

December 2013

NEWSLETTER

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The Geneva Office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES Geneva) presents its newsletter, designed to inform you about our activities and publications as well as recent and upcoming events and developments at the Geneva-based international organizations. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, please [unsubscribe](#).

Das Genfer Büro der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES Genf) freut sich, Ihnen unseren jüngsten Newsletter vorzustellen. Dieser enthält Informationen über unsere Veranstaltungen und Neuerscheinungen und bringt Sie auf den neuesten Stand von Entwicklungen in Genfer internationalen Organisationen. Sollten Sie diesen Newsletter nicht erhalten wollen, dann können Sie ihn [hier](#) abbestellen.

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[//Upcoming Events](#)

HRC Universal Periodic Review Working Group

27 January to 7 February 2014, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Room XX

During this 18th session of the UPR Working Group, Chile, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic will be among the countries that present their reports to be reviewed by the Council. FES has supported civil society organisations in those countries in providing input to the UPR process and will host side events to present civil society reports and discuss them with the governments concerned.

[UPR 18 Timetable](#)

[//Recent Events](#)

LDC-Journalists at 9th WTO Ministerial Conference

03 to 06 December 2013, Bali, Indonesia

FES and WTO provided twelve journalists from Least Developed Countries with the opportunity to be present at this year's Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia. During the Conference they were able to report directly from the spot, to get in touch with high-level governmental representatives and civil society organizations, and to be among the first to write on decisions taken in Bali. The journalists came from the following countries: Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Laos, Mali, Myanmar, Samoa, Senegal, and Tanzania.

Clean Energy and Trade at 9th WTO Ministerial Conference

Side event to the WTO Ministerial Conference, 5 December 2013, 11 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. at the Trade and Development Symposium, Bali, Indonesia

Since June 2013, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, in cooperation with Chatham House and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, has been running a working group on clean energy and the WTO. First ideas with regard to a Plurilateral Agreement on Clean Energy were presented at this side event in Bali.

[Information](#)

“Make the right impact! Trade policies assessment and Human Rights”

Side event to the WTO Ministerial Conference, 4 December 2013, 10 a.m. - 11.30 a.m., Nusa Dua Convention Center, Bali, Indonesia

It has been widely criticized that trade agreements and investment treaties focus exclusively on commercial interests in negotiations without their obligations to address human rights, the environment and development. A powerful and nascent tool for evaluating the effects of trade policies is the Human Rights impact assessment (HRIAs). This event will explore the interaction between human rights and trade; analyze the possible negative impacts of WTO rules for the enjoyment of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; as well as discuss the state of play of human rights impact assessments within the field of multilateral trade.

[Information](#)

Realizing the Right to Development: Round Table of Authors

4 December 2013, 9 a.m. – 12.30 p.m., UNOG Library Events Room B-135, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

This Author Roundtable preceded an official book launch by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, at the same day. The book features ten essays in commemoration of 25 years of the United Nations Declaration of the Right to Development.

[Program](#) [Webcast](#)

2nd UN Forum on Business and Human Rights

02 to 04 December 2013, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

The [Forum](#) was established by the Human Rights Council and is under the guidance of the [UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights](#). It provides a global platform for the promotion and implementation of the [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#). These Principles, unanimously endorsed in 2011 by the Council,

are the first globally accepted standards on the responsibilities of States and businesses for preventing and addressing business-related human rights abuse.

FES Geneva supported 25 civil society activists from the Global South to attend the Forum.

[Program](#)

“Protect, Respect and Remedy” in the Field of ESC and Labour Rights
27 November 2013, 6.15pm to 10pm, Restaurant Vieux Bois, Geneva, Switzerland

The Roundtable Meeting of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, with special participation of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, addressed the respective roles and approaches at the ILO and the UN in the field of business and human rights. The discussions took place against the background of the opportunities raised and challenges faced by the respective Committees and the Working Group in this context as well as the growing awareness and calling-in of States obligations related to the impact of the corporate sector on the implementation of economic and social rights.

