



World Alliance for Citizen
Participation

e-CIVICUS

SPECIAL ISSUE:

UN CONFERENCE ON THE WORLD FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT ON
DEVELOPMENT

Please send contributions, comments and questions to editor@civicus.org.

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CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen
Participation

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ABOUT e-CIVICUS

The CIVICUS weekly electronic
publication is keeping tens of
thousands of people informed of the
developments taking place in civil
society, the factors that are affecting
them and the impact they are having
on creating an informed and
knowledgeable civil society.

e-CIVICUS WELCOMES CONTRIBUTIONS

e-CIVICUS offers a useful channel
through which you and your
organisation can share your news,
publicise your events and articulate
the issues you face. Please send us
your contributions by Monday for
publication in the coming week to
editor@civicus.org. All contributions
must focus on civil society issues or
have a civil society angle. To read

FROM THE DESK OF CIVICUS' SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear friends and colleagues,



Whose crisis is it anyway?

A critical conversation is scheduled to occur next week at the UN in New York. While delegates wrangle over minutiae in the draft outcome document of the UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, one issue is at the heart of the debate: who has the right to determine our collective responses to the financial and economic crises? Is it the UN, the most broadly multilateral forum currently available, or entities like the G20, a handpicked group of the most powerful economies, accountable to nobody except themselves?

Ever since the conference was first proposed, a small group of countries has sought to derail it. A number of hurdles have been raised since late last year when the President of the General Assembly first mooted the idea. At first the necessity for such a meeting was challenged, then its scope was sought to be limited. Process issues were raised around the first draft outcome document and the President of the GA made the target of personal attacks. Finally, an attempt has been launched to limit the meeting to a one-off event with no follow-up mechanisms and any references to an UN entity with responsibility for global economic oversight have been blocked.

To read more, please visit our website [here](http://www.civicus.org).

With gratitude, faith and solidarity,

Ingrid Srinath

The UN Summit on the economic crisis: not just a talking shop; our future is at stake

By Vicente García-Delgado, CIVICUS UN Representative

It's only five days to the opening of the United Nations High-level Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development at UN headquarters in New York (24-26 June), and the intergovernmental negotiations are becoming increasingly intense as the clock ticks toward the final hour.

Much is at stake for citizens and civil society around the globe: Will the international community of nations muster the courage and demonstrate the political will required to give an adequate, effective,

the contribution guidelines, [click here](#).

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Civil Society Watch Monthly Bulletin

The CIVICUS e-newsletter Civil Society Watch Monthly Bulletin is an action-oriented newsletter distributed to over 7,400 people, featuring insightful interviews, updates on threats to civil society, and analyses of current situations. Read more at www.civicus.org.

collective response to the global financial and economic crisis: a regenerated system of global economic governance framed in principles of Human Rights, the UN Charter and the Rule of Law? To read more, [click here](#).

Follow the UN Conference on the CIVICUS website!

We will be covering the summit on our website. [Click here to view this resource](#). If you want to contribute an article or comment for this Special Issue please email to editor@civicus.org

CIVICUS Poll Question

This week's question:

At the UN summit on the economic crisis, you would urge world leaders to:

- a. Engage in an open, transparent and ongoing process
- b. Provide adequate financing for stimulus packages to developing countries
- c. Agree to systemic reform of financial institutions
- d. Forge a new global consensus for economic growth which benefits everyone
- e. All of the above

To answer the question, [click here](#).

Previous question: Participation of all member states at the [UN Conference on the Economic Crisis](#) this month is

- a. Imperative
- b. Preferable
- c. I haven't heard about this summit!

Results: a. - 71.4%, b. - 17.1%, c. - 11.4%

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CIVICUS channel on YouTube:
'Time 2 Act' Go to YouTube, [click here](#).



CIVICUS' 1 for 1 membership campaign
Are you one of the missing 86?
One CIVICUS member for every UN member state, that's the goal of CIVICUS' 1 for 1 Membership campaign, [click here](#).

