

## **DJPC's Position on Debt Relief**

DJPC's work for human rights, economic justice and lasting peace for Latin America offers a unique perspective from which to contribute to the current policy debate on debt relief.

DJPC recognizes that debt relief is important to lasting peace; debt increases inequality within a country and among countries, potentially causing conflict. DJPC concurs that a comprehensive debt relief policy must be adopted by the U.S., one that meets the needs of indebted countries and their citizenry, while holding responsible the lending nations and organizations, as well as officials, that have committed these countries to egregious debt. This policy should respect human rights and international law, while removing the burden of debilitating debt from not only governments, but also from the citizenry of Latin American nations.

DJPC believes that this issue cannot reach successful resolution without dealing with the root causes of global debt and poverty, as well as analyzing those areas in which U.S. policies act as catalysts for them. To this end, DJPC advocates foreign policies that:

- Support forgiveness of debt for impoverished nations together with the issuance of new loans lent under just terms.
- Respect the sovereignty of foreign countries and their institutions.
- Encourage just and fair lending policies both by the U.S. and through international lending organizations.
- Conduct negotiations in a transparent, inclusive and accountable manner.
- Strengthen political and civil institutions and eliminate corruption and impunity.
- Promote human development over U.S. investment interests and end exploitation of human and natural resources, as well as communities.
- Prioritize the needs of communities and individuals, particularly women and children, over those of transnational corporations and other global powers.
- Support poverty alleviation by promoting sustainable and equitable development as determined by a country and all sectors of its society, including civil society.
- Improve human rights in countries at risk of incurring enormous debt.
- Reverse and reduce privatizations of essential public services as part of the loan process.
- Support communities in the development of local solutions to debt, e.g. micro-credit loans.

DJPC works to establish equitable public policy through:

- Education: of our members, our communities, our Congressional delegation on the ways in which U.S. foreign and trade policies economically impact countries already constrained by large-scale debt, as well as those countries that are threatened by debt.
- Solidarity: in partnering with local and national groups and international movements to advocate for these policies.
- Nonviolent Activism: calling, writing, visiting and keeping the pressure on members of our Congressional delegation to enact just debt relief policies. Participating in rallies, press conferences, public meetings, and protests.