

## Embassy Action - 1st April 2005



### Global Call to Action Against Poverty to demand debt cancellation on 1 April 2005

On Friday 1 April 2005, organisations and national platforms involved in the Global Call to Action against Poverty are asked to target representatives of rich creditor countries with a demand for debt cancellation, and to wear the white band. Through Embassy Actions, this GCAP mobilisation will focus on the embassies of the G7 - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and US - calling for full cancellation of the debts of the most impoverished countries. Particular emphasis will be on the French and German embassies to encourage their leaders to sign-up to debt cancellation - although each national platform should decide on its own target, based on its own national context.

The action comes ahead of the meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Washington DC on 16 and 17 April. The G7, the group of the world's richest and most powerful nations, holds more than half the votes for the World Bank and IMF. Campaigners are demanding that they seize the opportunity at these meetings to agree a deal on 100% debt cancellation and particularly on using IMF gold reserves to fund cancellation.

This follows a similar day of action on Tuesday 18 January, ahead of the G7 Finance Ministers' meeting in London. On that day, debt campaigners mobilised in over 20 countries worldwide, as far apart as Finland, Tajikistan and Uganda. They made their voices heard through a wide range of actions: by staging protests, marches and media stunts; meeting embassy representatives; delivering letters; issuing statements; and holding press conferences. In Zambia, for example, campaigners from around the country held a protest march targeting the Canadian and Japanese embassies; while in Tanzania, delegations from citizens groups met with the German and Canadian ambassadors to urge them to go further with debt cancellation; and in Tajikistan, NGOs held a debt conference and produced a petition. The huge range and spread of international activity clearly had an impact which built on many years of dedicated campaigning: for instance, shortly after being lobbied in its embassies around the world, the Canadian government agreed to release millions more dollars in debt relief, for both HIPC and non-HIPC countries.

Any activity on 1 April - from rally outside embassies, to sending a letter to the ambassadors to make them aware of civil society demands - will add to the pressure and make a difference. Wearing the white band as part of this action will show world leaders that we are standing together on this issue. Please do share details of anything you are planning with other colleagues in the debt movement internationally and other civil society groups. You can email [info@whiteband.org](mailto:info@whiteband.org) for more information or to share plans and ideas with GCAP groups world-wide.

For more information please contact [www.whiteband.org](http://www.whiteband.org)