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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It gives me a great pleasure to be able to send out this "UN in Focus" Newsbrief after having started my new assignment to FES New York in August. Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you who gave me such a warm welcome! I am very much looking forward to working with you to strengthen and enhance equitable economic and social development, peace and security, and the reform of global governance institutions.

With this month's Newsbrief I would like to inform you about our most recent activities and publications around the UN. As the civil war in Syria threatens to escalate on the international level, we will be co-hosting a timely debate on the Responsibility to Protect on September 9. The Syrian crisis intensified not in the least because two of the UN Security Council's permanent members vetoed resolutions that would have condemned the Syrian regime. Whether or not permanent members of the Council should self-restrict their veto power for the sake of mass atrocity prevention is a topic for debate that is explained in a new FES publication on the reform of the Council's working methods.

The second new publication focuses on another set of state actors, namely the so-called Democratic Emerging Powers (DEPs), such as India, Brazil, or South Africa. The authors conclude that DEP governments have prioritized pragmatism over principle so that, similar to the established Western democratic powers, DEPs have turned into inconsistent advocates for democracy and human rights on the international stage.

I hope this Newsbrief will make for informative reading

and I look forward to receiving your feedback.

With best wishes from New York,

Michèle Auga
Director
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung - New York Office

Upcoming Event (By Invitation Only):

**"Civil Society Perspectives:
Building State Capacity to Prevent Atrocity Crimes"**

**September 9
Intercontinental Barclay Hotel New York
11:00 am - 4:00 pm**

On 11 September 2013, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) will convene its 5th annual informal interactive dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) on the theme of the UN Secretary-General's Report, "State Responsibility and Prevention". On 9 September, in preparation for the General Assembly dialogue, FES together with the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), and the Stanley Foundation will host a discussion event. It will feature civil society representatives who will share their experiences on and provide recommendations for engaging with governments to build domestic capacity to prevent the commission of atrocities

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[UN Secretary-General's Report](#)

New Publication:

"Reforming the Working Methods of the UN Security Council: The Next ACT"

**Volker Lehmann
FES Perspective, August 2013**

In May 2013, some 20 UN member states launched a new initiative to improve the working methods of the UN Security Council. Dubbed "ACT", the initiative aims for greater accountability, coherence, and transparency in the Council's activities. This publication gauges this effort against the backdrop of previous stalled attempts to reform either working methods or the composition of the Council. It concludes that ACT's modest and seemingly technical proposals cut to the highly-political core issues of who controls representation of member states interests and who controls the reform

agenda at the UN.

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New Publication:

"Democratic Emerging Powers and the International Human Rights System"

Rob Jenkins and Emma Mawdsley
FES International Policy Analysis, August 2013

Democratic Emerging Powers (DEPs) such as Brazil, India, and South Africa, aspire for a more prominent role in global politics. This publication analyzes the hitherto neglected role of DEPs in the international human rights system, based on their involvement in the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Security Council, and the international development machinery. DEPs have to straddle domestic political pressures, ongoing support for developing countries' conceptions of state sovereignty, and the protection of national interests from potentially intrusive monitoring regimes. The authors conclude that DEP governments have prioritized pragmatism over principle. Consequently, similar to the established Western democratic powers, DEPs have turned into inconsistent advocates for democracy and human rights on the international stage.

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