critical" debt situation, with 24 countries in a debt situation that is "very critical."

Forty-eight countries, representing 3.3 billion people, spend more on servicing their debt than on education or healthcare, [according](#) to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

The debt crisis also undermines sustainable development and climate action. Countries in the Global South are currently spending [five times more](#) on debt repayments than they are on addressing the impact of the climate crisis. For many, public debt has grown so large that repayment is impossible, burdening future generations.

Moreover, wealthy countries exploit resources from low-income countries in the Global South and from Indigenous territories, often causing severe ecological and human rights harm, creating an "ecological debt" owed to the people of these countries and to Indigenous peoples in Canada and globally.

The Jubilee theme highlights the urgent need to address the devastating impacts of the debt crisis around the world, amplifying the voices of partners who are advocating for a just and sustainable model of development, sometimes at risk to their lives, offering hope and a path forward by raising awareness and advocating for meaningful change.

For more information and to sign the petition visit: kairoscanada.org/jubilee-2025-canada

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"Jubilee 2025 is a call to collective action, rooted in faith and justice, to address the devastating impacts of unjust debt and global inequality. This campaign builds on the success of past movements and invites Canadians to stand in solidarity with global communities by advocating for systemic change, debt cancellation, and climate justice. Together, we can create a future where economic systems prioritize human dignity and ecological health over profit that benefits only a few at the cost of harm to many." - Leah Reesor-Keller, Transitional Executive Director of KAIROS Canada.

"Canadian churches have long been engaged in public advocacy for economic justice in Canada and abroad. The cancellation of unjust debts is a strong scriptural theme from the Jubilee teaching in Leviticus, to Jesus' first sermon, and in the Lord's Prayer. All people of faith will resonate with this campaign's commitment to restore human dignity and the integrity of creation." - Pastor Peter Noteboom, General Secretary, The Canadian Council of Churches.

"As one of the wealthiest nations, Canada owes not only financial debts but also an ecological debt to the Global South. While CAD 1.5 billion in bilateral debt is owed to Canada, much of this stems from climate finance loans that exacerbate the debt burdens of vulnerable countries like Angola, Ecuador, and Guyana. Shockingly, some of the most indebted nations spend five times more on debt repayments than addressing the devastating impacts of climate change. It's time for Canada and other developed nations to acknowledge their responsibility and cancel unjust debt obligations, enabling the world's poorest countries to invest in sustainable futures and repair the damages caused by ecological exploitation." – Maryo Wahba, Climate Justice Policy Analyst, Citizens for Public Justice

"In this Jubilee Year, Pope Francis has called on all of us to work for justice, canceling debts that halt the development of countries around the world and reckoning with the growing ecological debt owed by the Global North to the Global South. Canadians are still remembered for their enthusiasm, effectiveness, and leadership 25 years ago. Canada has an opportunity to show its peer nations what true solidarity looks like, raising its voice in multilateral fora and using its role as the convener of the G7 countries

to call for debt justice, contributing boldly to climate financing that does not increase debt burdens, and regulating Canadian companies to prevent human rights and ecological abuses.” - Dean Dettloff, Advocacy and Research Officer, Development and Peace - Caritas Canada

"Religious congregations want to see Canada compensate for climate harm connected to Canada's resource exploitation and high carbon consumption, as part of a renewed dialogue about care for the planet and solidarity with its people. As shared by Sr. Ir. Nilva Dal Bello, csj, in Brazil: 'The prospect of the Jubilee of Hope is a glimmer of light in a world of darkness and gloom in which the "financial world" promotes greater exploitation and submission over the poor south of the world, to the level of the unbearable.'" Dr. Sue Wilson, csj, Chair of ORCIE

- 30 -

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