

CSF Bulletin

UN LDC-IV Civil Society Forum Bulletin (No. 5, 13 May 2011, Istanbul, Turkey)

'Development partners failed to deliver on their pledges'

13 May, Istanbul-- The LDC IV Civil Society Forum (CSF) concluded in historic Turkish city of Istanbul expressing disappointment over non-inclusion of its voices in the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs outcomes.

"The negotiations started with analyses of the failings of the Brussels Programme of Action that reflected in UNCTAD's LDC report 2010. These showed that development partners failed to deliver their commitments to provide adequate aid, reform unjust trade rules, remove the burden of debt and build the capacity of LDCs," said the CSF declaration which was disclosed at the closing ceremony of the LDC IV Civil Society Forum at the Istanbul Congress Centre on Friday.

Mostafa Tutkun, Chief Executive Officer of the Doctors Worldwide, Turkey, which hosted the CSF on behalf of the Turkish government, readout the 28-points declaration.

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal and Chair of the Global LDC Coordination Bureau, Upendra Yadav, Secretary-General of the UN LDC-IV, Cheick Sidi Diarra, Chair of LDC IV Civil Society Forum, Dr Arjun Karki, Executive of SILAKA, Cambodia, Ms Thida Khus and Ms Azeb Girmai of LDC Watch Steering Committee, among others, addressed the ceremony.

The CSF declaration emphasised the need for bringing changes in the development paradigm. "Our calls echoed proposals for a New International Support Architecture, and gone further in calling for a more fundamental transformation of the relations between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, men and women, the elites and those without resources, the dominant and the marginalised," it said.



Civil Society Forum Closing Ceremony

The declaration said the conference has failed to meet our expectations and the UN General Assembly mandate that calls on governments "to mobilize additional international support measures and action in favour of the least developed countries, and, in this regard, to formulate and adopt a renewed partnership between the least developed countries and their development partners".

Civil society is frustrated that, having caused massive costs in the LDCs through financial and food speculation, unjust trade rules, illegitimate loans with onerous conditionality, and ecological damage, including climate change, the developed countries have not even committed to provide more aid to LDCs.

Enhancing Productive Capacity

The declaration, however, welcomed the attention paid to enhancing productive capacity in the Programme of Action. "This is crucial to create jobs for the growing numbers of young people through inclusive policies that capture more value from resources, diversify the economy and build on the strengths of LDCs," the declaration said.

It also welcomed the recognition that governments need to lead the development process, not donors or

the private sector, and the proposal to establish a technology bank.

The Programme of Action has called for the removal of impediments to the private sector, without recognition that governments need to regulate to protect workers, consumers, the environment and local communities.

It said the LDCs should pursue an environmentally sustainable and equitable growth strategy that is labour intensive that provides decent work opportunities to a wider range of people especially the large numbers of young women and men, coupled with opportunities to gain new skills and improve their livelihoods.

International Coordinator of the LDC Watch and spokesperson of the Civil Society Forum, Dr Arjun Karki, thanked the organisers, Doctors Worldwide Turkey, civil society delegates from around the world and members of media for their support and cooperation in highlighting the LDC agenda and making the Forum a success. He expressed commitment that the Civil Society Forum would continue to champion the cause of LDCs and monitor the status of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action adopted by the member states.

Call to Address Climate Change Issues Affecting the LDCs



(From left) Mr. Ahmed Naseem, Mr. Upendra Yadav, Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Mr. Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi and Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra

Speakers at a special meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Istanbul have emphasised the need to take special plan of action to deal with the impact of climate change issues with special emphasis on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Addressing the meeting on "Implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action by Asia-Pacific LDCs and the Way Forward" held at Lufti Kirdar Convention Centre on Wednesday, they observed that though some of the LDCs had achieved some indicators of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), food insecurity and impact of climate change aggravated the situation among the LDCs.

The speakers said it was extremely ironic and huge injustice that people of the LDCs were bearing the brunt of the harmful impact of the climate change they had no part in creating.

Global warming is not only leading to massive dislocation of people, loss of livelihoods and destruction of homes and infrastructure due to disasters, extreme and unpredictable weather conditions and sea level rise, it has increased vulnerabilities and profound changes in the conditions of health, food production and agriculture.

"Access to water, habitat and other

fundamental aspects of our livelihood have been threatened by rise in sea level," said Prime Minister of Samoa Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi.

