

UN in Focus *Special Rio+20* Newsbrief



RIO+20
United Nations Conference
on Sustainable Development

**FRIEDRICH
EBERT**

STIFTUNG
New York Office

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Dear colleagues and friends,

The Rio+20 summit is a major opportunity for the world to address the most challenging issues for development:

- How to create a global governance structure that enables the integration of the economic policies with social justice and environmental sustainability,
- How to address income and wealth inequality, which threatens economic growth and development, produces social ills and undermines environmental sustainability,
- And finally, how to measure societal wellbeing differently than just using GDP growth as an indicator.

FES New York is organizing a side event on June 20 in order to address these challenges. Please find further details below.

Additionally, FES is participating in the People's summit with a number of events. The FES has also launched a webpage www.fes-sustainability.org open for a critical debate on the concept of sustainable development with the objective to develop ideas on how to put the notion of sustainable development in political practice and promote comprehensive social change.

With best wishes from New York,



Dr. Werner Puschra
Director
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung - New York Office

Upcoming High-level Event

"Sustainable Development in an Unequal World"

June 20, 2012, 17:00-18:30
Rio Centro Convention Center, Room T-4, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The vision statement from the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability offers an insightful summary of the global state of affairs: "Today our planet and our world are experiencing the best of times and the worst of times... Inequality between the world's rich and poor is growing, and more than a billion people still live in poverty. In many countries, there are rising waves of protest reflecting universal aspirations for a more prosperous, just and sustainable world." In this event, world leaders past and present will speak to the urgent need of millions of people worldwide for equitable and sustainable development to get out of poverty and to ensure their security and stability. They will also address the challenge for every country to transition to sustainable consumption and production patterns that can ensure socially equitable and economically and environmentally viable human development, objectives which should be pursued together.

Moderator:

Ernst-Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Co-Chair, Progress Forum, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung; Co-Chair International Resource Panel

Speakers:

Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director, UN Women; President of Chile (2006-2010); Member, Club de Madrid

Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway (1986-1989 and 1990-1996); Former Chair, World Commission on Environment and Development; Member, UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability; Member, Club de Madrid

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

Jose Enrique Castillo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Costa Rica

Angel Gurría, Secretary General, OECD

Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF

Mary Robinson, President of Ireland (1990-1997); Member, Club de Madrid

[Download printable program](#)
[View event listing on official Rio+20 site](#)

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New Publication

"A Global Shared Societies Agenda: The Role of the International Monetary Fund"

By Jack Boorman

This paper is written in response to a series of three conferences organized between April 2011 and April 2012 at the International Monetary Fund by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Club de Madrid and Center of Concern. The conference series has posed timely and important questions about the social and political challenges presented by inequality and the global economic policy framework needed to support and nurture equitable and sustainable development and Shared Societies.

The author's participation in this project has led him to reflect upon which way the causality with regard to shared societies and economic vitality runs. Does the promotion of equitable and shared societies produce sustainable development and growth? Or does sustainable growth promote equity?

These questions lie at the heart of political debates in many countries, but according to the author, there is increasing evidence supporting the first proposition. It is hoped that this paper will help inspire further research into the questions raised by the prospect of a Global Shared Societies Agenda, and particularly, of the role of the International Monetary Fund in it.

[Download the paper](#)

New Publication

"Really the Future We Want? Civil Society Voices on Rio+20"

The upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, taking place in Rio de Janeiro, 20-22 June 2012, aims to reaffirm the principle of sustainable development and to forge international agreements to further it. In some cases, however, the interests and expectations of civil society actors on the one hand and political decision makers on the other vary considerably. These differences are evident from recent discussions on the zero draft for »The Future We Want«, the conference outcome document.

The main topics of the conference - (1) A Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and (2) An institutional framework for sustainable development - are highly controversial. Many civil society actors and developing countries fear that the conference focus fails to address the real, structural causes of the multiple crises and that the Green Economy approach will lead to a »green protectionism« and »green washing« of existing capitalist structures. The absence of consideration of human rights and equity principles in the draft document has also been criticized.

Given the concerns of civil society actors, their involvement in the Rio process is extremely important. Against this backdrop, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) hosted five regional

preparatory conferences in Africa (Kenya), Asia (India), Europe (Brussels), Latin America (Ecuador), and the Middle East / North Africa (Tunisia) to formulate regional positions on the key topics of Rio+20. The conferences included participants from non-governmental organizations, trade unions, progressive parties, and regional organizations from 47 countries. This paper summarizes their recommendations and demands for the upcoming conference.

[Download the paper](#)

New Publication

"No Future Without Justice"

A group of 18 leading civil society activists and scholars from around the globe is releasing a joint report entitled "No Future Without Justice". The report calls for fundamental changes to tackle the root causes of the multiple crises in the world. It makes specific proposals for fiscal and regulatory reforms oriented by a set of globally shared principles and values. It suggests a profound strengthening of democratic governance structures at national and global level and defines a future framework and core principles for Global Sustainability Goals.

The report is published in the development dialogue series of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (development dialogue No. 59/ June 2012) in cooperation with *Social Watch*, *Third World Network*, *Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era* (DAWN), the *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, *Global Policy Forum* and *terre des hommes*.

[Download the full report \(12.5MB\)](#)

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