
GPF Newsletter

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[Latest from GPF](#) | [What's new](#)

Latest from GPF

New GPF Report on R2P: In whose name?



Global Policy Forum and Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung—New York Office publish a joint report on the concept of a Responsibility to Protect (R2P). "In whose name? A critical view on the Responsibility to Protect" by Lou Pingeot and Wolfgang Obenland provides an overview of the history and content of R2P, its positive contributions and its flaws. It concludes that R2P does not give a satisfying answer to the key question it is supposed to address: how best to prevent and, if prevention fails, respond to large-scale human rights violations and killings? The concept is particularly dangerous as it amalgamates arguments and proposals, mixing uncontroversial and widely accepted notions (that states have a responsibility towards their citizens) with more dubious claims (that military intervention is an appropriate tool to protect civilians).

What's new

Green revolution reloaded: G8 finance takeover of African food systems



As food security still is a severe problem in many African countries the G8 try to tackle the issue with old wine in new bottles – industrial farming – and thereby pave the way for transnational companies, a new report by the World Development Movement states. According to the report, the New Alliance initiative by the G8 seems to be a good strategy to direct more aid money to one of the most pressing problems in Africa but in reality is used as a lever to open up food markets and align agriculture policies to suit the needs of big business. “The African countries being targeted by the

New Alliance are not those with the highest levels of hunger or poverty, but those with the best access to export markets and the highest levels of economic growth”. Instead of improving food security the New Alliance is likely to exacerbate hunger by increased land grabbing, insecure and poorly paid jobs, privatization of seeds and producing cash crops instead of food products for the domestic market. Small scale farmers who cannot compete with transnational companies will be left without income.

No Transparency among UK's leading companies



"Secrecy is not the exception but the norm [...]" is the major finding of a report published by Christian Aid analyzing the disclosure of economic and financial information of almost 30,000 subsidiaries of the 100 largest companies whose shares are traded on the London Stock Exchange (the FTSE100). More than 90% of these subsidiaries are based in secrecy jurisdictions, only a quarter of them fully reveal information on turnover, assets, shareholder funds and number of employees. Data that is vital for investors, tax authorities as well as civil society to hold companies

accountable. Even though, in the last months, UK's Prime Minister David Cameron showed some willingness to finally tackle this issue the new evidence shows that current efforts are only scratching the service of company secrecy, says Christian Aid.

SDGs - a few steps forward, a few steps backwards



**Third World
Network**

The Open Working Group (OWG) established a draft 'chapeau' for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in its 11th session in New York. The text consists of two pages which will accompany the framework of the goals and is sent to all Member States. Already beforehand, developing countries stressed that the narrative have to reflect inter alia an inclusion of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR).

Many key developing countries recognize the reference to CBDR in the chapeau. Nevertheless, in their opinion, some aspects like a clear differentiation between developed and developing countries or roles and responsibilities are still missing in the SDG document.

Melinda Gates to address the World Health Assembly: Civil Society registers its protest



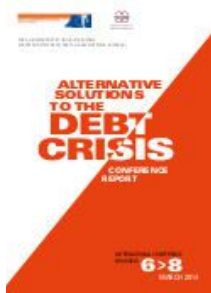
Melinda Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, addressed as a keynote speaker the 67th World Health Assembly on May 20, 2014. Civil Society Organizations like the Peoples' Health Movement and Third World Network express their strong protest against the decision of the World Health Organisation (WHO) to invite her. According to undersigned organizations, inter alia Ms. Gates' credentials as a leader in public health are unclear. In addition, more worth knowing is that the private organization, which is the second largest funder of the WHO, invested their corporate stock endowment in industries like oil or food, which are clearly conflicting with global health.

New Book: Peace Diplomacy, Global Justice and International Agency



A new book about UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, who influenced fundamental principles and practices of the United Nations, will be launched by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation at Uppsala University House on May 19, 2014. More than fifty years after the death of Hammarskjöld in a plane crash, GPF policy advisor Henning Melber and Carsten Stahn publish a tribute to him. In the book, they critically review his values and experiences in office as well as concepts associated with him, such as an international civil service. Investigations in the book about particular conflicts like the Congo crisis may serve as lessons for contemporary conflict resolution or developing concepts like human security.

Alternative Solutions to Debt Crisis



Eurodad in collaboration with the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung published a report summarizing a conference on alternative solutions to the debt crisis in Europe. Though increasingly questioned by economists, civil society and politicians, austerity policies still form the main instrument to rescue and restart European economies. The conference aimed at developing more equitable and just solutions to the crisis. Experts from Europe, the Middle East and North Africa as well as Latin America contributed and thus enabled the participants to share experiences also from countries affected by previous debt crises. Furthermore, the conference questioned the legitimacy of the Troika of the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund as the major decision-maker.

How TNCs deprive African countries of billions through trade misinvoicing



Global Financial Integrity published a report funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark analyzing the impact of trade misinvoicing on Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda. According to the report, under- and over-invoicing of trade transactions in the period between 2002 and 2011 caused a loss of US\$ 14.39 billions in tax revenues in the five Sub-Saharan African countries. This means that governments lose a huge amount of their annual budget which could otherwise be spend on education, health services or infrastructure projects desperately needed in these countries. Following an estimation of the scope of this fraudulent behavior, the report also analyzes the policy environment in each country and gives country specific policy recommendations.

Africa rises, but taxes don't follow: Who benefits?



A new report by Tax Justice Network-Africa and Christian Aid asks who benefits after a decade of economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite increasing economic prosperity and some positive achievements in poverty reduction too many Sub-Sahara African countries undergo sharp rising income inequality. The report examines eight countries and whether they experiences rising inequalities. By looking at this, the researchers underline the primary importance of the relationship between national tax systems and international taxation issues in redistributing wealth. It is a challenge for governments to recognize the levels of inequalities as huge concerns and to impose effective taxes on income and property. Precisely because, as the report finds out, rising income inequality come along with the current growth model and illicit financial flows from the continent.

Post-2015 Agenda: Caution against role of partnership



Third World Network



Third World Network (TWN) picks up on the debate over the performance of the private sector as contributor to the Post-2015 Agenda. Opinions over its role at UN level are dividing, according to TWN. Some in the international community recognize the private sector as crucial partners. In contrast, an increasing number of civil society organizations and networks worldwide express their substantive concerns over private sector financing for development. In line with this, Latin American countries like Brazil call attention to the need for a reform of governance mechanisms ensuring transparency, accountability and coordination. Furthermore they caution against the bringing in of additional funding from private corporations and philanthropy, which may lead to an outsourcing of development cooperation.

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