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**Kathmandu Statement to End Austerity:
A better world is possible with public education, health, social security,
decent jobs and a fairer economy for all**

The World Social Forum in Nepal is an Open Space of social movements, NGOs, civil society organisations, trade unions, citizens who demand that “Another World is Possible”. We believe that ending austerity is central to the aims of this assembly gathered in Kathmandu 15-19 February, and this is why we call for immediate attention to the crisis of austerity that is only getting worse, and demand for immediate action on many alternatives that exist to austerity.

Today, more than 6 billion people are suffering from austerity, so-called “fiscal consolidation” according to a recent study by the [EndAusterity Campaign](#). We demand that governments immediately stop harmful public budget cuts in essential areas like education, health and social protection, and halt damaging reforms such as the privatization of public services and social security rights, which are exacerbating gender inequality, as women are the shock absorbers due to the subsidy they provide to the global economy through their unpaid domestic and care work. Instead of austerity cuts/reforms, governments must seek new sources of fiscal space to meet their Human Rights obligations and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Specifically, we, the undersigned social movements, civil society organisations, trade unions and academics demand that governments, regional organisations and multilateral organisations urgently:

1. Stop cutting much needed social protection, education, health, public transport, housing and other social programmes;
2. Stop cuts to the public sector wage bill, in particular for the number and salaries of teachers, health and social workers, as well as civil servants at the local level;
3. Stop reducing subsidies that support households;
4. Stop pensions and social security reforms that result in lower support, and avoid reducing employers’ contributions to social security to ensure that systems are equitable and sustainable;
5. Stop labour flexibilisation reforms;
6. Stop privatisation and public-private partnerships in socially relevant areas;
7. Stop adherence to private finance first approaches;
8. Stop any other budget cuts or reforms with negative social impacts, particularly on women.

Instead, we urge governments, regional organisations, and multilateral organisations to implement financing alternatives, mainly:

1. Increase progressive taxation on corporations, the financial sector and the rich, including corporate and personal income and wealth taxes, excess profits taxes, taxes on windfall profits, digital services taxes on corporations, and financial transaction taxes; instead of regressive taxes such as VAT/ Sales taxes;
2. Fight Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs), tax abuses, and financial secrecy especially in tax havens that contribute to IFFs by opening up beneficial ownership registries for public access, publishing all tax reporting by corporates on a public country-by-country basis, and ending the impunity of tax havens and enablers who facilitate financial secrecy, and tackling trade mispricing;
3. Review, cancel and stop signing harmful tax agreements such as bilateral tax treaties and harmful tax incentives to corporations and wealthy individuals;
4. Reduce / eliminate sovereign debts, so debt service does not reduce social expenditure.
5. End harmful fiscal ceilings or fiscal rules that don't allow investing public resources to fight the climate emergency or inequality;
6. Increase employers' contributions to social security to ensure the sustainability of social security systems, and formalize workers in the informal economy with decent contracts;
7. Tap into fiscal and foreign exchange reserves, so that national savings are invested in people, realisation of human rights, and sustainable development today;

We, members of civil society organisations and social movements feel that these changes are not only urgent and necessary, they are also realistic to implement here and now at all levels. These decisions affect the lives and livelihoods of billions of people, but decisions are often taken behind closed doors in international financial institutions (IFIs), and in ways that do not engage the public, and more over those marginalised. Similarly, negotiations concerning international tax treaties, international tax governance, debt governance and debt restructuring also lack transparency, participation and effective citizen engagement.

To endorse the Kathmandu Statement to End Austerity, fill out the form below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVXXQ3_FfiQbjciqf3vNWbQs4Ax7YvDQ10LC_CyYLDrqfnDcw/viewform

Please visit our website and join the End Austerity Campaign: <https://endausterity.org/>

FIRST SIGNATORIES:

ORGANIZATIONS:

- Financial Transparency Coalition (FTC)
- Global Social Justice (GSJ)
- Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)
- Oxfam
- ActionAid
- Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt (CADTM)
- Asia Monitor Resource Centre (AMRC)

- World Social Movement (WSM)
- March For Our Planet (MFOP)
- HomeNet Nepal
- Madeshi Dalit NGO Federation
- Bangladesh Rural Economic Development (BRED)
- Socialist Trade Union Confederation of Nepal
- HomeNet Thailand
- Nepal Health, Education, Awareness and Rights (HEAR)
- Pusat KOMAS Malaysia
- Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD)
- Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF) Thailand
- Literacy Organization Lokvidya San Andolan, India
- Equality Foundation Organization
- Centre for Agroecology and Development Nepal
- Mass Development Centre, India
- Social Protection Civil Society Network (SPCSN)
- Children & Women in Social Services and Human Rights Nepal (CWISHR)
- Good Shepherd Sisters
- Navjiveen India
- WOREC Nepal
- Bihar Child Rights Forum AKKS, India
- Jeyen Nepal
- Keustubh Tamil Nadu, India
- Patriotic Education Foundation of Nepal
- Leo Club of Kathmandu
- Deep Jyoti Kalyan Sansthan (DJKS), India
- Nepal Entertainment Sector Union
- Rainbow Home of the Seven Sisters, India
- CWIN Nepal
- Youth Pioneer Organization
- Working People's Coalition (WPC)
- Progressive Plantation Worker's Union, India
- Public Services International (Asia Pacific)
- Women Workers Protection Union, Nepal
- Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)
- Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
- Food Sovereignty and Climate Justice Forum
- Movement for Advancing Understanding of Sustainability and Mutuality (MAUSAM), India
- Academics Stand Against Poverty
- Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)
- Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)
- Development Finance International, UK
- Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia, Mexico
- Free Trade Union Development Center, Sri Lanka
- Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Global Social Justice Brussels, Belgium

- Institute for Economic Justice, South Africa
- International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
- Latindadd
- MENAFEM Movement For Economic, Development And Ecological Justice, Morocco
- REAS Red de Redes (Spanish Network of Social and Solidarity Economy), Spain
- Social Policy Initiative, South Africa
- Social Watch, Uruguay
- Tax Justice Network
- The Bretton Woods Project
- Third World Network
- Transition in progress / Transition à l'œuvre, France
- Wemos
- Women and Media Collective, Sri Lanka

INDIVIDUALS:

- Jomo Kwame Sundaram, former economics professor, was UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development
- Walden Bello, former Executive Director of Focus on the Global South
- Eric Toussaint, Spokesperson of Cadtm International Network
- Varsha Gandikota-Nellutla, Co-General Coordinator, Progressive International
- Anselmo Lee, Coordinator Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development
- Leo Gabriel, Assembly of the World Social Forum
- Tord Bjork, Coordinator EU-Committee, Friends of the Earth Sweden
- Thomas Wallgreen, Professor, Finland
- Danny Singona, DR Congo Social Forum
- Nguyen Thi Lan Huong, Independent Expert, Vietnam