



# SOCIAL WATCH E-NEWSLETTER

Issue 15 - December 03, 2010

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## [Paraguay: national SW coalition demands growth follows social justice](#)

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## [World Social Forum 2011: the road to Dakar](#)

The International Council of the World Social Forum met in Dakar and discussed the organization and program of the next WSF that takes place in Senegal, 6-11 February 2011. Social Watch will organize several activities including the presentation of the 2010 Report in French and Arabic. [Learn more on how to participate in the WSF.](#)

## [Gender equality and trade: coordinating compliance between regimes](#)

The conflict between international trade rules and both human and gender equality rights is examined in the latest policy brief of the North-South Institute of Canada. Women's economic empowerment is key to alleviating world poverty, says the report, titled "Gender equality and trade: coordinating compliance between regimes". The document examines the challenges in making global trade rules and international human rights more mutually reinforcing.

## [Social Watch at the European Development Days](#)

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STRUCTURING DIALOGUE: COOPERATION OF NON STATE ACTORS AND GOVERNMENT ACTORS FOR INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MEETING ROOM 204

MONDAY 6 DECEMBER, 13.00 > 15.00

> Social Watch, Eurostep, Europe External Policy Advisors, European Commission

INTRODUCTION

Aristotelis Bouratsis, Director, Thematic Operations, EuropeAid Cooperation Office, European Commission

SOUTH - SOUTH COOPERATION FOR INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Marianella Feoli, General Manager,  
Fundecooperación para el Desarrollo Sostenible,  
Costa Rica  
Mathias K. Pofagi, Director, Ministry of Planning,  
Benin

#### COOPERATION ON CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING OF GOVERNMENTS: PRESENTING THE METHODOLOGY OF SOCIAL WATCH

Roberto Bissio, Coordinator, Social Watch  
Simon Stocker, Director, Eurostep

#### CLOSING REMARKS

Dr Mirjam van Reisen, Director, Europe External Policy Advisors

#### **Background on the EDD:**

Organised by the European Commission and the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the European Development Days is the leading European forum where the questions and issues about international development cooperation are debated.

In bringing together the global development community, EDD is an opportunity for key development actors to share and develop ideas and debate the EU's policies for tackling poverty worldwide. The event, organised jointly by the European Commission and the Belgian Presidency of the European Union, will bring together Heads of State, representatives of national governments, Members of the European Parliament, European development finance institutions, key civil society representatives, NGOs, as well as Business Europe and the International Finance Corporation, to name but a few.

More information on the Agenda of the European Development Days here:

[http://eudevdays.eu/download/EDD\\_2010\\_Full\\_Draft\\_Programme.pdf](http://eudevdays.eu/download/EDD_2010_Full_Draft_Programme.pdf)

#### [Paraguay: national SW coalition demands growth follows social justice](#)

*Decidamos*, the Campaign for Citizen Voices, presented the Paraguayan chapter of the Social Watch Report 2010 on December 1st in Asunción. Although the current Government has shown progress regarding social development programmes, there is still much to be done to achieve a fairer distribution of wealth in the country says the report.

The report argues that thanks to increased income from taxation and plans for development assistance, there are now more resources to meet the needs of the people, invest in infrastructure and still comply with debt commitments. "The Government should also revise the existing development model in order to bring about a fairer distribution of wealth and provide better protection for vulnerable population sectors. To do this, the State will have to coordinate its efforts with organizations from all sectors of society" says the report.

The civil society organizations that participated in the report acknowledge that the current Fernando Lugo administration (2008-2013) has undertaken to work in three broad areas: social and human development, a more productive economy and institutional policy. This plan is structured in three phases: the period of crisis (which means starting from a low position), national adjustment to cope with the crisis, and the 2013 legacy, and it is made up of projects that will mostly be consolidated in 2011, which is also the bicentennial of the country's independence.

"However, this is itself is not enough, and there will have to be greater and more effective coordination not only between government and donors, but also and particularly between government and civil society actors" concludes the national report.

Read the Paraguay Social Watch Report 2010 in full: <http://www.socialwatch.org/node/12101>

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One year after the Copenhagen conference that ended in chaos, it's Mexico's turn to host this year's big international climate gathering.

Expectations are low this time around. That's probably both good and bad.

The conference last year had been so hyped up beforehand and with so much hopes linked to it that the lack of a binding agreement at the end of it became a near-disaster.

Few expect this year's meeting at the seaside resort of Cancun to produce anything significant in commitments, either to cut Greenhouse Gas emissions or to provide funds to developing countries.

