



Official Newsletter of the Global Social Observatory
Geneva, Switzerland

Eleventh Issue, June 2016

2016 GSO General Assembly

The Twelfth Annual General Assembly of the Global Social Observatory is scheduled for Tuesday, 5 July 2016 from 10:00 to 12:00 at the International Environment House, Geneva, Switzerland. All are welcome to attend – GSO Members and Friends. See the agenda below. Please let us know at contact@gsogeneva.ch if you plan to attend, and we will send you additional materials.

1. Approval of Minutes from 2015 General Assembly
2. Approval of annual reports for 2015-2016
 - a. Report of the Executive Director
 - b. Report of the Treasurer
3. Election of GSO Management Committee Members
4. Review of GSO Action Plan for 2015-2016
5. Presentation of GSO Vision and Action Plan for 2016-2017
6. New Business
7. Interactive Dialogue: Gender and the SDGs

I. GSO Activities

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

International Geneva Gender Champions

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I. GSO Activities

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Although 2015 was the “Year of the Summits”, we note that 2016 is the year of implementation, whether it is climate change or SDGs or financing for development or even disaster relief – all four having been featured at major summits in 2015. The GSO has been promoting multi-stakeholder participation for a broad Geneva perspective on all of these issues – and especially on cross-cutting linkages among the many issues, goals, targets and indicators. We convened an informal brainstorming exercise on 19 February 2016 to stir the pot, and a small Working Group has been meeting to build on the recommendations from that exercise. We’ll feature this at the General Assembly on 5 July.

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International Geneva Gender Champions

GSO Executive Director Katherine Hagen, was invited to become an [International Geneva Gender Champion](#), and numerous events around International Women’s Day (8 March) featured this

important new initiative. The IGGC is led by US Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Pamela Hamamoto and Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva Michael Moller. It is the brainchild and facilitated by the dynamic Caitlin Kraft-Buchman, founder of an NGO known as Women@TheTable. On 17 May 2016, the initiative celebrated a “Mid-Term Review”, with informative sharing of insights from the heads of the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), and a private sector perspective from a representatives of Nestlé. We’ll have a special discussion on gender equality at the General Assembly and look forward to your participation in that.

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Gender Mainstreaming at the International Labour Conference

GSO Executive Director Katherine Hagen is representing the NGO Graduate Women International at the 2016 International Labour Conference from 30 May to 10 June 2016, with a particular interest in the gender perspective on an agenda item addressing decent work in global supply chains. Katherine has presented this gender perspective in the specific deliberations on this issue and also in the plenary on a broader perspective dealing with the ILO and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Read her plenary statement [here](#).

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GSO at the 2016 WTO Public Forum

The GSO has proposed to convene a panel session at the forthcoming WTO Public Forum on 27 to 29 September 2016. We have the ambitious goal of bringing a gender perspective to trade as a means of implementation for a cross-cutting cluster of the

Sustainable Development Goals on food security, health, climate change, employment and decent work. Let us know if you would like to participate in the preparations for this session.

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II. Commentary on International Organizations and NGOs

The Decade for Nutrition, 2016-2025

The UN General Assembly has recently approved a resolution ([A/70/L.42](#)) to launch the “Decade for Action on Nutrition”, from 2016 to 2025. The idea was first proposed at the Second International Conference on Nutrition that was held in Rome on 19 to 21 November 2014. The resolution specifies that the FAO and WHO have the lead to implement the Decade, while they will also be working in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and UNICEF. The programme will also involve working with important coordination mechanisms, such as the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). On 28 May 2016, the World Health Assembly approved a resolution ([A69/A/CONF./5/REV1](#)) supporting the WHO role in the Decade, and we expect a similar resolution from the FAO. The official launch of the Decade is expected to occur in July in conjunction with the High-Level Political Forum in New York.

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Human Rights and the SDGs at the Human Rights Council

An important perspective on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the integration of human rights concerns, which are included in SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, but which are also seen as important cross-cutting concerns. At the Human Rights Council in March 2016, there

was a high-level panel on human rights and the SDGs, we were especially impressed with the speech delivered by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at this mainstreaming panel. We were impressed with a number of issues that he chose to include in this intervention. The speech contained the expected statements: “Long-term peace and security cannot exist without human rights for all. Sustainable development is impossible without peace and security. Human rights are the very foundation of our common humanity.” But these sentences were supplemented by a number of bolder statements in support of democratic practices. “Leaders earn legitimacy,” he said, “by listening to their people”. He continued in that vein to talk about his support for the rights of all people, “regardless of their ethnicity, religion, disability, caste or other distinction”. In particular, he remarked that “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex people are subjected to brutal and sometimes deadly violence” in many countries. He commended the Council for adopting two historic resolutions on sexual orientation and gender identity and also urged the Council to hold firm – recognizing that there are undercurrents stirring to overturn these policies. The next session of the Human Rights Council, meeting from 13 June to 1 July 2016, will feature a full day on gender mainstreaming on 16 June 2016, and we look forward to benefiting from insights on gender equality in the human rights context and the SDGs.