THE UN CONFERENCE



UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development

24 - 26 June 2009, New York

The UN is convening a three-day summit of world leaders from 24 - 26 June 2009 at its New York Headquarters to assess the worst global economic downturn since the Great Depression. The aim is to identify emergency and long-term responses to mitigate the impact of the crisis, especially on vulnerable populations, and initiate a needed dialogue on the transformation of the international financial architecture, taking into account the needs and concerns of all Member States. *For details, [click here](#).*

Recommendations of the Commission of Experts of the President of the General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System

Source: United Nations

To review the workings of the global financial systems and to explore ways and means to secure a more sustainable and just global economic order, the President of the General Assembly convened a Commission of Experts, chaired by Professor Joseph Stiglitz, 2001 Nobel Prize winner in economics, comprising a group of outstanding economists, policymakers, and practitioners from Japan, Western Europe, Africa, Latin America and South and East Asia. These experts were chosen based on their comprehensive understanding of the complex and interrelated issues raised by the workings of the financial system. The members of the Commission are also individuals recognized for their strong grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of existing multilateral institutions as well as their sensitivity to the particular challenges facing countries from different regions of the world and at different levels of economic and social development. *For details, [click here](#).*

Briefing paper: UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development

Source: UN NGLS

This briefing paper is intended to provide information and background on the upcoming United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development which will take place from 24 – 26 June at UN Headquarters in New York. *For details, [click here](#).*



The global economic crisis and development – the way forward

Source: UNCTAD

UNCTAD's first Public Symposium highlighted the "human face" of the global economic crisis and provided a platform for civil society organizations to voice their concerns and offer ideas firmly anchored in grassroots realities. *For details, [click here](#).*

The global financial crisis and its impact on the work of the UN system

Source: ILO - Juan Somavia, Director-General, International Labour Organization and Chair of the High-Level Committee on Programmes

"The Executive Heads of all UN agencies, funds and programmes, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, under the leadership of the United Nations Secretary-General, met in Paris on 4-5 April 2009 and decided to pool together their mandates, knowledge, expertise and means of action to take bold initiatives." *For details, [click here](#).*

ILO Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis - 15-17 June 2009

Source: ILO

Heads of State and Government, Vice-presidents, labour ministers and leaders from employers' and workers' organizations are to meet here from June 15-17 for a Global Jobs Crisis Summit organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The ILO summit will provide a first-of-its-kind opportunity to discuss policies that are being implemented at the national and international level to

address the global jobs crisis. *For details, [click here](#).*

Brazil's Lula calls for new world economic order

Source: Reuters

GENEVA - Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva urged unions and workers on Monday to take advantage of the global financial crisis to help forge a new world economic order. "I address myself now to the labour leaders," Lula told a global jobs summit at the International Labour Organization (ILO), a United Nations agency grouping governments, employers and worker representatives to promote good working conditions. *For details, [click here](#).*

Is West Undermining the Summit on Financial Crisis?

Source: IPS - Thalif Deen

When a Western diplomat was asked whether his country would be represented by a head of state at next week's U.N. summit meeting on the global financial crisis, his response was tinged with sarcasm and contempt. *For details, [click here](#).*

CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENTS AND POSITIONS

Global civil society statement for the UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development

Civil society organisations and networks from around the world gathered in New York for a Civil Society Forum prior to the official UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development. The ongoing processes were reviewed to respond to the global financial and economic crisis and looked at the impact of the crises on people, particularly in developing countries. *For details, [click here](#).*

RESIST! Sign-on Statement For a Just and Democratic Response to the Global Financial and Economic Crisis.

This statement has been initiated by RESIST! (An International Campaign on Globalization and War) with input from organizations and individuals actively involved in the campaign. RESIST calls on underdeveloped countries to take advantage of the UN Summit on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development to assert greater economic and political independence from the major powers and break from the Washington Consensus imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions. It calls on the people to be vigilant against attempts to prevent the adoption of substantive reforms that uphold the public good over private profits, attempts to use the UN to re-legitimize discredited institutions or push a convergence with the G20 agenda. *Read the statement by [clicking here](#).*

A Call for Courage: the Upcoming UN Summit on the Economic Crisis

Source: Huffingtonpost - Kumi Naidoo

I think what is keeping most of us occupied right now is the forthcoming summit at the UN in New York, later this month, which will be an important attempt to hammer a way out of the economic crises. CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, along with other civil society partners, will be there demanding that civil society and especially the poor and marginalized - those most affected by a crisis not of their own making - are not left out of the discussion *[Read more](#).*

