Civil Society Demands

The following demands are based on African countries and civil societies experiences of the effects of impact of World Bank policies and programmes. This is largely borne from the workshops organised by SANGOCO, SACC and COSATU.

We demand that:

1. All national parliaments and the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank convene a commission of enquiry into the impact of the World Bank & International Monetary Fund policies/programmes on the peoples of "developing countries," particularly in Africa.
2. The World Bank gets out of development policy-making as this has proved to be incompetent, inappropriate and biased towards the interests of the rich and powerful. It follows that we believe that no new loans be made. This is particularly important as we undertake various impact assessment studies and await their outcomes.
3. In depth and systemic reform of international institutions and that the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation be placed under a renewed and democratized United Nations system that not only answers to national governments but also to "we the peoples."
4. We recognise that debt has and is being used as a lever to undermine national sovereignty, within our governments (and by implication our parliaments). The attack on the public sector was an attack also on national governments to determine their own development paths. It is necessary for our governments to reclaim the right to choose their own developmental paths. We call on the World Bank to desist from requiring any further debt payment from its client governments and end the further neoliberal conditionalities it imposes for any "debt relief." This debt was paid many times over in many forms.
5. For our friends and allies to assist us in building a genuine South or African Development and Solidarity Bank that puts the needs of people before profits. The World Bank has much to learn on development from other UN bodies and agencies such as UN Conference on Trade and Development and the UN Development Programme.
6. On corruption: If the World Bank and the IMF are really interested in promoting transparency and accountability, they will join us in calling for action on tackling the secretive tax havens or the flow of dirty money. By taking action on tax havens we will show our sincerity for tackling the source of inequalities which is unfair wealth and power accumulation. Global cross-border flows of dirty money in the form of tax havens range between US$1.06 trillion and US$1.6 trillion annually of which between US$539 billion and US$829 billion comes from developing and transitional economies.[1]

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[1] Raymond Baker (2005) He breaks these down further and estimates that two thirds of this flow is driven by commercial motives (including reducing or eliminating the payment of taxes) and only about a third is related to drugs and trafficking etc related crimes. Epstein et al (2005) have calculated and compiled estimates of capital flight for a number of developing countries. Their estimates show that for example South Africa has been losing an average of 9.2 per cent of GDP (losing US$13 billion in 2000), China 10.2 per cent of GDP (losing US$109 billion in 1999), Chile 6.1 per cent of GDP (losing US$4.7 billion in 1998) and Indonesia 6.7 per cent of GDP (losing US$14 billion in 1997). This indicates a very large aggregate number for total annual capital flight from developing countries which again seems to fall in the ball park estimates of dirty money flows ($539 billion to US$828 billion annually from developing countries) in Baker (2005).