



No. 3 | May, 2015

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

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The UN Secretary-General serves as the organization's top diplomat as well as its chief administrative officer. In 2016, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon's mandate will end. His successor will face diverse challenges not only with regards to the constantly changing security situation in the world, but also when it comes to necessary reforms to make the UN "fit for purpose".

FES New York will continue to contribute to an open exchange to realize necessary reforms and improve transparency within the UN. For instance, on April 29, FES New York hosted a discussion with UN diplomats and experts from civil society titled: "The UN at 70: Security Council Reform and the Wider UN Reform Agenda".

As this newsbrief is sent out, nuclear disarmament diplomats and experts meet in New York for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). To support the Review Conference, on May 4 the FES co-hosted an event with the Peace Research institute Frankfurt/ Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung and the Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East, to discuss concrete approaches towards a cooperative security architecture in the Middle East. Multilateral cooperation to improve the international security situation is also a main topic at the upcoming event: "Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: An Exchange between German Parliamentarians and International Civil Society in Support of a Successful NPT Review" hosted by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN and FES New York.

Between May 11 and 13, FES New York and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) will bring together trade union representatives from different regions and their respective Member State representatives. This meeting to discuss the negotiations towards the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and the upcoming Financing for Development Conference in July 2015 will be particularly timely as both processes will set the priorities of the international development policy community for years to come.

I hope this Newsbrief makes for an informative reading. I look forward to receiving your feedback.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Inza".

Michèle Auga
Director
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung - New York Office

Upcoming Event: "Towards a Nuclear-Free-World"

May 12, By invitation only

On occasion of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty -NPT), the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations and FES New York will host a delegation of German parliamentarians.

This informal discussion event will provide an opportunity for a frank exchange between the Bundestag's leading parliamentarians on nuclear disarmament -representatives of government as well as opposition parliamentary groups- and disarmament experts from international civil society organizations.

[Program](#)

Current Event: "Advocacy Seminar for Trade Unions on Post-2015 and Financing for Development"

May 11-13, By invitation only

There will be major agreements taken at the United Nations in the summer of 2015 in the Post-2015 and Financing for Development Processes to set priorities of the international development policy community for years to come. In order to ensure that these agreements take into account trade union priorities on decent work, social protection, global governance, and other elements on sustainable social, economic and environmental development, the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network and FES New York are convening a 3-day set of advocacy events to allow trade union activists from around the world to discuss perspectives on the means of implementation, monitoring and review, and global governance and accountability, and to speak directly with governments negotiating the SDG and FfD outcomes.

[Program](#)

Past Event: "The UN at 70: Security Council Reform and the Wider UN Reform Agenda"

April 29

Whereas the 70th anniversary year of the United Nations provides an opportunity to take stock of the functioning of the various UN bodies, the negotiations on Security Council reforms remain mostly stagnant. Against this background, on April 29, FES New York hosted a discussion on possibilities for the Security Council reform debate to regain momentum. Participating UN Member States diplomats and experts from civil society exchanged views on the Council's extension, but also on procedural reform, such as the propositions to voluntarily curb the Permanent Members (P5) veto power in cases of mass atrocities. Ample room was also given to the P5's role in the selection of the UN Secretary-General and to initiatives, such as the campaign 1for7billion, which want to make this

selection process more transparent and democratic.

[Program](#)

[1for7billion campaign](#)

Past Event: "Mining Communities in the DRC: New Challenges and Opportunities for Sanctions"

March 31 - April 1

This international conference was intended to build bridges between local specialists in natural resource and community issues from the Eastern DRC and those who need to respond with policies, donor programs, corporate community engagement and institutional investors. Such discussions are especially timely because, particularly in Africa, the current concepts designed to prevent or halt natural resource exploitation as funding sources for war and insurgencies must be updated.

A recently concluded multi-year study on the exploitation and trade of Congolese gold (SARWatch) demonstrates that regardless how far behind a region has left the conflict stage, local communities barely benefit from any peace dividends. At the conference, NGO representatives from the Eastern DRC discussed with UN diplomats, secretariat officials and other experts some practical proposal for overcoming these challenges.

[Program and links to individual presentations](#)

[SARWatch Report](#)

[Keynote by H.E. Ambassador Gata Mavita wa Lufuta of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations](#)

Past Event: "Power of Protest: Linking politics and protest from the local to the global"

March 26

Calls for real democracy are the greatest singular demand of protests around the world. Calls for economic justice-like good jobs, better labor conditions, progressive taxing and spending on social services, tackling inequality, and affordable food, water, housing, healthcare and education-represent a cluster of the most widely held grievances worldwide. As more people around the world express their grievances and aspirations in the streets, activists motivated by local struggles are scaling up local issues for global debates. This "fishbowl" dialog, facilitated by Nermeen Shaikh, Producer and Weekly Co-Host of Democracy Now!, brought together activists from around the world to talk about how to better link struggles for social justice and to discuss what role the media can play.

[Program](#)

[Full World Social Forum Program](#)

Past Event: Expert Global Commission Responds To One-Sided Tax Debate

March 18-19

Responding to widespread anger about corporate tax avoidance and its impact on inequality and poverty, as well as to concerns that current tax reform processes are inadequate, a new nonpartisan body - the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT) - has been established to propose reforms from the perspective of the public interest. The inaugural meeting of the Commission took place in New York on March 18-19, 2015. The Commission's Chair, former UN Under-Secretary-General José Antonio Ocampo, says: "The world has changed but the international tax system has not. Corporations play governments against each other, for example, in encouraging race-to-the-bottom tax incentives, and the public loses out. There are billions of dollars at stake. This Commission will shed light on where the rules of the game, and the institutions that govern them, need to change."

[Program](#)

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