

Strengthen, Don't Weaken, UNCTAD's Role in Global Governance: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Development, Not More Crises

Sunday, April 22, 2012

To: Governments and Negotiators at the UNCTAD XIII in Doha, Qatar

Since the onset of the global financial and economic crises, UNCTAD has played an important role in identifying the key causes of the crises, assisting developing countries in seeking solutions to the impacts of the crises, and advocating for the reform of global economic and finance policies and governance in order to prevent similar crises from recurring. These are all key roles that no other multilateral economic institution has fulfilled from a development perspective. In fact, UNCTAD is well known for having predicted the crisis in advance, a fact that is to be commended, particularly given its paucity of resources compared to institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which failed to do so. This prescience builds on a long history of UNCTAD's contributions to development-oriented policies such as the Generalized System of Preferences, 0.7 percent GNI aid targets, debt cancellation, international commodity agreements, special and differential treatment at the WTO, and policy space, among many others.

Despite these important contributions, throughout the negotiations leading up to UNCTAD XIII, the developed countries have tried to rescind the important mandate of UNCTAD to work on issues of global macroeconomic and finance policies, and particularly to *participate in global governance* on these issues, which are so essential to global prosperity. In addition, the EU and "JUSSCKANNZ" (Japan, the United States, Switzerland, Canada, South Korea, Australia, Norway, New Zealand, and Lichtenstein) have sought to impose a mandate on UNCTAD to push developing countries to adopt investor protection and trade policies in accordance with the corporate interests of developed countries, rather than in the interests of the successful use of trade and investment for the purposes of sustainable and inclusive growth within developing countries themselves.

The outcomes of the UNCTAD XIII conference in Doha, Qatar, April 21-26, 2012, must contribute to the transformations of the global economy that are necessary for true inclusive and sustainable development for all:

1. It is essential that the 2012 UNCTAD Declaration affirms, rather than retreats from, the progress made at the UNCTAD XII in Accra. This includes an agreement on the need for sustainable as well as inclusive growth, as well as the need for UNCTAD to work on the inter-related issues of finance, technology, investment, and sustainable development, among other key issues.
2. The collective policy analysis must recognize the root causes of the global crisis, its impacts, and mandate a role for UNCTAD to continue its excellent economic and finance research and critical analysis, in order to truly assist developing countries in creating solutions to the crises – rather than pushing them to implement more of the same deregulatory trade and investment policies that led to the global crises in the first place.
3. Finally, the role of UNCTAD as an alternative voice to the "Washington Consensus" paradigm – being the only multilateral economic institution focused on development – must be strengthened vis-à-vis the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD, and the G20 in global economic governance decision-making.

In order to accomplish these transformations, we call on developed countries to abandon the pressure on the G77 negotiators, and instead work together with developing countries to ensure a forward-looking mandate for UNCTAD which must, among other issues:

- Specifically recognize the origins, spread, and impacts of the global crises, and mandate a role for UNCTAD which includes assisting developing countries as well as advocacy in the global governance arena in favor of sustainable and inclusive growth;
- Affirm the key role of UNCTAD's research and analysis on macroeconomic and financial issues, including exchange rates and global imbalances, as well as countercyclical fiscal policies that have helped stabilize economies during the global crisis.
- Include analysis that recognizes both the costs as well as opportunities of trade, and directs UNCTAD to assist developing countries in utilizing trade for their development, rather than just advising them to join the WTO and other "free" trade agreements.
- Mandate UNCTAD to determine the contours of a global trade framework that is truly development-oriented, and thus to identify the changes to the existing WTO and ongoing negotiations that are necessary to ensure that governments have the policy space to use trade for sustainable and inclusive development, and to regulate in the public interest.
- Affirm the importance of adequate regulation and supervision of financial markets, particularly with regard to crisis prevention and resolution, and mandate UNCTAD to play an active role in ensuring strong national and global financial regulatory rules.
- Acknowledge the problems of investor protection provisions in trade and investment agreements and mandate a role for UNCTAD in helping developing countries design investment policies that will benefit their sustainable and inclusive growth, as well as advocating for development-oriented best practices in investment policies globally.
- Recognize the major impacts of the crisis on employment, and mandate UNCTAD to work on the national level with developing countries in favor of job creation, and on the international level in favor of the Decent Work Agenda in concert with the ILO.
- Reassert the need to find solutions to the problem of volatility in the global commodities markets and the need for fair trade in global agricultural trade towards Food Security and Food Sovereignty, and mandate a research and advocacy role for UNCTAD on these issues, together with the FAO and particularly the Committee on Food Security.
- Affirm developed countries' commitments in ODA and Aid for Trade, as well as UNCTAD's key role in identifying the need for and developing mechanisms towards a sustainable sovereign debt work-out mechanism, bringing together diverse stakeholders to create Responsible Lending and Borrowing principles and continued efforts on debt cancellation.
- Set forth clear analysis of the impact of climate change on sustainable and inclusive development, and mandate UNCTAD to contribute to the global effort to realize the objectives of sustainable and inclusive development vis-à-vis climate change.

