



## INCLUSIVE SOCIETY INSTITUTE

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### **INCLUSIVE SOCIETY INSTITUTE CEO CALLS FOR JUST AND INCLUSIVE GLOBAL FINANCIAL REFORM AT THE THINK-TANK 20 (T20) MID-YEAR CONFERENCE**

Daryl Swanepoel, Chief Executive Officer of the Inclusive Society Institute, delivered an urgent call for fairness and structural reform in the global financial system during a panel discussion at the T20 Mid-Year Conference, held in Pretoria on 19 and 20 June 2025.

Speaking at the invitation of the T20, the official engagement group of the G20 that brings together leading think tanks and research institutes, Swanepoel argued that finance is the true enabler of progress across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that without equitable financial mechanisms, the global development agenda will remain out of reach for many developing nations. “Without the right kind of finance, the rest is just talk,” Swanepoel told delegates. “Finance must stop being a barrier and start being a bridge.”

He drew attention to the unjust structure of international climate finance, where developing countries that have contributed the least to climate change are facing the worst impacts, only to be offered loans, often in foreign currencies, rather than grants or fair financial support. Using research by the Inclusive Society Institute, he illustrated that a concessional climate loan taken out in euros in 2015 would today cost South Africa 38% more than if it had been issued in local currency, due to exchange rate volatility.

“This isn’t theoretical; it’s mathematical and it’s unjust,” he said. “Developing countries must not be penalised for climate damage they did not cause or for global market fluctuations they cannot control.”

Swanepoel called for three urgent shifts in global finance:

- A significant increase in climate finance grants, particularly for adaptation.
- Denominating concessional loans in local currencies to protect borrowing countries from exchange rate risk.
- An end to restrictive conditionalities that tie financial support to donor-country technology or services.

He described local-currency lending not as charity, but as “a form of overdue developmental accountability.”

On bridging the global financial divide, Swanepoel identified four practical strategies to enable more inclusive development:

- Supporting country-led integrated investment frameworks aligned to national development priorities;
- Expanding concessional and local-currency finance through multilateral institutions;
- Enhancing participation and legitimacy in decision-making, including civil society and community voices;
- Building shared data systems for transparency, accountability and trust.

“The global financial system is structurally biased against developing nations. But that doesn’t mean we’re powerless,” Swanepoel noted. “We can act through smarter coordination, inclusive processes and fairer financing instruments.”

He emphasised the pivotal role of the G20 in leading the reform agenda, stating that it has the influence, tools and responsibility to convert rhetoric into real reform.

“This isn’t about generosity, it’s about responsibility. And it’s time we restored trust by building a financial system grounded in justice.”

The Inclusive Society Institute, which focuses on public policy research and inclusive development strategies, will be promoting further proposals on financing for development at the upcoming UN Finance for Development (FFD4) Summit in Seville.

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**Date: 22 June 2021**