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# GPF Newsletter

October 9, 2015



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## Global Policy Watch

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### Rethinking the development paradigm: Reflections from civil society in the region on Post2015 and Financing for Development



The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) has published a booklet titled ‘Rethinking the development paradigm: Reflections from civil society in the region on Post2015 and Financing for Development’. Some of the central topics are the role the private sector has been given in the Post2015 development agenda and the diminished support for civil society organizations in the region. This shift in stakeholder roles comes before the adoption of “business-binding human rights standards.” In the global partnership for development the focus has shifted towards private sector involvement while minimizing the goals for fair trade, debt relief and neglecting the regulation and control of capital movement.

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### U.S. Funding for the United Nations



Barbara Adams, with the Global Policy Forum, talked about the money the U.S. contributes to the United Nations and how that amount compares to contributions by other countries. She also discussed the efficiency of U.N. programs.

This program was part of C-SPAN’s “Your Money” series. Each Monday morning the last hour of “Washington Journal” is devoted to a federal program, focusing on its mission, participants, and cost.

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## The world agrees on a better future... just not yet on how to get there

Last August 2 in New York, the United Nations agreed on the new sustainable development agenda as the guide for their global, regional and national policies over the coming fifteen years. At the core of this new global consensus, seventeen “sustainable development goals” (SDGs) spell out a vision for a better future where poverty everywhere will be eradicated, inequalities within and between countries will be substantially reduced, and current unsustainable consumption and production patterns will be transformed.

*by Roberto Bissio, Social Watch*

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## Public SDGs or Private GGs?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) negotiated painstakingly over two years by all UN Member States with thousands of public interest organizations providing their commitment and expertise have been copyrighted. And by whom? The UN you would think? But no. They have been re-branded as Global Goals (GGs) and the copyrighted by Project Everyone, a private company incorporated and registered in London.

*by Barbara Adams, Global Policy Forum*

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## Is the UN fit for the ambitious new Sustainable Development Agenda?



### **New study highlights private funding and corporate influence in the United Nations**

More than a hundred Heads of State and Government will gather in New York this week to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda is intended to make the UN ‘fit for purpose’, but it is important to ask, ‘whose purpose will it be fit for’?

## Truth and reconciliation in sustainable development

“The UN must champion a process of truth and reconciliation” in development, said Barbara Adams, on behalf of Global Policy Forum and Social Watch during a round table at the United Nations in New York. Adams emphasised that “those who have benefitted the most from the past and current model are those that need to change the most”.

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## What's new

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### Peoples' Nutrition is Not a Business



*“As the authors of this enlightening volume of the Watch make clear, nutritional adequacy and well-being are integral dimensions of the right to adequate food—and must be dealt with as such. Peoples’ nutrition and food sovereignty risk being undermined by predatory agri-business practices that relentlessly pursue maximum profit at all costs.”*

Hilal Elver, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

The Right to Food and Nutrition Watch report "Peoples Nutrition Is Not a Business" places the spotlight on nutrition and the impact of business operations on people’s livelihoods. In doing so, their assessment goes beyond the measurement of nutrients in food and human bodies to considering the socio-economic and cultural context in which human beings feed themselves. The paper also provides recommendations for states to prevent and punish initiatives that hamper the enjoyment of the right to adequate food and nutrition.

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### Overall Evaluation of the G20/OECD Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project

The BEPS Monitoring Group, a network of specialists concerned with the effects of international taxation on development and the reform of the international system for the taxation of transnational corporations, has recently published their General Evaluation of the BEPS Project outputs. While acknowledging the importance of the results as a first step towards a better taxation system, the report highlights a range of shortcomings. The proposals do not suggest treating multinational enterprises as a single firm, instead they emphasize the independent entity principle. Other proposals, such as the access to country by country reporting, contain unnecessary obstacles where publication would have been an easier solution. The proposals are a patch-up of existing rules, not a coherent and comprehensive set of reforms. The BEPS has, however, succeeded in opening space for more far-reaching changes.

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### Foreign Direct Investment, Investment Agreements and Economic Development: Myths and Realities



In the recently released paper 'Foreign Direct Investment, Investment Agreements and Economic Development: Myths and Realities' by South Centre, Yilmaz Akyüz examines the effects of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on emerging and developing economies and how it can be used to benefit them. The paper critically assesses the benefits commonly ascribed to FDI and clarifies that only a small percentage of FDI is a long term, stable, cross-border flow of capital that adds to productive capacity, helps meet balance-of-payments shortfalls, transfers technology and management skills, and links domestic firms with wider global markets. Additionally the paper reviews the effects of the WTO and Bilateral Investment Treaties on the ability of emerging and developing economies to regulate FDI, before closing with policy recommendations derived from the analysis.

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## ICC opens a case for the destruction of cultural heritage in Mali



A few days ago, on 26 September 2015, the first suspect in the Mali investigation, Ahmad Al Mahdi Al Faqi was surrendered to the International Criminal Court (ICC) by the authorities of Niger. The charges against him centre on the destruction of cultural heritage during the war in Mali 2012. It is the first case at the ICC in which war crimes against cultural heritage are the main

accusation, which is particularly timely in light of the vicious trend of deliberate destruction of cultural heritage we have witnessed in Syria and Iraq at the hands of Islamic State.

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## Joint letter by European CSOs on Country-by-Country Reporting

More than 40 European NGOs write to their respective Ministers of Finance and to the European Commission to call for a strong outcome of the upcoming EU negotiations on public country by country reporting for multinational corporations under the Shareholders Rights Directive. Ending the secrecy surrounding the tax payments and economic activities of multinational corporations is a crucial step towards re-establishing public trust in our tax system. By requiring multinational corporations to report publicly on key financial data on a country by country basis, governments will also dramatically increase the incentive for these corporations to pay their taxes in the jurisdictions where the economic activity takes place and value is created. This is not only key to achieving financial stability and development in Europe, but also in the world's poorest countries, where corporate tax avoidance is strongly undermining sustainable development and the fight against poverty, public country-by-country reporting is the most cost effective and efficient way of ensuring they have timely and low-cost access to this crucial information. Public country by country reporting will also help flag up corruption risks by shedding light on any special arrangements between companies and governments.

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