Emphasising on the need for enhancing the Official Development Assistance (ODA), Mr Malielegaoe said that it could play a key role in socio-economic development in the LDCs, particularly in the water, sanitation, health and education sectors. He also underlined the need for devising necessary plan of action to increase the productive capacity and effective policy to deal with natural calamities in the LDCs.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary-General of the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs, said that high food price and economic meltdown were putting pressure in the new development activities in the LDCs. "We need to increase international support to help LDCs to come out from food insecurity and energy crises," he observed.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal, Upendra Yadav, said there was the need to enhance productive capacity of the LDCs. He called upon the development partners to meet their commitment of providing their assistance between 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their Gross National Income (GNI).

Foreign Minister of Maldives, Ahmed Naseem, said climate change

presented real threat for very survival of countries like Maldives. He said there was the threat of wiping away of whatever socio-economic gains his country had been able to achieve over the past decades due to the impact of climate change.

International Coordinator of the LDC Watch, Dr Arjun Karki, said the Brussels Programme of Action did not adequately address the problems of climate change and its consequences to the peoples of the LDCs. "Even now international negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have not succeeded in forging international agreements towards just and decisive solutions."

The Istanbul Programme of Action should echo the call for the mobilisation of finance to enable LDCs to be able to deal with the impact of climate change through comprehensive adaptation programmes and shift towards sustainable and equitable economic systems in the process of meeting sustainable development goals, Dr. Karki said.

Moderated by Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, the function was also addressed, among others, by Senior Advisor of the Asian Development Bank Ms Carola Donner-Reichle.

The Civil Society Forum Concludes with 28-point 'Istanbul Declaration', Expresses Disappointment at the 'Programme of Action'

Istanbul, 13 May 2011: Civil society leaders who had gathered in Istanbul from around the world issued the "Istanbul Declaration" on Friday morning at the closing of the Civil Society Forum of the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs. Pledging to redouble their efforts to raise awareness among civil society and to campaign for fundamental change at both national and international level, they expressed deep disappointment in the Istanbul 'Program of Action' adopted by UN member states.

Over the last year civil society has been galvanising people in LDCs to become involved in pushing for a dynamic 'Istanbul Programme of Action' to provide the framework for at least 50 percent of the LDCs to

graduate out of the category of the most vulnerable countries over the next ten years. They had submitted positive proposals to their governments and to international organisations about the need for a strengthened more integrated development framework. They were anxious to give teeth to the Programme and overcome the failures of the previous Programmes in order to set.

They had been optimistic that the Conference could mark a turning point towards a more just, equitable and sustainable world. However, "the resultant Programme, adopted on Friday has ignored any of these and 'definitely does not do the business' as it blatantly fails to provide a framework for graduation", they said.

'Unconditional Cancellation of Debt'

The CSF demanded immediate and unconditional cancellation of all debts of LDCs and a moratorium on debt payments by LDC governments pending debt cancellation. The Istanbul target to reduce the number of LDCs needs to occur because they graduate not because they burn or drown due to the impacts of climate change.

Civil society must be given a stronger role as a partner in development. Real ownership by LDCs of their development strategies requires not only ownership by governments but by society as a whole. An effective follow-up strategy to the UN-LDC IV Conference needs to be created, implemented and monitored, the CSF declaration said.

"We call for governments and donors to give a new priority to water and sanitation for all by 2020, and to the global Sanitation and Water for All partnership as a global platform to deliver national commitments on sanitation and water. The urban poor are particularly neglected. Service

delivery plans must meet the growing needs for water and sanitation in cities and towns," it said.

LDC governments should uphold and guarantee core labour rights, including freedom of association, and prepare national plans for the implementation of the ILO Global Jobs Pact with the meaningful participation of social partners and representative civil society organisations, the declaration said.

It called for regular reviews of progress to renew commitments and generate political will. "We will continue our work over the forthcoming decade. We will educate and raise awareness about the crucial challenges facing LDCs and the need for people-centred approaches to development. We will support and mobilise local communities and other citizens to challenge unjust and unsustainable policies and practices. We will play our part in ending the injustice of poverty and suffering. We will continue to work collaboratively with those who share our aims," it said.

