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FES GENEVA NEWSLETTER

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 of upcoming events and developments within the Geneva-based international organisations.

Das Genfer Büro der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES Genf) freut sich, Ihnen unseren jüngsten Newsletter vorzustellen. Dieser enthält Informationen über unsere Veranstaltungen und Neuerscheinungen sowie anstehende Veranstaltungen und Ereignisse innerhalb der Genfer Internationalen Organisationen.

[Upcoming Events](#) | [Recent Events](#) | [International Agenda](#) | [Publikations](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Just Contracts - Investment into a Sustainable Future

20 April, Berlin, Germany

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is organizing in cooperation with the German UN Association (DGVN) a conference and public debate on investment and human rights. This discussion will be held in the bigger framework of the German debate about the establishment of a “National Action Plan” for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and be part of a week of

events at FES headquarters in Berlin, Germany, on “JUSTAINABILITY – pathways into social and ecological societies.”

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[Read More about Business and Human Rights](#)

FES-WTO Incoming for Journalists from French speaking Africa

04 - 08 May 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

What exactly is the World Trade Organization and what is it not? How does the multilateral trading system function? What are the most current developments at the WTO? What can be expected from the next WTO Ministerial Conference end of this year in Nairobi? Which other international organizations based in Geneva are involved in trade policy? And how do non-governmental organizations and trade unions assess developments in and around trade policy? These and other questions will be dealt with during an intense week of information for journalists from French speaking Africa.

Participation is by invitation only.

Training Course on Human Rights for NHRIs

04 - 08 May 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

The training, developed especially for staff of National Human Rights Institutions world-wide, will support participants in

- Expanding their knowledge of the functioning of UN human rights mechanisms;
- Identifying concrete opportunities for NHRIs' effective engagement;
- Participating in sessions of UN human rights mechanisms;
- Identifying practical ways of effective engagement with the UN mechanisms, such as report writing and following up;

- Engaging with colleagues from the OHCHR and NGOs as well as with states; and
- Exchanging experiences and best practices with peer NHRIs participating in the training

The application and selection process for this training are closed!

Public UPR Side event on Workers' Rights in Panama and Honduras

07 May 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

On 6 and 8 May, Panama and Honduras will undergo their second UPR review. FES supported civil society actors in both countries in submitting reports to the review, in both cases focusing on workers' rights. The joint side event will discuss the submissions as well as the human rights performances of both governments.

Contribution of Intellectual Property to facilitating the transfer of environmentally rational technology

12 May 2015, France

The issue of intellectual property rights and the debate over technological cooperation is becoming a fundamental aspect of how best to adapt to and combat the harmful effects of climate change, particularly for developing countries. This workshop aims to create a space to freely exchange points of view from sector's specialists with delegates from different developing countries.

Participation is by invitation only.

Transnational Business, Human Rights and Labor Standards

08 – 12 June 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

During the ILC, specialists of FES offices and representatives from partner organizations from Europe and Northamerica will get an insight on the work of

various Geneva based institutions. Topics will include the right to strike, the social protection floor, trade and trade negotiations as well as international investment policy and tax justice.

Participation is by invitation only.

Informal trade union Meeting on CESCR General Comment on “Rights At Work”

June 2015 (date tbc)

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights published a draft of their upcoming General Comment on ICESCR Article 7 on “just and fair conditions at work,” calling for comments and submissions by all interested stakeholders. To facilitate input by trade unions, FES Geneva offers this informal dialog with Committee Members ahead of the official “Day of General Discussion” on the issue.

Participation by invitation only.

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RECENT EVENTS

Multistakeholder expert workshop on a potential Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) of the Continental Free Trade Area in Africa

16 - 17 April 2015, Addis-Abeba, Ethiopia

This workshop aimed at exploring possible ways to conduct a human rights impact assessment (HRIA) of the Continental Free Trade Area Agreement in Africa (CFTA) on which negotiations will begin later this year. The meeting featured a validation and discussion of an issues paper being prepared by OHCHR and elaboration of future steps in the HRIA process. It was organized jointly by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) offices in Geneva and Ethiopia.



E-Commerce for developing countries

13 April 2015, Domaine de Penthes, Geneva, Switzerland

Technology has changed the world of business tremendously during the past at least two decades. E-commerce does not stand for something exotic. E-commerce is an important part of business nowadays. However, this is not the world of many businesses in developing countries; especially not for their SMEs. The technological infrastructure has not yet been sufficiently developed in many countries but other obstacles such as legal requirements, IT knowhow, models on how to ensure that rural and remote areas can actively participate, and how domestic economies can benefit, continue to exist.