Thus, if Cancun ends as a non-event, it won't be taken as a catastrophe.

On the other hand, this lowering of expectations indicates how low climate change has sunk in just a year in the world's political agenda.

And that is bad indeed, because the climate problem has got even worse.

This year is already rivalling 1998 as the hottest since records were kept.

And there have been so many natural disasters in 2010; some of them like the catastrophic flooding in Pakistan, are linked to climate change.

Other events, especially the spread of the financial crisis to Western Europe and the persistent high unemployment rate in the United States despite economic growth, have taken over the attention of the politicians and public in the developed countries.

Also, the chances of getting a global climate change agreement appear much more dim.

And when a problem seems intractable, political leaders tend to lose interest because like other people they don't like to be associated with failure.

The problems facing the Cancun conference of the UN Climate Change Convention are many and they seem intractable.

The main problem is the inability of the US administration to make any meaningful commitment to cut its country's emissions to an adequate extent because Congress is likely to reject a comprehensive climate bill.

This makes the other developed countries reluctant to firm up their own commitments.

Many of them are still dragging their feet in saying how much they should cut their emissions, individually and as a group, in the Kyoto Protocol's second period that is to start in 2013.

Worse, Russia and Japan have stated that they do not want to continue with the Kyoto Protocol because the US is not a member. Australia, New Zealand and Canada have also been reluctant to commit to Kyoto's second period.

That leaves the European Union, which prefers to shift to a new system, too, but is open to remaining in Kyoto if others do.

Only Norway has said firmly it wants a second Kyoto period.

The death of the Kyoto Protocol, under which the developed countries except the US have legally-binding targets to cut their emissions, is something the developing countries cannot accept.

They want the developed countries to cut their emissions as a group by more than 40% by 2020 (compared to 1990), and for each country to do an adequate cut, under the Kyoto Protocol.

They are in despair because most of the developed countries want to join the US in a voluntary pledging system to replace the legally-binding Kyoto Protocol.

Each country would not have to do what the science says is needed, it would just pledge what it feels it can or should.

Top climate scientists in a new UN Environment Programme report shows how disastrously off-mark such a voluntary system can be.

Instead of cutting their emissions by at least 25% to 40% below 1990 levels in 2020 as required, the developed countries will actually increase their emission by 6% in a bad scenario and will only cut by 16% in the good scenario.

This is based on the pledges that they have made.

The major turn-around in the attitude of most developed countries towards their own emission reduction will be the hardest problem to resolve in Cancun.

The other contentious issue will be the proposed new obligations to be placed on developing countries on the insistence of the developed countries.

These are obligations to cut the growth of their emissions from "business as usual", and to produce reports once in two years on their emissions and on their emission-reduction plans and actions.

The reports will be subjected to international verification or analysis and consultation.

Developing countries are saying they are willing to do more and to give more reports, but they need funds and new technology to do this. Moreover, why should they take on more stringent obligations when the developed countries want to downgrade their own commitments?

The possible bright spot in Cancun could be a decision to create a new climate fund under the Climate Convention.

This would be a very limited gain, as the details of the fund (including its governance and the amounts it will have) are to be worked out later.

After all, it would be easy to set up a fund if there is no clear commitment to put substantial money in it.

But, Cancun may even be deprived of such a small result.

The US has made clear most recently through its special climate envoy Todd Stern, that there cannot be an "early harvest" in Cancun such as setting up a fund.

For the US to agree to that, there must be a Cancun agreement on mitigation, in which developing countries agree to the stringent obligations on reporting and international analysis, and in which developed countries only undertake a system of voluntary pledges.

At Cancun, there will be an appeal to the US to allow the fund to be set up, and not to tie this to conditions that its demands in mitigation will be met.

"Don't take the funds that can get actions going in the developing world as "hostage" or conditional on you getting your way in other areas of the negotiations."

This call will most likely be made many times in the next two weeks in Cancun.

Source: [The Star](#)

### [World Social Forum 2011: the road to Dakar](#)

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#### **THE FORUM IN AFRICA**

The preparation of the WSF in Dakar, much more than what happened in Nairobi, is involving many different African organizations and movements - diverse both geographically and socio-political. Over the past two years many African countries have held social forums in their territory.

In the changing international scenario, the South-South relations between Africa, Latin America and Asia is the focus of the African Committee. Several forums were held in the Middle East, including the one on Education in Palestine.

Dakar will therefore be a good opportunity to initiate or strengthen links and relationships with a large part of global civil society, to promote or strengthen networks and to launch campaigns and international actions.

