

**ENDING THE STRANGLEHOLD OF GLOBAL DEBT
ON IMPOVERISHED NATIONS**

A Resolution Adopted by the XXII General Synod of the United Church of Christ (1999)

WHEREAS, delegates from over 300 national churches at the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, in December 1998, unanimously voted to "Let the Trumpet Sound a Jubilee Call to End the Stranglehold of Debt on Impoverished Peoples;"

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ seeks to be in solidarity with those who have taken up this international call to address the crushing burden of global debt;

WHEREAS, this indebtedness of the poorest nations of the world has escalated to such a degree as to make repayment impossible;

WHEREAS, such indebtedness imposes an unjust burden on people struggling for the basics of existence, with an unequal burden falling primarily on women and children;

WHEREAS, the rules and regulations of the debt management are placed in the powerful hands of the wealthiest nations and their institutions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which have focused on debt repayment rather than debt cancellation; and

WHEREAS, the debtor nations are not included in the decision-making regarding lending and debt repayment, placing these nations in an unjust and unfair position concerning their own destiny;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, July 1-6, 1999, encourages its members, congregations, associations, conferences to be involved in the Jubilee 2000 campaign, and calls upon them to strive to:

1. Work for the cancellation of the major debt of the most severely impoverished nations by the end of the year 2000, enabling their economies to experience new life;
2. Encourage the institutions involved in granting loans and debt repayment to devise policies aimed at preventing future debt crises and to include the debtor nations in the formulation of said policies;
3. Call upon the leaders of the richest countries, the commercial banks, the IMF, the World Bank, regional and international financial institutions to cancel these debts in a way that benefits the ordinary citizens of the countries and without conditions that would perpetuate and/or deepen poverty; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, to commend the Office for Church in Society and the United Church Board for World Ministries for their work on Jubilee 2000 and urge that they and their successors continue their work to cancel the debt;

To urge the President or General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and the Council of Conference Ministers to give strong leadership to encourage Jubilee 2000; and

To encourage the local churches to study and become advocates for Jubilee 2000.

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.