
GPF Newsletter

October 17, 2014



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Latest from GPF

Truly universal Post-2015 development agenda

Watch the Kapuscinski Development Lecture by Jens Martens on October 29, 2014



"The debates on the Post 2015 Agenda offer the opportunity to reconsider development in light of the new realities and to overcome the old and often still paternalistic approaches of development policy. Therefore, a truly universal Post 2015 Agenda must not just become an updated set of MDGs. It should contain universal sustainability goals and a program for structural transformation which defines the necessary financial, regulatory and institutional means of implementation in all countries of the world, and this in line with their differentiated responsibilities and capabilities." Jens Martens, director of Global Policy Forum will be delivering a "Kapuscinski Development Lecture" on these issues on October 29, 2014 in Helsinki.

[Find out more about the lecture and how to join here.](#)

What's new

Cash-Strapped Human Rights Office at Breaking Point



After six weeks in office, the new U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini of Jordan launched a blistering attack on member states for insufficient funding, thereby forcing operations in his office to the breaking point “in a world that seems to be lurching from crisis to ever-more dangerous crisis,” writes Thalif Deen in a recent piece for IPS. “I have been asked to use a boat and a bucket to cope with a flood,” he said, even as the

Human Rights Council and the Security Council saddles the cash-strapped office with new fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry – with six currently underway and a seventh “possibly round the corner.” Jens Martens, director of the Global Policy Forum (GPF) in Bonn, told IPS that governments treat the United Nations like firefighters. “They call them to a fire but don’t give them the water to extinguish the fire and then blame the firefighters for their failure.”

Open Letter: Synthesis report of the Secretary General



The German NGO Forum on Environment and Development has sent an open letter to the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, Amina Mohammed. The letter addresses the Secretary General’s synthesis report, which will constitute a major step in the elaboration of this new agenda and will reflect on the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals’ report, published in July. The NGO Forum welcomes that the

OWG report addresses a series of important issues such as inequality within and among countries or important environmental aspects. However, looking closer at the indicators, serious gaps and misconceptions become evident.

Strengthening the Global South’s Voice in Global Tax Governance



Global Policy Forum, in cooperation with the Global Alliance for Tax Justice, Eurodad, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, MISEREOR and Oxfam Germany, will be holding a side-event during the meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters on October 30, 2014. The event seeks

to take a critical look at the processes shaping the international anti-BEPS framework at the OECD and the G20 and to spur discussion on the need for a more inclusive approach that centers on the interests of countries of the Global South, who suffer most from the consequences of tax abuse. Currently, global standards on tax matters are being developed through negotiations that not only preclude the possibility of developed and developing countries being equally represented; but also prevent the majority of countries around the world from having their

say in the decision-making process. We believe there is space outside of the exclusive clubs of the OECD and the G20 to develop norms and mechanisms that strengthen tax governance at all levels - the UN being the natural place for this.

Managing the Next Debt Crisis: Recent Reform Proposals



The world is faced with increasingly complex sovereign debt situations, and the institutions and the instruments they use to tackle these crises are often inadequate and harmful to the most vulnerable in affected societies. The UN Financing for Development Conference in 2015 will be a unique opportunity to change the way debt crises are being managed to avoid forced 'defaults' like the one Argentina has recently faced, or crushing financial collapse like the one that Greece has experienced. In a briefing paper by Eurodad's Bodo Ellmers, recent reform proposals to manage future debt crises by international organizations are examined – one from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and one from the United Nations – and the next steps in the process are spelled out. The paper also makes concrete recommendations with respect to the role of Parliaments and steps that legislators and decision-makers can take in coming months to ensure that Europe influences future effective debt workout mechanisms that are responsible, fair and humane.

Warning from Civil Society: TTIP Threatens to Undermine Financial Reform



In a letter to U.S. and EU trade negotiators and finance ministers, 52 civil society groups on both sides of the Atlantic, Global Policy Forum amongst them, have come together to warn that the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) currently under discussion could undermine new financial regulations and potentially create significant risks to the global financial system, as well as to investors and consumers. Despite the experience of the global financial crisis, leaked documents from the confidential TTIP negotiations indicate that current TTIP drafts replicate deregulatory provisions from pre-crisis trade arrangements, in some cases even adding new loopholes, such as the suggestion to introduce investor state dispute settlement provisions.

Where is the public in Public Private Partnerships?



A July Report from the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) has revealed a worrying lack of proven poverty impact from the World Bank's public-private partnerships (PPPs). This comes despite a significant increase in the Bank's support to PPPs in the decade 2002 through 2012 and the Bank's recent strategy, which suggests intensifying support for PPPs in the future. One key reason for the ineffectiveness of PPPs, writes Eurodad's María José Romero, has been the scant attention paid to hidden debts run up by these partnerships. Indeed, public sector liabilities triggered by PPPs can be substantial and this has been the case for many PPPs. If this particular issue is not addressed properly, it has the potential to have long-term negative development impacts. Overall, the IEG evaluation raises critical points that should prompt deep reflection and a management response from the World Bank Group, including a reassessment of the rationale for supporting PPPs to reduce poverty and fight inequality.