## **IN DAKAR**

The Forum will be held at the University of Dakar. Most of the campus will be used and some tents will be built in open spaces.

The logistical details, as well as the services that the Organizing Committee is preparing for the Forum should be available soon on the WSF2011 website.

## **THE PROGRAM**

4-5 February

In these days before the Forum there will be several initiatives linked to Forum taking place:

- Assembly of the World Charter of Migrants, to be held on the island of Gore (twenty minutes by ferry from Dakar), the symbol of the African slave trade
- Forum of Local Authorities and the Forum of Parliamentarians
- Forum on Science and Democracy

6 February

Arrival of several Caravans of Forum participants from different parts of Africa, which will mobilize people along the way, visiting many towns

- Opening March

7 February

Africa and Diaspora Day

The day will be dedicated to initiatives and events on the resistance of the African diaspora, ancient and "modern"

8-9 February

Days of self-organized activities

In these two days the classic social forum activities registered from different organizations (seminars, meetings, cultural events) will take place, along the 12 main axes of the Forum

10-11 February

In session for action.

Assemblies will be registered by the participants: the difference with the first two days is that the assemblies are to promote convergence of different type of actions (campaigns, demonstrations, discussion networks, alliances) connecting organizations.

11 February afternoon

Final assembly of the Forum, where the various assemblies will promote their agendas of action agreed at meetings in the days before

12-13 February

WSF International Council - initial evaluation of the Forum and decide next steps.

## **DAKAR EXPANDED**

It will also be possible to register the activities for the Dakar Forum that can be held anywhere in the world in the days of the Forum.

These activities are registered in a specific form and will be advertised in the program and can, if they wish, establish a direct connection via the Internet (video and audio conferences) with the Forum. Groups to help organize such events are already in place here [see](#)

All organizations are encouraged to support in any way possible, the journey of African migrants to their participation in the Forum.

More information at: [www.fsm2011.org](http://www.fsm2011.org)

## **[Gender equality and trade: coordinating compliance between regimes](#)**

Women's economic empowerment is key to alleviating world poverty. Yet, international trade rules which seek to promote economic growth often conflict with both human and gender equality rights. The North-South Institute's latest policy brief "Gender equality and trade: coordinating compliance between regimes" examines this disconnect and the

challenges in making global trade rules and international human rights more mutually reinforcing. International trade agreements, widely viewed as a tool to promote economic growth, can also be a double-edged sword. While trade treaties generate economic winners and have the potential to greatly enhance the incomes of those on the lower end of the economic scale, they also create losers — and a disproportionate number are women, 70 per cent of the world's poor.

When trade arrangements further marginalize women, who typically work in at-risk economic sectors or are less able to change jobs to adapt to new economic realities, everyone loses. It is only when everyone can participate actively in the economy that long lasting gains are possible.

In simple terms, when more women are in the workforce, poverty is reduced. More broadly, taking human rights into account in trade agreements can in the long run benefit more people and produce more sustainable growth.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) estimates that nearly 400 preferential trade agreements have been negotiated since the world's leading trading nations established its predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in 1948. No matter that global trade talks have stalled; around the world, a rush of bilateral and regional trade negotiations has filled the void.

The accelerated pace at which bilateral and regional trade agreements have been negotiated in recent years as well as their sometimes broader coverage highlight a glaring gap in global governance: trade rules too often clash with international human rights obligations, including gender equality rights. Not only do such inconsistencies challenge the advancement of human rights, they also undermine the global welfare benefits that many trade agreements seek to bring about. The challenge for policy makers and governments is to make global trade rules and international human rights obligations more mutually reinforcing.

To examine the intersection between trade and gender equality rights, The North-South Institute, in collaboration with the University of British Columbia's Asia Pacific Dispute Resolution Project and the University of Ottawa's Human Rights Research and Education Centre and School of International Development and Global Studies, has organized the conference Coordinating Compliance between Gender

#### Key points

- Trade rules can conflict with international human rights obligations, including gender equality rights.
- The governance gap between trade rules and human rights obligations must be closed to maximize the global welfare benefits of trade.
- Policy makers and governments must act to ensure that trade and human rights regimes are complementary and coherent. This could begin at the trade negotiating table

See the full report (PDF): [http://www.nsi-ins.ca/english/pdf/Trade&Gender\\_final.pdf](http://www.nsi-ins.ca/english/pdf/Trade&Gender_final.pdf)

SOCIAL WATCH IS AN INTERNATIONAL NGO WATCHDOG NETWORK MONITORING POVERTY ERADICATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

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