



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WELFARE

A World Organisation Promoting Social Development

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Stockholm Joint World Conference Social Work and Social Development

Registrations are up to 2000. Don't miss out. Go to <http://www.swsd-stockholm-2012.org/> to register. The Conference webpage lists the main speakers <http://www.swsd-stockholm-2012.org/Invited-Plenar-Speakers.aspx>

Commission for Social Development

ICSW received a letter (quoted here in part) from Daniela Bas Director of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) regarding the 2012 meeting of the Commission for Social Development. Ms Bas expressed her "deepest appreciation for the spirit of productive collaboration that prevailed during the session."

The fiftieth session of the Commission concluded its work with the adoption of a set of draft resolutions for the approval of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). These included draft resolutions on the priority theme, poverty eradication (E/CN.5/2012/L.7); Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (E/CN.5/2012/L.3); mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2012/L.6); and Social Dimensions of the new Partnership for Africa's Development (E/CN.5/2012/L.5).

Ms Bas in referring to the draft resolutions indicated her wish to explore opportunities with civil society for their efficient and collaborative implementation.

In conclusion Ms Bas drew our attention to the priority theme for 2013 and 2014 – *Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all*

ICSW is an active participant in the Commission each year. For Commission documents mentioned above go to <http://social.un.org/index/CommissionforSocialDevelopment/Sessions/2012.aspx>

Civil society supports ILO on social protection

30 civil society organisations including ICSW are submitting a statement wholeheartedly supporting the International Labour Organization's intention to adopt the recommendation on national social protection floors at the 101st session of the International Labour Conference in June 2012.

The implementation of the ILO Recommendation will be a great step towards the reduction of poverty and inequality as well as the empowerment of people worldwide. It is a timely response to the fact that millions of people living on our planet are excluded from the benefits of globalization, and are often penalised through the implementation of austerity measures. To read the statement in French and English go to <http://www.icsw.org/un/un.htm>.

Commonwealth paper on social protection

Social Protection: A Question of Delivering on Rights and Resources: Discussion Paper 13

The authors of this paper Dr Anit Mukherjee and Dr Marilyn Waring debate the definitions of social protection saying definitions are "currently a contested space". The authors ask "who is making the decisions about its nature and the responses? Who controls what 'social protection' means?" By asking this question the authors miss a fundamental point that is emphasised by the ILO - it is for a country to define, design, implement and resource its own social protection floor. "National SPF strategies should be built to strengthen, complement and build on existing social protection schemes. SPF policies will be integrated in the overall national social protection architecture." (ILO) <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/246777/FileName/SocialProtectionDP13EB.pdf>

WHO on health-related Millennium Development Goals

WHO reports in its Fact sheet N°290 May 2011 on progress in reaching the health related MDGs:

- Fewer children are dying. Annual global deaths of children under five years of age fell to 8.1 million in 2009 from 12.4 million in 1990.
- Fewer children are underweight. The percentage of underweight children under five years old is estimated to have dropped from 25% in 1990 to 16% in 2010.
- More women get skilled help during childbirth. The proportion of births attended by a skilled health worker has increased globally; however, in the WHO Africa and South-East Asia regions fewer than 50% of all births were attended.
- Fewer people are contracting HIV. New HIV infections have declined by 17% globally from 2001–2009.
- Tuberculosis treatment is more successful. Existing cases of TB are declining, along with deaths among HIV-negative TB cases.
- More people have safe drinking-water, but not enough have toilets. The world is on track to achieve the MDG target on access to safe drinking-water but more needs to be done to achieve the sanitation target.

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs290/en/index.html>

Friedrich Ebert Foundation Essays

"Fixing Finance is Not Enough: The social consequences of monetary and financial policies" edited by Werner Puschra and Sara Burke. April 2012.

"Issues relating to inequality or social cohesion should not be considered just as an add-on to mainstream economic policy, but such considerations should be embedded in all aspects of economic policy. In other words, the objectives of public policy include not only growth in output, maintaining employment, and price stability and financial stability, but also social cohesion."

-Contributing Author Y.V. Reddy, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (2003-2008)

The 15 collected essays from heads of governments and central banks, governmental advisors and experts from the UN, the Bretton Woods Institutions, OECD, International Labour Organization and academia-raise the level of debate on the role of rising income, wealth and group inequalities and the need to shape policies for a sustainable international monetary and financial system to foster shared societies. Download 84 pages (2.4Mb) http://www.fes-globalization.org/new_york/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/FixingFinanceIsNotEnough-WebVersion.pdf?utm_source=UN+in+Focus+-+April+2012&utm_campaign=UN+in+Focus+Newsbrief+1%2F2012&utm_medium=email

New restrictions on NGOs are undermining human rights

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay issued a long news release on 25th April on NGOs and human rights. Parts are quoted here. She "expressed deep concern about current or recent moves in a number of countries to curtail the freedom of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society actors to operate independently and effectively".