This conference focused on the obstacles and provided clear examples on how developing countries can promote e-commerce to benefit their domestic economic development.



Conference on legal accountability of business for human rights impacts

14 - 15 March 2015, Château de Bossey, Switzerland

The aim of the dialogue was to strengthen NHRIs' capacities to participate effectively in the coming international processes including the development of a legal framework addressing business' human rights responsibilities. During the discussions, the common approach and common goals amongst NHRIs for the current and future processes on business and human rights became apparent – both regarding bilateral cooperation but equally on the involvement in the international process towards the

development of a legally binding framework. The results of the conference will inform a joint ICC / NHRI statement to this process.



Ensuring the Right to Food through Human Rights Impact Assessments - Side Event to the 28th session of the Human Rights Council

11 March 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

At this expert round-table, we presented and discussed the results of the Human Rights Impact

Assessment **(HRIA)-study “Owning seeds, accessing food”**. Following recent experiences in implementing HRIA in practice, the panelists discussed the strengths and shortcomings of the HRIA approach and identified challenges for future HRIAs. The discussion also focused on the potential role of the UN human rights system in strengthening HRIAs and in supporting its use in public policy making.



NGO coordination meetings on the UNFCCC ADP negotiations

06 and 27 February, Geneva, Switzerland

FES and Earthjustice and CIEL, as initiators of the GeCCco (Geneva Climate Change

concertation group) organized a coordination meeting at the occasion of the Geneva session of the UNFCCC ADP negotiations taking place from 8-13 February. The first meeting helped to prepare the NGO communities focused on the HRC and the UNFCCC respectively prior to the UNFCCC session. A meeting summing up the session also discussed the “Geneva Pledge” initiated by Costa Rica at this occasion, committing governments to more coherence in their climate and human rights policies.

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LDC Workshop on the Elaboration of the “Work Programme”

30 January 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

The next WTO Ministerial Conference will be held end of this year in Nairobi, Kenya. There is not much time left to define how to proceed with the remaining issues of the Doha Development Agenda. LDCs have to actively participate in the definition of the so-called Work Program to ensure that their concerns are addressed. Some of the major bottlenecks in these negotiations concern the relationships between emerging and OECD countries. But LDCs have to actively participate in order to not suffer from collateral damage of the solutions found or that those issues marginalize their legitimate interests. The overall objective of this workshop organized jointly by Ideas Centre and FES Geneva is to brainstorm on what essential elements may form part of the Work Program being elaborated by July 2015 and how LDCs could influence the negotiations to promote their interests.

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More Events:

Membership in the WTO: Challenges, risks and potentials for economic development of Russia

24 - 27 March 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

Social Protection Floors and Human Rights

06 March 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

Ensuring the Right to Food through Human Rights Impact Assessments -

Side Event to the 28th session of the Human Rights Council

11 March 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

Brainstorming Session on Business and Human Rights - Access to Justice and Extraterritorial Obligations

26 February 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

UN Headquarters: 2015 NPT Review Conference

27 April - 22 May, New York

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology. The NPT represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. The 2015 Review Conference is expected to consider a number of key issues, including: universality of the Treaty; nuclear disarmament; nuclear non-proliferation; measures to advance the peaceful use of nuclear energy, safety and security; regional disarmament and non-proliferation; implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East; measures to address withdrawal from the Treaty; measures to further strengthen the review process; and ways to promote engagement with civil society in strengthening NPT norms and in promoting disarmament education.

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104th Session of the International Labour Conference

01 - 12 June 2015

The “World parliament of labour” will discuss amongst standing items “The

transition from the informal to the formal economy”, “Small and medium-sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation” and the “strategic objective of social protection (labour protection)”.

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29th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

15 June – 3 July, Geneva, Switzerland

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Fifth Global Review of Aid for Trade

“Reducing Trade Costs for Inclusive, Sustainable Growth”

30 June – 2 July 2015, WTO, Geneva, Switzerland

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1st session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Business and Human Rights

06 - 10 July, Geneva, Switzerland

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PUBLICATIONS

Goals for the Rich: Indispensable for a Universal Post-2015 Agenda - Discussion Paper

Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives, March 2015

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Fighting Climate Change: The Contribution of the Human Rights Council

Yves Lador, February 2015

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Breathing Life into the List: Practical Suggestions for the Negotiators of the Environmental Goods Agreement

Aaron Cosbey, January 2015

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