[Information and Program](#) [UN Guiding Principles](#)

The Optional Protocol of the Social Pact
18 November 2013, 6.30pm - 8pm, Villa Moynier, Geneva, Switzerland

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Social Pact) has been strengthened by the Optional Protocol which was put into force in May 2013. A panel discussion took place to evaluate this new instrument and to launch the respective *Geneva Academy In-Brief* booklet.

[Information](#) [Academy In-Brief no. 2](#)

Arabic Speaking Training Course on International Human Rights Mechanisms
11 to 15 November 2013, Geneva

In cooperation with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the NGO Geneva Institute for Human Rights, FES Geneva offered this advanced training week to selected participants from 12 Arabic countries. Topics included in-depth information on the Geneva-based human rights system, meetings with officials and NGOs and participation at a session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

[Program](#) [List of Participants](#)

**The Impact of Labour Migration Policies on Migrants' Socio-Economic Welfare:
Improving Practice in Asia and Europe**

08 to 09 November 2013, Château de Bossey, Geneva, Switzerland

Recent trends in migration reinforce the need for effective policies to address specifically the socio-economic welfare of migrants.

The workshop, jointly organized by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), addressed the following topics: Essential policies in support of fair and equitable migration systems; reducing migration risks and providing migrants access to protection; and integration of migrants.

[Information](#)

Bangladesh 2013: the rising demand for labour standards

30 October 2013, ILO, Room IX, Geneva, Switzerland

“Employers and governments seek ever new ways and means of gaining competitive advantages by circumventing established international labour norms” states Werner Sengenberger in his new publication *“The International Labour Organization: Goals, Functions and Political Impact”* launched at this event.

The ILO has a massive impact on the current situation in Bangladesh as exemplified by the joint EU and Bangladesh “Sustainability agreement,” which was signed in July 2013, as well as in the accord on “Building and Fire Safety” signed by fashion retailers and trade unions in May 2013. The status quo was discussed by:

- Gilbert Hougbo, Deputy Director-General, ILO
- Jenny Holdcroft, Policy Director, IndustriAll Global Union
- Maria-Helena André, Director, Bureau for Workers' Activities at the ILO
- Werner Sengenberger, former Director, Employment and Strategy Department, ILO

[Information](#)

[Statement by Gilbert Hougbo, Deputy Director of the ILO](#)

[“The International Labour Organization” by Werner Sengenberger](#)

Membership in the WTO: Challenges, Risks and Potentials for Russia and Neighboring Countries

22 to 25 October 2013, Geneva, Switzerland

After long years of negotiations for accession, Russia became member of the WTO in August 2012. 12 journalists from Russia as well as from Kazakhstan were invited to get first-hand information about the multilateral trading system - inside and outside the World Trade Organization.

[Program](#)

[List of Participants](#)

The Human Rights Council: A Way to Justice?

07 to 08 October 2013, Château de Bossey, Switzerland

In cooperation with the German Institute for Human Rights and the German Forum Human Rights, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung organized, as in the previous years, a conference on the Human Rights Council, its developments and tendencies as well as its potential use and benefits for non-state actors. This year's topics included the tendency of constraining civil society space and increasing pressure on NGOs and the role of NGOs to strengthen human rights in the construction of a Post-2015 Development Agenda.

[Program](#) [List of Participants](#)

How to Leverage E-Commerce for Trade Development in the ACP Countries

01 October 2013, 3.00 – 5.00 pm, Room W at WTO, Geneva, Switzerland

E-commerce is not only an integral part of today's business. Indeed, e-commerce is business. However, in the Pacific, Caribbean and in Africa e-commerce exists to a low extent. Thus, ITC, ACP Geneva Office and FES Geneva organized a session to provide firsthand experience from small business practitioners located in the ACP regions. It focused on how:

- (1) to lift barriers to the development of e-commerce,
- (2) to encourage citizens and companies of the ACP region to become users of e-commerce solutions,
- (3) to develop partnerships for technical assistance in the area of e-commerce.