The High Commissioner cited recent or proposed new laws and other measures in a number of countries which, to varying degrees, place new restrictions on the right to freedom of association.

- A draft law on regulation of NGOs in Egypt "will, if passed in its current form, seriously undermine the spirit of Egypt's revolution, in which civil society played such a pivotal role. It gives the Government too much power to regulate, monitor and restrict the work of CSOs."
- In February provincial authorities in Zimbabwe ordered the activities of 29 NGOs to be suspended.
- A proposed law in Cambodia would allow the Executive to close down certain NGOs if their activities were deemed to "harm... national unity, culture, customs and traditions of the Cambodian national society." There would be no appeal against such a decision. Pillay welcomed the Cambodian Government's commitment to consult further on the draft.
- In Algeria, a new law states that the object and goals of associations' activities must not be contrary to "national values." Should associations fail to comply with this provision, their applications for registration may be rejected. Should they "interfere with domestic affairs," they may be suspended or dissolved.
- In Ethiopia, several human rights organisations have been forced to close due to a 2009 law preventing associations from receiving more than 10% of their overall resources from abroad.
- In Belarus, an amendment to the Criminal Code was adopted in October 2011 by the Parliament, establishing criminal liability for receiving foreign grants or donations in violation of Belarusian legislation. It is believed this will substantively limit the operations of NGOs.

"NGOs must be able to operate free from executive interference," the UN Human Rights chief said. "They must be consulted and included in policy decisions, particularly when a state is undergoing major transformational or transitional processes. And they must not be penalized for criticizing or questioning state policies and processes. Governments need to understand that collaboration with civil society is not a sign of weakness. It is the way to build a better, more inclusive, society - something all governments should be trying to do, and something they cannot manage on their own." For much more detail in all UN languages go to: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12081&LangID=E>

Akihiko Tanaka replaces Sadako Ogata as head of JICA



Photo by: Remy Steinegger

Earlier this year Sadako Ogata resigned as head of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Mrs Ogata had contemplated leaving her post at the end of her second term, but signed on for a third tenure in October as JICA reportedly had a hard time finding a replacement. Akihiko Tanaka, a scholar of international politics and vice president of the University of Tokyo took up the post in March. He served as vice chairman of the board of the Japan Association of International Relations.

Tanaka obtained his doctorate in political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1981. His specialties are, theories of international politics, contemporary international relations in East Asia and issues concerning Japan-U.S. relations.

(Posted by [Jenny Lei Ravelo](#) from DEVEX <http://www.devex.com/en/blogs/the-development-newswire/academic-replaces-ogata-as-jica-president>)

UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Update

UNICEF Social Protection Framework

UNICEF has become an influential actor in social protection worldwide. UNICEF Social Protection Framework supports governments to develop social protection systems for children and women, and advocates for a social protection floor. <http://www.unicef.org/socialprotection/framework/>

UNICEF Global Consultation on Social Policy, Equity, Rights and Development

The [IV Pratolino global consultation was held on 21-24 February](#). Participants included Sir Richard Jolly, Directors of Save the Children, Oxfam, UNRISD, ILO, World Bank, academics and senior staff from UNICEF country, regional offices and HQ. Presentations and recommendations on the future of UNICEF policy work. http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_meetings.html

UNICEF Publication

Vandermoortele, J. 2012. "Equity Begins with Children". Social and Economic Policy Working Paper. UNICEF. http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_61328.html

NGO Committee on Social Development (UN New York)

ICSW is pleased to advise that Sergei Zelenev, ICSW Special Representative to the UN in New York has been elected to the NGO Committee on Social Development. The Committee is the primary organiser of civil society participation in the UN Commission for Social Development. Other members of the committee are Margaret Mayce, Chair; Ming Chong, Vice Chair; Brigid Driscoll, Treasurer; Michele Morek, Secretary; and Jim Collins member At-Large. <http://www.icsw.org/un/un.htm>

OECD

Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 39pp free at
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/57/38/49732892.pdf>

Tackling inequality: OECD Observer article by Angel Gurría
<http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/3717>

Tackling poverty and inequality: OECD Observer article with a focus on Brazil
<http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/3715>

International Women's Day: New times, old perspectives? OECD Observer Article
http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/3732/New_times,_old_perspectives_.html and http://www.oecd.org/site/0,3407,en_21571361_38039199_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

Who pays if you are sick? Emerging economies have made good progress on health coverage recently, but the share of out-of-pocket payments in total health expenditure remains significantly higher than in most advanced countries.

<http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/3716>

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