Budgeting for Human Rights: Progressive Realization

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The obligation of progressive realization has long been central to understanding how economic, social, and cultural (ESC) rights recognized in the present International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) should be achieved. Indeed, at the time the ICESCR was adopted, it was considered appropriate to underscore that the right to health, education and social security, among other rights, could not be fully and immediately realized everywhere in the world. In her blog, Helena Hofbauer from the International Budget Partnership explores the implications of progressive realization for government budgets. She argues that the connection between international human rights law and budget analysis has the potential to be a powerful tool for holding governments to account for their obligation of progressive realization not only at times when public resources are scarce, but equally when they are plentiful.

Actions expected of states under UN Guiding Principles



The Danish Institute for Human Rights has published a working paper on “The State Duty to Protect Against Business-Related Human Rights Abuses”, which provides an extensive analysis of all of the guiding principles under pillars 1 (The State Duty to Protect) and 3 (Access to Remedy) of the United Nations’ Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Human Rights and Business. The paper considers state duties and state access to remedy in the following three parts: overall issues such as the state’s approach to its duty to protect, state regulatory and policy functions and the question of extraterritoriality (part 1); specific issues covered by the UNGPs such as state businesses, privatization and public procurement, conflict-affected areas and international economic agreements concluded by states (part 2); and finally state duties pertaining to access to remedy (part 3).

Hence this working paper covers all the guiding principles under the UNGPs Pillar 1 as well as the relevant state principles under Pillar 3.

Eight Key Issues for a Post-2015 Global Development and Sustainability Agenda



The German NGO Forum on Environment and Development, in cooperation with various other German civil society actors, has published a position paper outlining eight key aspects that need to be further built on by the post-2015 Global Development and Sustainability Agenda. Key elements include: a decent life for all; human rights; gender; generational and distributive justice and respect of planetary boundaries; the complete eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; and the safeguarding of natural resources and ecosystems – elements for which the Global North and Global South have a common but differentiated responsibility. The group of NGOs states that the implementation of the post-2015 agenda must become a political priority and cannot be allowed to fail due to short-term political thinking, a lack of political will, disputes about matters of competencies, or a refusal to provide the required financing.

Upcoming events

Side-event during the meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

Strengthening the Global South's Voice in Global Tax Governance

Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 13-15h | Palais des Nations, Geneva

Jointly organized by the Global Alliance for Tax Justice, Eurodad, Global Policy Forum, MISEREOR, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Oxfam Germany.

The international cooperation in tax matters has intensified in the last few years. Processes under the anti-BEPS framework at the OECD or G20 are proof of that. Nevertheless, countries in the Global South that are suffering from the results of tax evasion and avoidance the most (at least in relative terms as recent papers by IMF and OECD show) are to a great deal excluded from this increasing cooperation. This means losing vast amounts of resources, where they could have been allocated to sustainable development. While countries of the Global South that are not part of the G20 are periodically “consulted”, the actual intergovernmental negotiations and decision-making have been taking place behind closed doors and without any tangible links to more inclusive processes. Once again, global standards are being developed without equal representation of developing countries, and with the majority of the world's countries excluded from the decision-making processes.

At the same time, the Intergovernmental Commission of Experts on Sustainable Development Finance concludes that «a participatory and broad based dialogue on international cooperation in tax matters should be strengthened». But how to foster such dialogue and cooperation without marginalizing a majority of governments? We believe there is space outside the exclusive clubs of the OECD or the G20 to come to meaningful norms and mechanisms to strengthen tax governance at all levels. The UN appears to be the natural place for this. Concrete next steps could be an upgrade of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. But even more visionary solutions are conceivable.

We would kindly like to invite you to join us for a panel discussion around these issues and share your views with experts in the fields of international financial and tax cooperation.

Programme

Welcome: Hubert Schillinger, Director, FES Geneva Office

Panel discussion with contributions by

- Manuel Montes, Senior Advisor, Finance and Development, South Centre
- Tove Maria Ryding, Senior Policy Analyst, Eurodad
- Dereje Alemayehu, Chair of the Coordinating Committee, Global Alliance for Tax Justice

Moderator: Wolfgang Obenland, Program Coordinator, Global Policy Forum

Please indicate your participation by sending an e-mail to [woob\[at\]globalpolicy.org](mailto:woob[at]globalpolicy.org) before October 22nd.


[Invitation and program \(pdf, 180 KB\)](#)

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