These are but a few of the key issues that should form the foundation of the official declaration that is to guide UNCTAD's role over the next four years. More comprehensive analysis on each of these issues is detailed in the official Civil Society Declaration to UNCTAD XIII.

In light of the rhetoric surrounding the commitment to a more open, democratic, and participatory system of global governance that have become commonplace in recent years, we find the return to the semi-colonial approach of the developed countries in the UNCTAD negotiations outrageous. We commend the former leadership and staff of UNCTAD who spoke up against this unacceptable situation last week, as well as the G77 for their statement that called the EU and JUSSCKANNZ to account for their intransigent positions.

As representatives of developed and developing countries of myriad stages of development, we know that our own prosperity is deeply entwined to the sustainable development of all, and thus we call on all governments of the North and South to join together, to affirm a strong role for UNCTAD in working towards sustainable and inclusive development for all.

Signed,

International Organizations

1. ACORD
2. ACP Civil Society Forum
3. ActionAid International
4. Africa Trade Network (ATN)
5. Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)
6. Asia Europe People's Forum (AEPF)
7. Asia Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN)
8. CIDSE international alliance of 16 Catholic development agencies
9. Convergencia de Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas (COMPA)
10. Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF)
11. European Attac Network
12. European Coordination Via Campesina
13. European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad)
14. Federación Latinoamericana de Trabajadores de las Industrias (FLATIC)
15. Friends of the Earth International (FOEI)
16. Hemispheric Social Alliance/Alianza Social Continental (HSA/ASC)
17. Alianza Internacional de Habitantes (International Alliance of Inhabitants)
18. International Grail Global Justice and Trade Agreements Network
19. International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
20. International Union of Food workers (IUF)
21. Jubilee South - Asia/Pacific Movement on Debt and Development
22. Latin American Association of Micro, Small, and Medium Businesses (Asociación Latinoamericana de Micro, Pequeños y Medianos Empresarios, ALAMPYME)
23. Mesa de Coordinación Latinoamericana de Comercio Justo
24. Movimiento Mesoamericano contra el Modelo Extractivo Minero (M4)
25. Nord-Sud XXI
26. Oxfam International
27. Pacific Network on Globalization (PANG)
28. Public Services International (PSI)
29. Red de Acción en Plaguicidas y sus Alternativas de América Latina (RAPAL)
30. Red Latinoamericana sobre Deuda, Desarrollo y Derechos (LATINDADD)
31. Seattle to Brussels Network
32. Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)
33. Tax Justice Network
34. Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education)
35. Third World Network (TWN)
36. Third World Network – Africa
37. Transnational Institute
38. World Council of Churches

National Organizations

39. 11.11.11, Belgium
40. African Business Roundtable
41. African Commission of Health and Human Rights Promoters (CAPSDH), Ghana
42. African Forum for Alternatives, Senegal
43. African Services Committee New York, US
44. Alianza Mexicana por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos (AMAP), Mexico
45. Al-Jawf women Organization For Development, Yemen
46. Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL), Philippines

47. Alliance Sud, Switzerland

48. Alternative Information & Development Centre (AIDC), South Africa

49. Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union (APVVU), India

50. Artisanal Fishers Association, South Africa

51. ASRAD, Mali

52. Association for Child Health, Nigeria

53. Attac Austria

54. Attac France

55. Attac Germany

56. Attac Japan

57. Banana Link, UK

58. Bharatiya Krishak Samaj (BKS), India

59. Bia'lii, Asesoría e Investigación, A.C, Mexico

60. CAFOD, UK

61. Campaign for a Life of Dignity for ALL (KAMP), Philippines

62. Campaign for the Welfare State, Norway

63. Caribbean Policy Development Centre, Barbados

64. Center for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD), Bangladesh

65. Center of Concern, US

66. Central Única dos Trabalhadores do Brasil (CUT), Brazil

67. Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), India

68. Centro de Formación e Investigación. Municipal, A.C. (CEFIMAC), Mexico

69. Common Frontiers, Canada

70. Confederación de Trabajadores Rerum Novarum (CTRN), Costa Rica

71. Consejo de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo de Centroamerica, Guatemala

72. CNCD-11.11.11, Belgium

73. Comhlámh, Ireland

74. Comisión Nacional de Enlace (CNE), Costa Rica

75. Confederación de trabajadores del Comercio de Chile CONSFETRACOSI, Chile

76. Confederation of Labor and Allied Social Services, Philippines

77. Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia

78. Coordination Climate Justice Sociale, Switzerland

79. Coordination des ONG Africaines des Droits de l'Homme et du Développement (CONGAF), Guinea

80. Council of Canadians

81. Debt and Development Coalition Ireland

82. Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, Philippines

83. ECA Watch Austria

84. Eco-Accord, Russia

85. Ecologistas en Acción, Spain

86. EcoNexus, UK

87. Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA)