[Information on the session](#) [Information on the WTO Public Forum](#)

[Program](#) [Report](#)

Border Carbon Adjustment: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know (and more)

27 September 2013, Room C at CCV, Geneva, Switzerland

The purpose of this workshop jointly organized by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and FES Geneva Office was clear: What is BCA and what does it mean for trade policy? International experts gave concrete answers to these relevant questions:

Is leakage really an issue? If so, in what specific cases, and to what extent? Could an instrument like BCA actually address leakage? What policy alternatives are available for addressing leakage? What are their strengths and weaknesses relative to BCA? Is it possible to do BCA both legally and effectively? If so, would it be advisable?

This workshop was open for delegates, experts and NGOs.

[Program](#) [Information](#)

Side Event to the 24th Session of the Human Rights Council: “UPR - Do NGO Recommendations Matter?”

17 September 2013, 2.00 – 4.00 pm, Room XXIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

NGO submissions are an integral part of the UPR. In many countries, civil society is picking up this new instrument of participation, hoping to benefit from the UN human rights system for the protection and promotion of their rights. The paper discussed at this meeting examined the extent to which state recommendations made in the UPR reflect draft recommendations proposed by NGOs. It finds that state recommendations significantly encompass NGO recommendations: two-thirds of NGO recommendations are reflected in state recommendations.

[Information](#) [Download Publication](#)

Consultation on Fiscal Policy, Poverty, and Human Rights

16 to 17 September 2013, Geneva, Switzerland

The recent financial and economic crisis, and measures to respond to it, have created severe fiscal shortfalls that highlight the inequitable impacts of such measures, especially on the poorest and most vulnerable. In June 2014, at the 26th session of the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona, will submit a report concerning fiscal policy and the human rights of persons living in poverty.

This consultation brought together about 25 experts working on issues related to fiscal policy, finance, and human rights to share their experience and knowledge, and to contribute to the preparation of the report.

[Report](#) [List of Participants](#)

24th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

09 to 27 September 2013, Geneva, Switzerland

[Report](#)

PNND – MPI – FES Roundtable seminar for OEWG governments

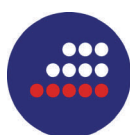
24 August 2013, Geneva, Switzerland

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) – the principal multilateral disarmament negotiating body based in Geneva – has been blocked from undertaking any substantive work for 17 years – owing to the capacity of any one member state to veto discussions, deliberations, decisions and negotiations. In a new attempt to unlock the CD, the UN General Assembly established an Open Ended Working Group (OEWG), to “take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.” The round-table

seminar will examine key developments and proposals of the OEWG sessions to-date, encourage implementation of promising proposals/decisions, and offer additional proposals for the OEWG, particularly in shaping the report of OEWG to the UN General Assembly and providing the basis for next steps.

[Program](#) [Report](#)

//International Agenda



Global Coalition for
SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS

The Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors was created in summer 2012 and consists today of 74 civil society and trade union organizations from all parts of the world. In late November 2013, the Core Team of the Coalition – 17 organizations – convened in Berlin to discuss future activities. Among those, the Core Team is currently drafting a statement to ensure Social Protection Floors as development goal. This statement will be available in February 2014.

You would like to join the Coalition? Please click [here](#).

[Download the list of all current Coalition members](#)

[Further information](#)

25th session of the UN Human Rights Council **3 to 28 March 2014, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Room XX**

Reports to be discussed at this session will include those of the Rapporteurs on Environment, Food, Foreign Debt, Freedom of Religion, Human Rights Defenders among others. FES Geneva will report on the session and engage actively with Side Events on relevant topics.

[Further Information](#)

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The Universal Periodic Review: Do Civil Society-Suggested Recommendations Matter?

Edward McMahon et al.; November 2013

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