EGALITE DES SEXES ET AUTONOMISATION DE LA FEMME

Investir sur les femmes

Par Hamidou SAGNA

"Investir sur les femmes a un effet multiplicateur." C'est la conviction du ministre d'Etat ; ministre chargée des Femmes et des Enfants de Bangladesh Mme Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury. Elle s'exprimait ainsi lors du forum portant sur le thème "Le développement humain et social, l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes". Au cours de la rencontre qui a réuni plusieurs sommités du système des Nations unies et de fortes personnalités telle l'ancienne présidente du Chili Mme Michelle Bachelet, tous se sont presque accordés pour reconnaître que les femmes sont le moteur du développement des Nations unies pour l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation de la femme Mme Michelle Bachelet, par ailleurs ancienne présidente du Chili dira que 90 % des revenus des femmes sont injectés dans la sécurité alimentaires et les frais scolaires. De quoi faire dire à William Lacy Swing que les femmes ont la clé pour déverrouiller le développement social et humain. A cette compétence, Mme Bachelet ajoute leur efficacité pour consolider la paix. En quoi il faut les associer aux accords de paix. Mieux, "les femmes doivent au cœur de l'agenda de la sécurité et de la paix", dira Mme Bachelet. Elle qui a, en outre, plaidé pour

"Si les femmes réussissent, elles tirent vers l'avant toute leur communauté", a martelé le Directeur exécutif du Fonds des Nations unies pour la population, M. Babatunde Osotimehin. Pour lui, "le temps est venu d'investir dans les femmes, surtout les jeunes femmes", précise-t-il. Pour s'en convaincre, le Directeur général de l'Organisation internationale pour les migrations, M. William Lacy Swing alerte : "les femmes envoient plus d'argent que les hommes". Dans ce même plaidoyer, la Secrétaire générale adjointe et Directrice exécutive de l'Entité

qu'on soutienne l'engagement politique des femmes. Ainsi, on pourra, sans doute, améliorer la représentativité parlementaire des femmes estimée aujourd'hui, sans doute, améliorer la représentativité parlementaire des femmes estimée aujourd'hui à 19 %. Même s'il est vrai que le Rwanda passe pour un modèle positif dans ce domaine avec 56 % de femmes parlementaires. Pour y arriver, il faudra inverser la tendance. Faire alors en sorte d'octroyer plus des 10 % de crédit pour les femmes, multiplier leur taux d'accès à l'école et réduire la mortalité maternelle.

Sivil Toplum Forumu'nun buruk kapanışı...

On yılda bir yapılan ve bu sene dördüncüsü gerçekleşen Birleşmiş Milletler En Az Gelişmiş Ülkeler Konferansı bugün sona eriyor. Bizler de Konferans bünyesinde Sivil Toplum Forumu'nu gerçekleştiren ekip olarak Forum'u bugün kapatıyoruz.

Yeryüzü Doktorları olarak Sivil Toplum Forumu'nun Türkiye'deki organizasyonu için gerek gecesini gündüzüne katan profesyonel ekibimizle, gerekse harikalar yaratan gönüllülerimizle, canla başla çalıştık. Başta En Az Gelişmiş Ülkeler olmak üzere dünyanın dört bir köşesinden gelen katılımcıların katkıları sayesinde bilginin, birikimlerin, deneyimlerin paylaşıldığı, birbirimizden çok şey öğrendiğimiz bir beş gün geçirdik. Dostluklar oluştu, bağlar güçlendi, işbirlikleri doğdu. Birbirimizi daha iyi tanıdık. Bundan çok keyif aldık. Bu çerçeveden bakıldığında, Sivil Toplum Forumu'nun verimli geçtiğini hissediyoruz.

Ancak işin bir de diğer yönü var. Sivil toplum temsilcileri olarak, En Az Gelişmiş Ülkeler'de yaşayan insanların gerçek ihtiyaçlarını ve bu ülkelerde kalkınmanın gereklerini gözetmeyen, ticarete ve maddi çıkarlara öncelik veren İstanbul Eylem Planı yüzünden büyük hayal kırıklığı içerisindeyiz. Sivil toplumun uyarıları ve talepleri Plan'da dikkate alınmadı. On yıl önce kabul edilen Brüksel Eylem Planı'nın bir adım ötesine geçilmedi. Yeni hedefler, yeni bir yaklaşım getiren stratejiler belirlenmedi. Geçmişte verilen sözlere ve taahhütlere sadık kalınmadığı gibi, gelişmiş ülkeler yeni taahhütlerde de bulunmadı. Yeryüzü Doktorları Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı Prof. Dr. İhsan Karaman'ın da dünkü basın toplantısında vurguladığı gibi, kuzeyli seçkinler, eski sömürgelerine karşı sorumluluklarından kaçıyorlar maalesef...