88. Ecuador Decide

89. Ecumenical Peace Institute/ Northern California chapter of Clergy and Laity Concerned, US

90. Ekogaia Foundation, South Africa

91. Enda Tiers Monde, Senegal

92. Euronatura - Centro para o Direito Ambiental e Desenvolvimento Sustentado, Portugal

93. Fair, Italy

94. Faith Action for Community Equity, US

95. Faith Action Network of Washington, US

96. Fastenopfer Switzerland Federation of Independent Trade Unions and NGOs (FITUN), Trinidad and Tobago

97. Foreign Policy in Focus, US

98. Foro Ciudadano de Participación por la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos (FOCO), Argentina

99. Foro Latinoamericano del Trabajo, Innovación e Integración (FLATI), Argentina

100. Forum Social Lémanique (FSL), Switzerland

101. Friends of the Earth, England Wales and Northern Ireland (FoE EWNI)

102. Friends of the Earth Hungary

103. Friends of the Earth Mauritius

104. Fundación Promoción Humana, Argentina

105. Fundación SES, Argentina

106. Ghana Trades Union Congress

107. Global Community Rights Framework Initiative, US

108. Global Exchange, US

109. Global-Local Links Project, US

110. GLOBAL 2000/Friends of the Earth Austria

111. Golias Magazine, France

112. Grupo Tacuba, A. C., Mexico

113. Haitian-American Grassroot Coalition, US

114. Hecho en Bs As – empresa social, Argentina

115. Ibon International, Philippines

116. Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF), India

117. Indonesia for Global Justice

118. Information Group on Latin America (IGLA), Austria

119. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), US

120. Institute for Economic Research on Innovation, South Africa

121. International Forum on Globalization, US

122. International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)

123. Jubilee Debt Campaign, UK

124. Jubilee Germany

125. Jubilee Justice Task Force of the United Church of Christ, US

126. Jubilee Oregon

127. Jubilee Scotland

128. Jubilee USA Network

129. KEPA, the Service Centre for Development Cooperation, Finland

130. Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre, Nigeria

131. Mundial de las Mujeres, Peru

132. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, US

133. Milwaukee Fair Trade Coalition, US

134. Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition, US

135. Missionary Oblates United Sates Province, US

136. Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (National Network of Farmers Groups in Tanzania, MVIWATA)

137. Mujeres para el Diálogo A.C. (MpD), Mexico

138. National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANTS)

139. National Labour and Economic Development Institute, South Africa

140. National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), Canada

141. New Trade Union Initiative, India

142. Norwegian Coalition for Debt Cancellation, Norway

143. Otros Mundos AC/Amigos de la Tierra, Mexico

144. Platform Aarde Boer Consument, the Netherlands

145. Polaris Institute, Canada

146. Popular Campaign to Drop Egypt's Debt

147. Public Citizen, US

148. Public Service Alliance of Canada

- 149. Raid ATTAC Cadtm Tunisie, Tunisia
- 150. Red se Accion Ciudadana Frente al Libre Comercio Sinti Techan, El Salvador
- 151. Rede Brasileira Pela Integração dos Povos (REBRIP), Brazil
- 152. Red Mexicana de Acción frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC), Mexico
- 153. Red Nacional Género y Economía (REDGE), Mexico
- 154. Red Peruana de Comercio Justo y Consumo Ético, Peru
- 155. Sahabat Alam Malaysia
- 156. SF Bay Area Jubilee Coalition, US
- 157. Siembra A.C., Mexico
- 158. Sierra Club, US
- 159. Sisters of the Holy Cross Congregation Justice Committee, US
- 160. Solidarité, France
- 161. SWISSAID, Swiss Foundation for Development Cooperation, Switzerland
- 162. Tax Research UK
- 163. Tchad Agir Pour L'environnement (TCHAPE), Chad
- 164. The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations in The Gambia (TANGO)
- 165. The Berne Declaration, Switzerland
- 166. The Oakland Institute, US
- 167. TPPWatch, New Zealand
- 168. Trades Union Congress, UK
- 169. Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP)
- 170. United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society, US
- 171. U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project (USLEAP)
- 172. Village Suisse ONG, Switzerland
- 173. VOICE, Bangladesh
- 174. War on Want, UK
- 175. World Development Movement, UK
- 176. Worldview-The Gambia
- 177. X minus Y Solidarity Fund, the Netherlands
- 178. Youths Action, UK

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