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# GPF Newsletter

September 30, 2016



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## Latest from GPF

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### Corporate accountability and influence in the UN

#### Challenges for the new Secretary-General and the UN

##### Panel Discussion

**4 October 2016, 1:00-3:00 pm | Church Center, 2nd Floor, 777 UN Plaza, New York City**

The international debate surrounding the environmental, social and human rights responsibilities of corporations has been gaining momentum. Growing public criticism of transnational corporations and banks has contributed to this debate. The list of criticisms is long: pollution scandals, disregard for basic labour and human rights standards, massive bribery allegations, on top of widespread corporate tax avoidance strategies.

Confronting this reality is a historic decision of the UN Human Rights Council (of 26 June 2014) to establish an intergovernmental working group “to elaborate an international legally binding instrument to regulate, in international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises”. For the first time since decades, an intergovernmental body of the UN was established to address the international regulation of corporations.

The second session of the intergovernmental working group is scheduled for 24-28 October 2016 in Geneva.

The panel will assess the state of the current debate, discuss the pros and cons and the potential content of a legally binding instrument (or a treaty), and explore links to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and to the agenda and responsibilities of the incoming Secretary-General.

Speakers include:

- Jens Martens/Barbara Adams, Global Policy Forum
- H.E. Horacio Sevilla, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations\*
- Dominic Renfrey, Corporate Accountability and Economic Policy Program Coordinator, ESCR-Net
- James Hare, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung—New York Office

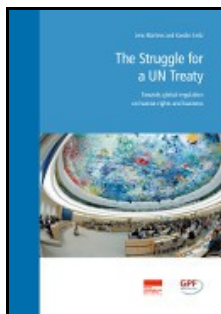
\* *to be confirmed*

Download the [invitation](#) and [the programme](#) here.

Please RSVP by 30 September 2016 to [gpf@globalpolicy.org](mailto:gpf@globalpolicy.org)

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## New publication: The Struggle for a UN Treaty



In June 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council took the historic decision to establish a working group “to elaborate an international legally binding instrument to regulate, in international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises.” This binding agreement should complement the existing UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which show serious shortcomings. Between 24 and 28 October 2016, the second session of the working group will take place in Geneva. Against this background, Global Policy Forum and Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung-New York Office published a new working paper. It presents the basic facts concerning the current discussions at the UN Human Rights Council, outlines the events leading up to today’s discussions, describes the

controversies and lines of conflict, sets out the potential content of a legally binding instrument and concludes with some remarks on the further process.

### The Struggle for a UN Treaty

#### Towards global regulation on human rights and business

Published by Global Policy Forum/Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung—New York Office

Authors: Jens Martens and Karolin Seitz

Berlin/Bonn/New York, August 2016

61 pages

ISBN 978-3-943126-28-0

[Download the full working paper here.](#)

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## New briefing: FENSA - a fence against undue corporate influence on WHO?



After several years of intense discussions and negotiations, the World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted the World Health Organization’s Framework of Engagement with non-State Actors (FENSA) on 28 May 2016. The establishment of the framework was a response to the growing concerns of many governments and civil society organizations about the corporate influence on the World Health Organization’s (WHO) normative and operational activities. The objective of the new framework was therefore to provide guidelines for clear and informed decision making on WHO’s engagement with non-State actors, and to improve transparency and accountability. FENSA constitutes a precedent. It is the first comprehensive regulatory framework within the United Nations system that covers all types of

interaction with non-State actors. The new briefing paper provides an overview on the recently adopted framework. It outlines the process leading up to this document, presents the agreed provisions, describes lobbying attempts by the private sector, and discusses the final outcome.

## FENSA - a fence against undue corporate influence?

### The new Framework of Engagement with non-State Actors at the World Health Organization

Briefing September 2016

Author: Karolin Seitz

Editor: Jens Martens

Published by Brot für die Welt/Global Policy Forum/MISEREOR

Aachen/Berlin/Bonn, September 2016

[Download the briefing here.](#)

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## Global Policy Watch

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### GPW Briefing #12: Silos or system?

#### The 2030 Agenda requires an integrated approach to sustainable development

By Barbara Adams and Karen Judd



The 2030 Agenda is both a problem and a solution for the UN system. The UN, especially the UN development system, must be encouraged to return to its value-driven role in the public interest, grounded in the explicit adoption of norms and standards and delivered through programming that does not deviate from its core business. Otherwise it will find itself caught in a self-inflicted vicious circle of decline. “More of the same” will see the continuation of its shrinking role in global affairs at a time when so many challenges require international co-operation and resolve.

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### GWP Briefing #11: The HLPF 2016

#### First global meeting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

By Jens Martens



The United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) met in New York from 11 to 20 July 2016. It is the central UN body addressing sustainable development, and its chief task is to monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The HLPF is still in a trial phase. Whether it can justifiably claim a central role in global sustainability policy will only be revealed over the next few years.

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### The Diplomatic (and Economic) Struggle over Microbes

By Barbara Adams and Sarah Dayringer

It may sound like an issue for health specialists, but at the UN high-level meeting on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) ministers and heads of state from around the world made clear that it is more than that it appears.

