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G20 Labour and Employment Ministers meet

<http://www.g20-g8.com/g8-g20/g20/english/news/news/the-g20-on-social-issues.1474.html>)

At the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers September meeting in Paris they adopted conclusions aimed at strengthening the social dimension of globalisation. They stated the importance of employment as an objective of economic policy, with focus on youth employment. The Ministers agreed to put in place a task force for youth employment to prepare proposals for the meeting of the G20 labour Ministers in 2012 under the Mexican presidency.

The Ministers underlined the importance of strengthening social protection, with a commitment from the G20 States to implement nationally-defined floors of social protection. They encouraged greater coordination of the activities of international organisations to support States in implementing this commitment.

The Ministers supported effective implementation of social and labour laws. In particular, they expressed their support for the International Labour Organisation in its efforts for the ratification and application of the eight fundamental conventions.

Lastly, they declared support for better cooperation between international organisations in order to increase the coherence of social and economic policy.

The French presidency is paying particular attention to the emergence of this social dialogue at G20 level, which will lead to meetings of business and workers alongside the Leaders' Summit in Cannes. The conclusions of the labour and employment Ministers will be submitted to the G20 Leaders during the Cannes Summit on 3 and 4 November 2011. The full text is at http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/multilateral-system/g20/WCMS_164260/lang--en/index.htm

ICSW President Christian Rollet commented on the conclusions of the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers. "Unemployment is the key point of the declaration and the link between sustainable growth, social protection and employment is stressed. The social protection floor (SPF) is quoted many times as an investment in social justice and a way of promoting economic stability."

"In a summary of a first draft of the report by Mrs Bachelet (French only) to the G20 summit, the SPF is put forward as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, linked with decent work; affordability; improvement of productivity at work, etc...Mrs Bachelet spoke also of strengthening SPF as a "post MDG" issue."

Mr Rollet concluded "Despite good content there is not a single word on civil society! A bit disappointing. Trade unions and employers groups are involved in the preparation of the social part of the summit (they will have a pre-summit event). ILO and governments see unions as civil society."

Signature campaign for social protection

The New York based NGO Committee for Social Development at the United Nations has mounted a signature campaign in four languages in support of the Social Protection Floor Initiative. The aim is one million signatures. By clicking on the links below you will find background information and can sign the petition. Please promote The Social Protection Floor Campaign on your list serves and among your friends and communities.

The signatures will be used as an advocacy tool at national level and at the UN during the Commission on Social Development 2012, Commission on Status of Women 2012 and the International Labour Conference in June 2012.

English: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/signature-campaign-social-protection-floor.html>

Spanish: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/en-apoyo-del-piso-de-protecci%C3%B3n-social.html>

French: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/appuyer-le-socle-de-protection-sociale.html>

Portuguese: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/patamar-de-prote%C3%A7%C3%A3o-social-para-todos-e-todas.html>

For more information: www.ngosocdev.net

Parliamentarians discuss migrant workers' rights to social protection

In September 2011 twenty-six parliamentarians as well as legislative staff members, civil society and trade union representatives gathered in Phnom Penh for the 5th Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Labour Migration. The programme hosted by the Cambodian National Assembly was organised in parallel to the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) to address the issues of protection of migrant workers and members of their families and their access to social security/protection.

The Caucus explored challenges to the prevailing notion that states are not responsible for the well-being of non-nationals working in their territories. The parliamentarians sought to resolve the ongoing tensions surrounding the protection of rights of migrant workers in the context of regional integration. (From Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development Monthly Information Service September 2011 No.79 <http://www.afppd.org/information.html>)

New film on social protection

GIPSPSI has just produced a film *Social protection: a lifelong necessity*. The film is available at:

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xld91i_social-protection-a-lifelong-necessity_news

This film presents three successful social protection experiences: Bolsa Família (Family Grant) Programme in Brazil, the medical assistance scheme for the needy in Morocco and the 500 Baht Universal Pension Scheme in Thailand.

The film was made with the help of ILO and HelpAge International.

The mandate of GIP SPSI is "to assist the French public, para-public or private operators in their international cooperation actions in the health and social protection sectors".

As coordinator, it encourages networks to develop and collaborate in order to draw on French expertise. It also contributes to strategic thinking on major health and social welfare challenges.

<http://www.gipspsi.org/> (In English, French and Spanish)

Austerity measures threaten children and poor households

http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Austerity_Measures_Threaten_Children.pdf

After a first phase of fiscal stimulus and countercyclical policies (2008-2010), in a second phase (2010-) many developing countries are contracting public expenditures. Adjustment measures include: (i) wage bill cuts/caps, including salaries of education, health and other public sector workers; (ii) elimination or reduction of subsidies, including food subsidies; (iii) rationalising social protection schemes by reforming pensions or further targeting social safety nets; (iv) governments are also introducing VAT on basic products consumed by vulnerable populations.