GET INVOLVED



10 days of action: A countdown to commitments

Source: Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)

The Global Call to Action Against Poverty is calling on the world to join social movements everywhere as we celebrate the 'Day of the African Child' and kick off an important 10-day initiative that will help deliver all of our demands to the world leaders at the United Nations Conference on the Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development on 24-26

June in New York City. *For details, [click here](#).*

www.rethinkingfinance.org

A web portal for presenting civil society opinion on the financial crisis and financial reform is available for interested parties to use and post to. It has a list of events - everyone to post/list their events on the [rethinkingfinance.org](http://www.rethinkingfinance.org) website so that they can be all one place and coordinated. *Find out more [here](#).*

BOOKS, REPORTS & RESOURCES

Impossible Financial Architecture

Source: Social Watch

Finances are usually explained in water metaphors: money “flows”, benefits from growth “trickle down” to the poor, capital “leaks” out of countries to tax havens...In 2006, Social Watch used an illustration, inspired by the famous “Waterfall” etching by MC Escher, as a metaphor for the global financial architecture. This structure prominently features the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund - IMF), despite the fact that they had clearly failed to achieve the objectives they were created for: to ensure financial stability, full employment and development. We argued then that a mechanism that mobilizes capital from where it is scarce (the low and middle income countries) to where it is abundant is “impossible, both in the sense of impractical and in the sense of intolerable” and that the international financial architecture “badly needs to be redesigned.” Two years later, the international financial system collapsed, credit sources dried up and recession spread like a pandemic from the richest economies to the poorest. The need for substantial reform is now widely acknowledged, but a common understanding of what went wrong still needs to be achieved, before a blueprint for a new financial architecture can be agreed upon. *For details, [click here](#).*

e-Discussion on Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development

Source: UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis

A moderated e-discussion on the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, jointly organised by the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UNDP, will be held as part of the preparatory process for the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development. *For details, [click here](#).*

Some questions on the global economic council

Source: Aldo Caliari, Director, Rethinking Bretton Woods Project, Center of Concern

How the saying goes, maintaining things as they are requires no good reason, but there are tonnes of ways to shut down a new idea, and the Global Economic Council (GEC) is a new idea. Here are some questions that I hear come up repeatedly (both developing and developed countries) in lobbying for a GEC, and some quick answers I've come up with. If you heard a question that's not here, please feel free to send it to me (I don't guarantee I'll have a good answer but two minds will think better than one!) *For details, [click here](#).*

IMF gains illusory strength

Source: Aldo Caliari – Asiatimes/Foreign Policy in Focus

As the financial crisis reached global and historic proportions last year, many commentators identified

one institution as the debacle's great winner: the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (...) Still, looking beneath the surface reveals a more nuanced picture. Accounts that herald the IMF's "revival" are premature and superficial. Recent events illustrate nothing more than the fact that the world's largest economies, who happen to be the fund's largest shareholders, view it as an instrument to manage emergency crisis financing. That was never, however, in question. It was the borrowers who saw the need for substantial reform in the IMF before this emergency financing function could be played effectively and, in fact, the infusion of large amounts of funding, by freeing the IMF's hands and relieving its fears of survival that will act against such reforms. *For details, [click here](#).*

Money well lent

As a bank created for poor women in Bangladesh prepares to open its doors in Britain, Alison Benjamin hears from its Nobel peace prize-winning founder Muhammad Yunus about how the recession can help people out of poverty. *Find out more by [clicking here](#).*

NGO survey regarding the theme of the 2010 Commission on Social Development "Social Integration"

Source: Outreach Task Group of the UN NGO Committee on Social Development

An NGO survey regarding the theme of the 2010 Commission on Social Development "Social Integration" was launched to elicit examples of best practices on the theme of "Social Integration". Find out more about the purposes of the survey and the timeline on the NGO Committee on the Social Development [website](#). The survey can be completed on line on a dedicated UN NGLS [page](#).

