

Statement on the FfD4 Outcome Document

## **Ambition Lost, Accountability Damaged, Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality Less than Lip-Service**

APWLD expresses our deepest concerns on the negotiation processes and the adoption of the FfD4 Outcome Document "Compromiso de Seville" at the 3rd session of the 4th Preparatory Committee in New York on 17th June 2025 - even before anyone gathers in Seville for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development. Over the last few days, the silence on the procedural text was broken only to further water down critical paragraphs in the tax and debt chapters. This is alongside the lack of transparency and accountability by excluding civil society from accessing the attributed text as well as the misled narrative of addressing gender equality and women's human rights.

We are witnessing the same colonial power of the Global North violating multilateralism to ensure its geopolitical power and economic domination sustains. The Outcome Document recognises the deeply volatile state of our current world, the urgency of transformation and ambitious actions to correct the wrongful acts that led to human rights violations, widening inequalities between and among countries, debt slavery as well as climate and ecological crisis. Yet, the Outcome Document fails to concretely and ambitiously address the gross global challenges, or to defend multilateralism that is based on international cooperation and global solidarity.

Contrastingly, the Outcome Document allowed the Global North governments to concretise blended finance that will diversify sources of funds, particularly tapping the so-called potential of private capital. It is a trade deal to undermine their Official Development Assistance obligation. Similarly, the Outcome Document does not mention militarism, military expenditure or war even once despite the very fact that the world's biggest economies dominate the territories and markets for critical minerals, which leads to increased military expenditure to



maintain and dominate the global financial order. While the call for reparations from the Global South echoes in the negotiation halls, reform of international financial architecture remains in the hands of big economies. The promise to fulfill the 2030 Agenda is once more tainted as the so-called solutions agreed by member states are with a colonial string attached - neoliberal, false and profit-oriented.

The women of the global South are raising the red alarm. We cannot accept a text without ambition and accountable actions, a text that does not acknowledge the systemic perpetrators to our historical oppression, and a text that is silent on the wars and genocide against peoples. The FfD4 Outcome Document in its current form is lost in ambition, damaged in accountability and only further instrumentalised women's human rights and gender justice.

Following are our key concerns that require global actions:

### **On Women's Economic Empowerment Framework**

The text is silent on the systemic marginalisation and oppression of women. While it does talk about access to employment, it still looks into women and girls as 'economic potentials' for 'economic benefits' without really addressing the fundamental barriers to labour rights and economic justice. It is also silent on safeguards, corporate abuses and preventing gender-based violence in the workplace. It perpetuates the same economic system that only facilitates the race to the bottom at the cost of women's life and human rights, and the decent work agenda is clearly missing. **We demand the FfD4 to recognise internationally agreed human rights and labour rights standards such as the ILO C190, as well as uphold principles of decent work and operationalisation of living wage, and increase public financing in social protection.** We need concrete actions, not tokenistic offers.

### **On Peace and Sustainable Development**

The text recognises that without peace, sustainable development is impossible. However, it fails call out the different wars and genocide against peoples across the world, as well as how militarism is being used to control territories and to continue the extraction and exploitation of economies and peoples in the Global South. It fails to call out increasing budget allocation of the world's biggest economies to defence and anti-people and anti-gender policies. Across regions, there is notable increase in military spending alongside increasing austerity measures to basic social services, which detrimentally affects women and girls. Peace is impossible in a context of



aggression, sustainable development is impossible without peace. **We demand that FfD4 calls out the defunding of the global military complex at the expense of the peoples' right to development, gender equality and women's human rights.**

## **On the narrative of multistakeholder approach and “unlocking potentials” of the private sector**

The text is presenting a whole package of “unlocking potential” of the private sector, particularly, the private capital to fill the gaps in development. The EU is strong in pushing for blended finance, which means for public finance to de-risk private investments and pave the way for so-called investments in the development agenda. This whole narrative sits in the context that Global North governments will not meet the 0.7 percent ODA target anymore. The FfD4 Conference in Seville is happening side-by-side with the International Business Forum with the same objective to tap private capital. The UN is ushering such partnerships through its multi stakeholder approach, which allows the private corporations to be on the same development table as we are –the rights holders. The peoples, grassroots women and communities of the Global South have generations of lived experiences of human rights violations and corporate abuses of big transnational corporations. We cannot sit at the same table with them. **We demand the FfD4 space to uphold the rights of peoples and its movements to participate meaningfully and ensure safeguards, protection and accountability mechanisms are in place.**

## **On Debt and Reparations**

The text fails to identify and challenge the power inequalities in the existing debt architecture, while also only paying lip service to the impact of obligatory servicing of unsustainable debt burdens on the fulfillment of fundamental human rights, with a disproportionate impact on the most marginalised, especially women. Its disappointing lack of ambition to usher in structural solutions is reflected in limiting the mandate of the intergovernmental process to merely producing ‘recommendations’ for closing gaps in the debt architecture. Even worse, it centers the very same international financial institutions - such as the IMF and the WB, that have historically perpetuated debt and interconnected crises in the Global South - by recommending them to establish and implement ‘voluntary’ principles and protocols of sovereign lending and borrowing, and act as institutional bases tasked with centralising data and technical capacity building for measures that only stall and exacerbate impending crises.





Worsening impacts of debt crises in the Global South urgently warrant genuine, systemic solutions. Detrimental policies as a result of loan conditionalities continue to shape development paradigms, maintaining chronic stuntedness of indebted countries and rendering them increasingly vulnerable to even more crises, thus perpetuating debt slavery. Women are disproportionately impacted as they grapple for survival amidst shrinking social safety nets and mounting household debts, un/der/paid care work burdens and precarity in the workforce. **We demand:** i) the immediate cancellation of all illegitimate debts that frees up fiscal resources for governments in the Global South to invest in building and reinforcing gender transformative public services and infrastructure; ii) systematic accountability of the Global North countries - including through reparations to the Global South - for centuries of plunder and devastation caused by continued colonisation; and iii) the preservation of people's sovereignty and self determination by necessitating that the design and implementation of debt servicing solutions are accessible, democratic, human rights-based and iv) independent gendered, human rights and environmental assessments, particularly the impacts of loan conditions and costs of repayment, on the most vulnerable, especially women.

## **A global cry for an economic system based on dignity, human rights, care, justice and reparations**

FfD4 requires no less than a just and equitable transformation of the international financial architecture directed by rights-based development programming, to reverse the neocolonial, neoliberal patterns and policies that extract resources and women's labour, further impoverishing the Global South. We reject band-aid solutions that perpetuate the violence of capitalism, and demand a just, equitable and transformative framework that addresses systemic barriers, injustices and inequalities within and among countries, and between men and women. We demand a global financial architecture based on care, human rights, justice and reparations. **Women's Human Rights and Development Justice, NOW!**

