



PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE
DEBT & POVERTY

**The Catholic Campaign
Against Global Poverty . . .
Fighting poverty with trade, aid and debt**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) invite Catholics throughout the U.S. to join in our Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty. The campaign focuses on three areas of U.S. policy: trade, aid and debt. It advocates U.S. policies that promote coordination and consistency among these three arenas to combat poverty and hunger. The following is a discussion on Debt:

The mothers who have lined up outside of the Consolata Sisters Dispensary in Tanzania are waiting. They are waiting hear if the babies in their arms are HIV-positive like themselves. They are waiting for medical care. Along with the other 25 million people living with HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa, they are waiting for policies and programs that will help stop the pandemic that is sweeping the continent. But, because they live in one of the world's poorest and most indebted countries, these women and their children will wait a long time.

Despite recent initiatives advocated by our Church and others to reduce the foreign debt of the world's poorest countries, many countries still hold heavy debt burdens. The 34 poorest African nations – a majority of the world's least developed countries - had a combined foreign debt of \$106 billion in 2002. Because payments must be made on this debt, it is nearly impossible for many poor countries to invest adequately in HIV/AIDS care and prevention, to feed their people in times of natural disaster and conflict, and at the same time foster development that is essential for people to rise out of poverty.

The Campaign's Debt Goals call for the U.S. to eliminate the debt of the poorest countries and institute reforms that pave the way for development.

- Eliminate the existing foreign debt of the poorest countries without reducing future assistance.
- Redirect money from debt payment to health, education and other poverty reduction programs.
- Promote transparency and civil participation in debt cancellation programs to help ensure that benefits reach poor families and children.
- Ensure coordination and consistency among trade, aid and debt policies.

**Join the Catholic Campaign
Against Global Poverty**

www.usccb.org/globalpoverty
OR
www.catholicrelief.org/globalpoverty

*Peace & Social Justice Director: Nora Jackson
Next Meeting: 1/26/05; 7:30-9:30; Room 227*