
GPF Newsletter

June 28, 2013



What's new

Declaration Adopted at Vienna+20 Conference Calls for Primacy of Human Rights



On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Second World Conference on Human Rights, which produced the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, a wide range of civil society organizations gathered in Vienna this week. They adopted the Vienna+20 CSO Declaration, which emphasizes the primacy of human rights and calls for rights to be made operational.

Leave No One Behind: The Agenda of the United Nations Should Respect Nature and Listen to the People



Social Watch, ITD Fourth World and the International Trade Union Confederation trace some worrying features of the United Nations development agenda. The agenda beyond 2015, when the Millennium Development Goals expire, is currently debated in international fora. The organizations emphasize the importance of leaving no-one behind and respecting nature, and call for listening to and learning from the people living in poverty.

EU Financial Regulations Fail to Curb Food Speculation



A coalition of NGOs, including Friends of the Earth Europe, Oxfam, the World Development Movement and SOMO have criticized the position EU finance ministers display with regard to financial regulation. They say the EU ignores how financial institutions continue to engage in food speculation, which endangers food security. New regulations are due to be adopted by 2014.

Big Corporations Having Big Influence on EU Competitiveness Pact



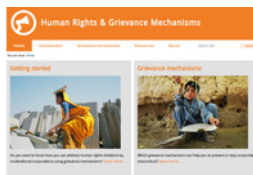
Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) criticizes the strong influence business is having on the current negotiations on a Competitiveness Pact in the EU. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President François Hollande have given the European Roundtable of Industrialists, one of the biggest lobby groups in Europe, a prominent role in the negotiations. CEO is a Brussels based research and campaign group working to challenge the influence of corporate interest in EU policy making.

EU Agricultural Reform Misses Opportunity



Two German NGOs, Brot für die Welt and WWF Germany, criticize the recent agreement on the reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, which provides massive subsidies to large agricultural producers in EU countries. Not only does the reform miss the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in terms of environmental protection, but it also ignores export subsidies, which are a crucial issue for farmers in the global South.

New Website on Grievance Mechanisms to Address Human Rights Violations



Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO), a Dutch civil society organization, has launched a new website providing guidance on how to address human rights violations committed by corporations – without law courts. The website provides information on these non-judicial grievance mechanisms and guidance to people and organizations who need to tackle human rights violations.

Eradicating Poverty... By Lowering the Bar



Roberto Bissio, director of Social Watch, criticizes the current understanding of poverty in an article for Third World Network. He compares the approaches of World Bank President Jim Yong Kim and his

predecessor Robert McNamara and notes their striking similarities despite the 40 years between the speeches he cites. According to Bissio, the past decades have nevertheless witnessed a regression in poverty eradication policies. He criticizes the definition of extreme poverty in absolute terms and stresses the need for more ambitious and equitable goals in fighting poverty.

Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition Launched in Vienna



The Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition was launched in Vienna on 24 June 2013 as part of the Vienna+20 action week, celebrated 20 years after UN World Conference on Human Rights. The Network has 20 founding organizations aiming to open space for dialogue and mobilization to hold states accountable and support social movements and groups standing up to violations of the right to adequate food and nutrition.

Hammarskjöld Perspectives - Solidarity and Ethics in Global Governance



Henning Melber, Senior Adviser and Director Emeritus at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Policy Advisor of Global Policy Forum, reflects on the legacy of Hammarskjöld. In his presentation to the Plenary Panel on “Ethical Leaders and Global Leadership: Building on the Legacy of Dag Hammarskjöld” on 18 June 2013 at the Academic Council on the United Nations (ACUNS) 13th Annual Meeting, Henning Melber highlights the importance of ethics and solidarity in global governance. He sets Dag Hammarskjöld as an example of the kind of a leadership also needed today.

Beyond Pragmatism in the Post-2015 Agenda - GPF Europe Director in ICAE Virtual Exchange



The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is currently having a virtual exchange on the topic “Post-2015 Education Agenda: Advocacy Actions”. In a contribution, the director of Global Policy Forum Europe, Jens Martens, calls for a holistic post-2015 development agenda that would go beyond mere pragmatism.

Tax Havens and the Taxation of Transnational Corporations



Tax avoidance and tax evasion by transnational companies and the role played by tax havens have recently received much media attention, when it transpired that prominent companies such as Starbucks and Apple pay virtually no income taxes on their massive international profits. The case of the world's largest commodity trader, Glencore, demonstrates that tax evasion by multinationals also affects developing countries. Tax issues and the detrimental role played by tax havens are now firmly on the international policy agenda, for example at the G20.

FIAN Rejects G8 Hunger Initiatives as False Solutions



FIAN International strongly criticizes initiatives on food security and nutrition promoted in connection with this year's G8 summit hosted by Great Britain. The initiative on transparency, which promotes an increase in the transparency of land transactions, among others, as well as the further expansion of the "New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition," adopted at last year's G8 summit, are rejected by FIAN as false and inadequate solutions to fight poverty and eradicate world hunger.

Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference for the "World Conference on Indigenous Peoples"




Indigenous Peoples and Nations representing the 7 global geo-political regions met from June 10 - 12 in Alta, Norway. The purpose was to exchange views and proposals and develop collective recommendations on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, which will convene in New York, 22 - 23 September 2014. They prepared an outcome document, which sets forth our recommendations along with the historical and current context of Indigenous Peoples.

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