This is the fourth time that the UN General Assembly has addressed health issues. As the representative of Portugal pointed out, this meeting “is proof of global recognition of this problem

and how important an issue it is”. Executive Director of South Centre, Martin Khor said that AMR is “as serious as Climate Change and perhaps more immediate”.

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## Spotlighting the 2030 Agenda – one-year after

Heads of state and government leaders from around the globe have descended on the United Nations in New York for the 71st United Nations General Assembly. Their “general debate” on 20 September will focus on the theme: The Sustainable Development Goals: a universal push to transform our world.

To push forward with implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the incoming President of the General Assembly, Peter Thomson of Fiji, has created a special advisory group on the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Check our new [Global Policy Watch Notice Board](#) for updates on current affairs around the United Nations in New York.

For more, see [globalpolicywatch.org](http://globalpolicywatch.org) | Follow Global Policy Watch on [Twitter](#)

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## What's new

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### Neue Briefing Paper-Serie zur 2030-Agenda

Mit einem Text zum High-level Political Forum 2016 startet das Global Policy Forum eine neue Briefing-Paper-Reihe zu Themen rund um die 2030-Agenda für nachhaltige Entwicklung, die SDGs sowie ihre Umsetzung in und durch Deutschland. Bislang sind drei Ausgaben erschienen.

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#### Das Nachhaltigkeitsforum der UN 2016

Erstes globales Treffen zur Umsetzung von 2030-Agenda und SDGs

GPF-Briefing August 2016  
Autor: Jens Martens  
Herausgegeben von Global Policy Forum  
Bonn, August 2016

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#### Mühsamer Start

Die Mittel zur Umsetzung der 2030-Agenda auf dem Prüfstand

GPF-Briefing September 2016  
Autor: Wolfgang Obenland  
Herausgegeben von Global Policy Forum  
Bonn, September 2016

[Zum Download des Briefings.](#)

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## Die SDGs auf der G20-Agenda

Der G20-Aktionsplan zur 2030-Agenda für nachhaltige Entwicklung

GPF-Briefing September 2016  
Autor: Jens Martens  
Herausgegeben von Global Policy Forum  
Bonn, September 2016

[Zum Download des Briefings.](#)

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## In Need of Rethinking

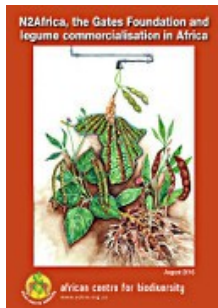


"Free trade has both been negatively affected by and an active contributor to an anti-globalisation backlash in the public opinion of many advanced economies. Further trade liberalisation is increasingly resisted. Much of the backlash can be viewed as a reaction to the underlying policies that, in the past, have produced many »losers« – not just »winners« – and especially have increased income inequality. Most of the »low-hanging fruit« in trade liberalisation has already been harvested. In the search for further cost savings, the frontier of trade negotiations has moved away from the borders deep into the arena of national policies. Attempts to use trade negotiations to modify regulations that express societal preferences and had been established for reasons that are unrelated to international trade have largely eroded the

confidence in trade negotiations and trade negotiators – and added to the backlash." writes Hubert Schillinger of FES' Geneva Office in a recently published Briefing Paper.

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## N2Africa, the Gates Foundation and Legume Commercialisation in Africa



African Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) published a new report entitled "N2Africa, the Gates Foundation and legume commercialisation in Africa". This report considers the N2Africa programme, which aims to develop and distribute improved, certified legume varieties, promote and distribute inoculants and synthetic fertiliser and develop commercial legume markets for smallholder integration in 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. N2Africa was started in 2009 with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. While ACB can recognise the potentially valuable technical and organisational contributions of such efforts, it criticizes that they currently are oriented exclusively to supporting a modernisation agenda that can only benefit few. A legume development programme that integrates farmers into seed

enhancement and production, and develops appropriate quality control systems based on farmer priorities and under the control of farmers, could offer a more sustainable and inclusive approach than a private sector, profit-driven approach.

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## Put corporate lobbyists in the spotlight - vote now!



It's an open secret: corporate lobbies enjoy a particularly cosy relationship with the trade officials at the European Commission. Behind closed doors, the infamous TTIP trade deal is being written hand in hand by regulators and the corporations they are meant to regulate. Corporate Europe Observatory, Friends of the Earth, LobbyControl and WeMove.EU launched the Democracy

for Sale Awards, an initiative giving citizens the opportunity to call out the corporate lobbyists most successful in undermining democracy and the public interest by capturing the EU positions for TTIP.

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## Sign Petition: Tell EU to support UN treaty for businesses and human rights!



The UN Human Rights Council is currently negotiating a treaty with binding rules for businesses and human rights. This treaty could protect people from human rights abuses by corporations and bring corporate human rights violators to justice. Unfortunately, the European Union and its member states have so far taken a pro-business approach and have been boycotting negotiations. Help bring justice to the victims of corporate abuse and uphold the rights of people. Tell the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, that we need a binding treaty on business and human rights! Please sign and distribute the petition.

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