Identifying fiscal space: Options for social and economic development for children and poor households in 182 countries

http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Fiscal_Space_-_17_Oct_-_FINAL.pdf

It is often argued that social and economic investments that benefit children and poor households are not affordable or that government expenditure cuts are inevitable during adjustment periods. But there are alternatives, even in the poorest countries. This paper offers an array of options: (i) re-allocating public expenditures, (ii) increasing tax revenues, (iii) lobbying for increased aid and transfers, (iv) tapping into fiscal and foreign exchange reserves, (v) borrowing and restructuring existing debt, and /or (vi) adopting a more accommodative macroeconomic framework. To serve as a general advocacy resource, the annex provides a summary of the latest fiscal space indicators for 182 countries.

Armed conflict women and girls who are pregnant, infants and children

Without security, adequate healthcare is not possible. Armed conflicts continue with the major casualties being pregnant women, girls, babies and children. Most countries in conflict are poorly resourced and their mortality and morbidity statistics so much higher than rich countries. Nothing short of a global revolution to create equity is going to solve the problem. The maternal and child mortality rates for weapon exporting countries are much lower than the countries in which the weapons are used. This is an ethical issue that must be addressed by health professionals. Armed conflict is probably the most serious global public health challenge and two suggestions are provided. Health professionals have a major voice and must support the currently progressing Arms Trade Treaty and call for more effective protection for healthcare in areas of conflict. The link to the article is: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378378211002805>

Health promotion forum: From local knowledge to health in all policies

Geneva International Conference Centre, CICG - Geneva, Switzerland Friday, 18 November 2011,

The goal of the Forum is to mobilise NGO and civil society health promotion efforts and provide an opportunity to explore strategies needed to advance the health promotion agenda. This will involve the key players in health promotion reaching a common understanding on the status of health promotion, analysing the outcomes of recent relevant international meetings and how to ensure follow-up, clarifying the role of key players and working methods needed to maximise contribution

and impact, strengthening the partnership between government, UN agencies, civil society and business

Questions to be considered are how to translate declarations into programmes/policies on the ground; identifying the obstacles to effective implementation; how to influence local, national and international policy; how to build on local knowledge and community assets as key components of successful outcomes; what actions are likely to make an overall impact; what can the Alliance for Health Promotion do to promote health promotion efforts.

Registration is open - visit <http://www.alliance4healthpromotion.org> to register.

Contact: sozanskig@alliance4healthpromotion.org

(ICSW is a member of the Alliance for Health Promotion)

Social science space website

ICSW's partner in the production of International Social Work – Sage publications has launched its re-vamped design on "socialsciencespace".

The front page and framework of the site has been redesigned to improve navigation and ease of use. It is now possible to see more of the content across the site and to identify what is new, what is exciting, and what topics people are writing about. Check it out at www.socialsciencespace.com

2011 Survey on monitoring the Paris Declaration

http://www.oecd.org/document/1/0,3746,en_2649_3236398_48725569_1_1_1_1,00.html

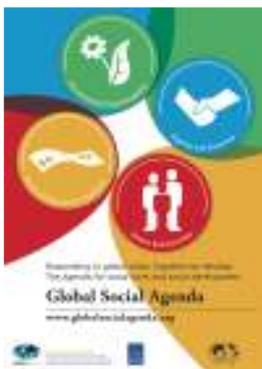
When both developed and developing countries committed themselves to the 2005 Paris Declaration for achieving more effective aid, they agreed not only to a set of principles, but also to meeting a set of measurable targets by 2010. This is an important feature of the Paris Declaration, providing a tool for donors and developing countries to hold each other to account.

After the target year of 2010, the results make for sobering reading. At the global level, only one out of the 13 targets established for 2010 has been met, however, considerable progress has been made towards many of the remaining 12 targets.

Globally, the survey results show considerable variation in the direction and pace of progress across donors and partner countries since 2005. For the indicators where responsibility for change lies primarily with developing country governments, progress has been significant. Many of these changes require deep reforms that go beyond aid management to broader aspects of government processes. Effectiveness 2005-10: Progress in Implementing the Paris Declaration (full report 2.7Mb) <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/30/48742718.pdf>

OXFAM warns on land grab dangers

Oxfam has launched a major new report, *Land and Power* (<http://oxf.am/4bB>), to highlight the growing pace of large-scale land deals abroad, often brokered at the expense of poor communities that lose homes and livelihoods - sometimes violently - with no prior consultation, compensation or means of appeal. <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/advocacy/76733>



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