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International Geneva Outreach to NGOs

The Director of the United Nations at Geneva (UNOG), Michael Moller held an exchange with the representatives of NGOs in Geneva on 25 February 2016, followed by a special exchange of NGOs with David Nabarro, the Special Representative of the Secretary General on the SDGs in April. We learned

that specific action items on the SDG implementation process at UNOG include the following:

1. Promoting a principle of shared responsibility
2. Integrating solutions to the migratory process from both May and September summits on how to rethink and remodel migration and refugee rights.
3. Expanding an SDG mapping of existing Geneva-based expertise
4. Preparing a new Geneva data mapping website – with SDG-specific information and a storybook with fairy tales from around the world and new infographics and a new “youth series”
5. Incorporating sustainable development into business models – new models on how to redefine success against impact
6. Moving beyond current solutions to different solutions and different combinations of stakeholders.

The key is multi-stakeholder partnerships with NGOs at the table – enabling open methods of communication BEFORE decision-making. The EU and parliaments are important links. Youth and other groups want to know how to be involved in SDGs. A platform can be developed for exchange of information, and we expect Dr. Nabarro to announce the opening of an office in Geneva in the near future.

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The Framework for Engagement with Non-State Actors at the World Health Organization

A new [Framework for Engagement with Non-State Actors](#) at the World Health Organization was approved by the World Health Assembly in May. The initiative was the last major piece of WHO reform launched a few years ago to address programmes and priority setting, governance, and managerial reform. Additional impetus came from linking the

new policy to the WHO's role in the implementation of the health-related goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the financing goals in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the nutrition-related goals in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition. These global declarations from 2014 and 2015 were fortuitous in setting the stage for a new environment calling for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral engagement by the UN system.

The WHO's Member-States spoke with pride during the debate to adopt the new policy, describing it as the FIRST such policy for engagement with non-State actors in the UN system, leading the way for others to follow! It is a framework that encompasses participation, resources, advocacy and technical collaboration in a far more inclusive way than just accreditation to participate as observers, as in the UN system generally. It is also more far-reaching than the ILO where the participation of Workers and Employers Groups may be just as far-reaching, but the ILO tripartite structure limits this to specific narrowly defined and nationally-based actors of these particular groups. So this is indeed a groundbreaking development, serendipitously benefiting from the new receptivity to multi-stakeholderism coming out of the 2014 and 2015 summits. Many NGOs are actually quite critical of the dangers in the new Framework for "undue influence from the corporate sector".

A central feature of FENSA is its approach to conflict of interest, including definitions and the role of due diligence and risk assessments. The approach is similar to the definitions and terminology on due diligence and risk assessments that were developed by the Global Social Observatory in partnership with the Secretariat of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement on the prevention and management of conflict of interest in the SUN Movement at the country level. This is certainly one of the areas where implementation of FENSA will be closely

monitored by everyone, NGOs and Member States included.

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III. Upcoming Events

Key upcoming events of interest to the GSO

GSO Events:

5 July, Twelfth GSO General Assembly
27-29 Sept, GSO Panel at the WTO Public Forum
(application pending)

International Events of Interest in Geneva (unless otherwise noted), June-July 2016

- 30 May-10 Jun ILO [105th International Labour Conference](#)
- 3 June Geneva Environment Network, [World Environment Day](#)
- 8 June ILO [International Labour Conference Event on Child Labour in Global Supply Chains](#)
- 9 June ILO [World of Work Summit on Youth at the International Labour Conference](#)
- 9 June IHEID [Measuring and Monitoring the SDGs: Fit for Purpose](#)
- 9 June Geneva Environment Network [Healthier Oceans for Healthier Lives](#)
- 10 June GCSP [Launch of the 2016 Global Peace Index](#)
- 13 Jun – 1 Jul Human Rights Council [32nd Session of the Human Rights Council](#)
- 13 June Human Rights Council [High-Level Panel on its 10th Anniversary](#)
- 13-15 June ISF [Eleventh International Security Forum: Global Order: Security in a World Disrupted](#)
- 14 June Geneva Water Hub [Water in Conflicts](#)
- 15 June Gender Champions [Power of Empowered Women 2016: Gender Equality: What Will You DO?](#)
- 15 June Gender Champions [Film Screening of Sonita](#)

16 June Human Rights Council [Annual Full Day Discussion on the Human Rights of Women](#)
16 June Gender Champions [The Power of Gender in Preventing Violent Extremism](#)
16 June Geneva Environment Network [IPCC after the Paris Agreement](#)
21 June Incitare [Workshop on Futures Thinking – Theories, Practice, Tools, Techniques](#)
23-24 June UN Global Compact [Leaders Summit](#) New York
23 – 25 June Global Ethics [2016 Annual Global Ethics Forum](#)
28 June Human Rights Council [Use of Sport and the Olympic Ideal to Promote Human Rights for All](#)
7-8 July WHO [Second Global Conference on Health and Climate](#), Paris
11-20 July ECOSOC [High-Level Political Forum](#) New York
17-22 July UNCTAD, [Fourteenth UNCTAD Conference](#) Nairobi

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IV. Who We Are

The Global Social Observatory (GSO) is an international organization founded in the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland in April 2004. The mission of the GSO is to initiate dialogue on social issues in order to encourage leaders to engage in a broadened search for solutions and policy coherence. This service is based on a participatory process in a neutral space that brings all interested parties together across national boundaries to identify solutions and policies that are coherent. These solutions can then contribute to policy-making at the governmental and intergovernmental levels. Visit our [website](#) for regular news and project updates.

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