

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

**Social Watch >>**

Social Watch E-Newsletter

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**SW EVENTS CALENDAR**

**August 2009**

- **24-26 August: Social Watch Latin America Capacity-Building Workshop, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

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**LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT**



**Which Fund Do You Want?**

by Roberto Bissio

Over the last few decades, the International Monetary Fund has been portrayed in Latin American

public opinion as a blood-sucking vampire, a saviour of bankrupt countries, and even a political ally of last resort without whom a presidential candidate can be seen as unduly risky for international investors. In the press, in Parliaments, and in cafes, discussions are held on whether or not the debt with the institution should be paid, if its conditionalities should be met, and during the last weeks, if the purchase of IMF bonds by Brazilian President Lula da Silva is a treasonous unprincipled act or if it is just a good way to branch away from US Treasury Bonds.

Technical or political, friendly or heated, these debates have explored all the aspects of the tumultuous relationship between the IMF and Latin America, except for one: What Fund do we want? How should we reform the Fund, if we could? This is the precise question that the IMF has formulated to a group of academics, unionists, and NGO activists, who have been convened to participate in an off-the-record, experimental but potentially transforming dialogue with the institution.

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**SPOTLIGHT ON..... SW National Coalition**

**Spotlight On.... Social Watch Morocco**

This month, "Spotlight On..." will turn its attention to the Middle East, to take a look at the experience of the Social Watch coalition in Morocco, one of the most broad-based and active groups of Watchers in the Maghreb region, who will be hosting this year's regional capacity building workshop in October.

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**GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SOCIAL WATCH NEWS**

**Towards a People-Centered Financial System: Social Watch at the UN Conference on the Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impacts on Development**

Last June, for the first time, all of the world's countries were able to participate in the search for a global solution to the current global crisis at the Conference summoned by the President of the 63rd General Assembly of the United Nations. Civil society in general and Social

**EYE ON NEW RESOURCES**

**Call for nominations – The Human Rights Defenders Tulip Award**

Established in 2008, the Human Rights Defenders Tulip Award is an initiative of the Dutch government. It is awarded to acknowledge "persons who have shown exceptional moral courage in protecting and promoting the rights of fellow human beings". Nominees can be individuals (not organizations) from any country, whose daily activity is to promote or protect human rights using peaceful means. They should be human rights defenders who have

Watch in particular played a key role in drawing public attention to this Conference. There have been positive outcomes, such the ECOSOC meeting in Geneva making significant advances with respect to the follow-up mechanisms to the Conference, but more decisive action must be sustained in order to implement lasting and just solutions for the current economic meltdown.

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### **Social Watch Seminar in Montevideo Offers Local-Global Analysis of the Crisis**

On a chilly winter evening in Montevideo in July, Social Watch partnered with a group of like-minded Uruguayan NGOs to host a seminar to discuss the implications of the global financial economic and regional crisis on a local and regional level. Despite the bitter cold, civil society activists and students from the Social Sciences Department of the Universidad de la Republica came together to add their opinions to the debate on what measures should be taken to ensure that the crisis does not reverse the social gains made by Uruguay's center-left government in recent years.

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### **Feminists' resistance to the coup d'état in Honduras**

The coup has been a blow to the Honduran social organizations. The de facto Government's repression has resulted in deaths, hundreds of injured and displaced people, and the violation of fundamental rights. With the absence of the rule of law, the violence against the women has increased, catalysed by the patriarchal culture that considers the feminine body as its property. In this framework, Feminists in Resistance – a coordination of women's organizations, and organized and independent feminists – has emerged, focusing its work on defending and highlighting the rights and struggles of women with messages such as "Neither

faced or be at risk of facing negative consequences because of their work. They must be individuals who could benefit from the recognition and visibility associated with winning the prize. The winner of the award is chosen by an independent jury and receives an individual cash award of EUR 10,000 plus the opportunity to submit a project proposal to the value of up to EUR 100,000, to be used to intensify his or her human rights work.

For further information please contact Chris Collier at the Secretariat of the Human Rights Defenders Tulip by e-mail ([secretariat@humanrightstulip.org](mailto:secretariat@humanrightstulip.org)) or telephone (

 +31-6-34936026 ) [More details.](#)

### ***mobilisr.org* Mobiles for mobilization in Africa**

*Mobilisr* is an attempt to harness the power of mobile phone technology and make it easily available to civil society, a tool to use mobile phones to facilitate the communication between citizens and organizations. In a continent where internet connection is not widely disseminated but the mobile phone network is growing faster than in any other place in the world, *mobilisr* can be a key tool for those working for social change. *Mobilisr* is designed to increase access to information in different sectors as also to facilitate two way communication between citizens and service providers or organizations. Through this tool NGOs can easily plan and manage different ways of communication over any mobile channel.

*Mobilisr* is result of the work of a consortium of companies, led by Cell-Life and Praekelt Foundation, in order to build an open source enterprise class mobile messaging platform. For more information, [see](#).

### ***Report on the Least Developed Countries 2009***

UNCTAD has recently released a report with recommendations for the Least Developed Countries, with special attention on how to face the current financial crisis. The report recommends that the governments of the world's 49 poorest countries should strive to increase public investment not only in response to the global crisis but as a long-term strategy for stable economic growth. Significant stimulus measures have been

blows to democracy nor blows to women”.

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taken by governments in developed countries in response to the financial crisis. As the crisis spreads across the globe, many less-wealthy nations lack the resources to take similar corrective action, the report notes. For most LDCs, the worldwide recession is compounding a pre-existing chronic squeeze on credit which has restricted business development and stymied economic diversification. A central claim of the LDC Report 2009, subtitled ***“The State and Development Governance”***, is that managing the crisis and establishing a new path of sustained growth and poverty reduction will require LDCs to adopt more expansionary macroeconomic and financial policies. To read the complete text of the [Report](#).

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