

# Joint statement on the urgent need to tackle poverty

## 5 January 2024

We believe that poverty is a scandal, the root causes of which have been neglected by our political leaders in the UK Parliament for too long. As this new year begins, the cost of living scandal is clearly not over for the poorest people in the UK. Around the world, poverty holds too many individuals and communities back from fulfilling their potential.

But we know that poverty is not inevitable – it's a consequence of political choices and priorities. With a General Election on the horizon, we call on our political leaders to make tackling poverty a priority. In line with our existing commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, this should include setting out clear plans to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce overall poverty by at least half, in both the UK and globally, by 2030.

Whilst our work to tackle poverty in the UK and around the world takes different forms, we are united in our belief that the human cost of failing to take action now is too big and too damaging to ignore. This year must mark the beginning of the end for poverty.

Inspired by our faith, we believe in a future where everyone has an equal share in the world's resources. Where everyone has enough to eat. Where all of us are able to wake up in the morning with hope, opportunities and options for living a fulfilling life.

This year, our Churches and Christian charities are committed to putting poverty on the agenda through practical action, prophetic words and courageous campaigning. Our elected politicians need to take responsibility too. Now is the time for action.

Signed by:

*Christine Allen, Executive Director of CAFOD*

*Bishop John Arnold, Bishop of Salford*

*Niall Cooper, Director of Church Action on Poverty*

*Revd Lynn Green, General Secretary, The Baptist Union of Great Britain*

*Nigel Harris, CEO of Tearfund*

*Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, Moderator of General Assembly, United Reformed Church*

*Emma Jackson, Public Life and Social Justice Group Convener, The Church of Scotland*

*Revd Gill Newton and Kerry Scarlett, President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference*

*Kate Nightingale, Deputy CEO, St Vincent de Paul Society*

*Commissioners Jenine and Paul Main, Territorial Leaders, The Salvation Army UK and Ireland*

*Stewart McCulloch, Chief Executive of Christians Against Poverty UK*

*Paul Parker, Recording Clerk, Quakers in Britain*

*Bishop Mike Royal, General Secretary, Churches Together in England*

*Right Revd Mary Stallard, Bishop of Llandaff*

*Most Revd Mark Strange, Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness, and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church.*

*Patrick Watt, CEO, Christian Aid*