Transparency is a global imperative

Source: Task Force on Financial Integrity and Economic Development (Task Force)

The Task Force on Financial Integrity and Economic Development (Task Force) has developed a Five-Point Plan to increase transparency within the global financial system. The plan is a product of research and analysis conducted by Task Force member organizations: Tax Justice Network, Global Witness, Transparency International, and Global Financial Integrity and tackles key elements of a worldwide shadow financial system comprised of secrecy jurisdictions, disguised corporations, anonymous trust accounts, and fake foundations, which annually moves trillions of dollars in illicit money across borders. *For details, [click here](#).*

Geneva: Human rights defenders write open letter to United Nations Human Rights Council

Source: Frontline - Protection of Human Rights Defenders

35 human rights organisations have published an open letter to the United Nations Human Rights Council, which was signed onto by human rights organisations from throughout the world. In the letter, they warned that recent "extraordinary attacks" by states on United Nations human rights experts at the Human Rights Council was "severely eroding the Council's legitimacy and credibility." *For details, [click here](#).*

EVENTS IN NEW YORK

People Impacted by the Economic Crisis from Around the World Gather to Give Voice to the Forgotten, Marginalized

People's Voices on the Crisis will give voice to those that have felt the impact of the crisis and whose stories have thus far received little attention. The event will showcase the testimonies of grassroots activists from diverse regions of the world working with many of the world's forgotten victims, who will give evidence on how the financial, as well as food, energy and climate change crises, are affecting their lives and their work.

"We believe that the current economic crisis is the result not merely of misinformation, lax regulation or simple hubris. Rather, it is the result of a deeply flawed system that perpetuates crises in food security, in the environment as well as in finance and economics," says Roberto Bissio, Coordinator of Social Watch and one of the organizers.

The forum will also address a more hopeful future, as advocates will offer their proposals on overcoming the current crisis and in the process develop a new economic system that is built on the rights – and in the service - of all people. The outcome of the Hearing will be a set of recommendations to be delivered to world leaders gathered at the UN Conference on the Economic Crisis that will begin the following Monday.

People's Voices on the Crisis

Saturday, 20 June
Church of the Holy Trinity
316 E. 88th Street, New York, NY

Workers on the Move: The Global Crisis and Migrant Labor

A Forum Sponsored by RESIST!, International Migrants Alliance, Ibon Foundation and the World Council of Churches
22 June 2009, 7-9pm, Boss Room, 8th Floor, UN Church Center
777 United Nations Plaza, New York City

The global financial and economic crisis continues to deepen and cause untold suffering among working people in the world. The International Labour Organisation estimates that as many as 52 million more workers would join the ranks of the unemployed this year alone plus millions more in the next few years as the global economy continues to stagnate. Migrant workers, especially women workers and those in irregular status are among the most vulnerable sectors in the population amidst the downturn as they are among the first to be laid-off or forced to accept lower wages and poorer working conditions in order to retain or get new jobs and continue to send remittances to their loved ones. They are also used as scapegoats of the jobs crisis; hence face increasing discrimination, xenophobia and racism.

This 2-hour public forum will critically examine the current global crisis and proposals to deal with the crisis from the perspective of working people, particularly migrant workers. It will consist of a panel of three (3) speakers (15 minutes each) followed by an open forum and speak out of migrant workers (1 hour).

Side-event on "Reform of the Financial and Monetary System: Putting Developing Country Trade and Development Needs at the Center"

The International Working Group on Trade and Finance Linkages and the Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania to the UN invites you to a side-event on "Reform of the Financial and Monetary System: Putting Developing Country Trade and Development Needs at the Center"
June 26, 2009, 1:15 - 2:30 PM
Conference Room B, UN Headquarters
Moderator: Ms. Mariama Williams, International Gender and Trade Network / Institute for Law and Economics (Jamaica)

Side event on "Reaching the MDGs amidst a Financial and Economic Crisis"

Sponsored by the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, CIDSE, Cordaid, Oxfam International, Afrodad, Latindad 25 June 2009, 9:30 am - 11:30 am
Conference Room C, UN Headquarters

ITUC/FES Side Event on "Policy Responses to the Jobs Crisis: Universal Social Protection is Key to Restoring Sustainable Growth with Equity".

The event is organized in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Chile
Thursday 25 June from 1:15pm to 2:45pm
Conference Room B of the United Nations Headquarters.

WFUNA Informal drinks party to celebrate the first day of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development.

Wednesday 24 June 2009 - 6.00 – 8.30 pm 216 East 47th St - #16 A
To know more about WFUNA: [World Federation of United Nations Associations](#)

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