Türkiye, sivil toplumun çabalarını hiçe sayan bu tatsız sonucun daha farklı olması için aylardır çeşitli düzeylerde bir uğraş içerisindeydi. Türkiye'nin tüm çabalarına rağmen sonucun böyle olması bizi özellikle üzdü. Fakat Türkiye, En Az Gelişmiş Ülkeler'i kalkınma yolunda desteklemekten vazgeçmeyecek. Türkiye'de halihazırda bu ülkelere hizmet götüren birçok kuruluş var. Özellikle tıbbi ve insani yardım kuruluşları, uzun yıllardır bu ülkelerle yakın temas halindedir. Yıllardır süregelen ve tümüyle insani değerlere ve vicdana dayanan işbirliği artarak devam edecek. Gerek sivil toplum kuruluşlarının bu ülkelere uzanan eli vasıtasıyla, gerekse politik arenada, Türkiye, sonuna kadar En Az Gelişmiş Ülkelerin yanında olmayı sürdürecektir.

En Az Gelişmişlik kavramının olmadığı bir dünya dileğiyle...

Repoliticising Financing, Re-energising Political Support for Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

By Shobha Raghuram

Development aid, with its rapidly changing trends and cutbacks, has been a matter of concern for hundreds of civil society organisations (CSO) involved in bringing social justice to vulnerable populations. The pursuit of the right to development and the role of CSOs in achieving this deserve consistent financing and long-term support from governments and the international development community.

However, declining development aid has forced us to rethink what needs to be done. We need to change the way we work. The dependency trap needs to be set right, not with more dependency but with more self-reliance. Funding is a collective task; it is a moral call for donors and recipients alike.

Asia-Pacific region and development:

The challenge for funders. 60% of the world's population live in this region of paradoxes, of high progress in certain areas and regressions in others. Asia-Pacific includes China and India, two of the world's most populous countries that have posted high economic growth rates. Yet, the region hosts two-thirds of the world's poor. The neglect of women's health, including for SRHR, are stark. The highest maternal mortality rates are in Afghanistan (1,900 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2000), Nepal (740) and Timor-Leste (660). To arrive at the levels of care provisioning already attained by women in the Northern countries, funds need to be doubled. Despite these, Asia receives the lowest per capita aid of all regions-US\$12 compared with US\$45 for Africa.

From South to South:

New development funds for the Least-Developed Countries (LDCs)? When 6,000 government members and activists meet in May 2011 in Istanbul, the much-needed financing for LDCs will be high on the agenda. Official development assistance fell from US\$122.4 billion in 2008 to US\$120 billion in 2009 due to the recession. While aid has gone up again to US\$128.7 billion in 2010, it represents only 0.32% of the gross national income (GNI), a long way from the target of 0.7% of GNI agreed by governments at the UN in 1970. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that US\$68-70 billion yearly is needed to achieve the pledge at the International Conference on Population and Development for universal access to reproductive health.

The LDC meeting is crucial for determining new sources of funding and new modalities of achieving South-developed self-reliance. There needs to be a unified demand to Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICS) to enter into long-term



development assistance arrangements with the LDCs. BRICS can bring changes which can result in a South-owned development enterprise that reflects the best practices of committed Northern donors.

What is to be done? Issues for self-reflexive stocktaking. This must include:

- Undertaking a critical review of affected women's citizenship status, including on SRHR, drawn up with community members.
- Government and industry memorandum of understanding with bilateral agencies need CSO representation prior to agreements.
- Stating the community's political stand on local sovereignty and how they wish to engage internationally in a way in which cooperation becomes a respectful and just engagement.
- Drawing up of strategies for financial mobilisation, including government funding, international/external funding, membership support, alliances with like-minded industries and their contributions. Redesigning phase-out plans with out-going funders to ensure sustainability.
- Making available accurate information to communities, online availability of data regarding funds utilisation of organisations, and developing tracking and reporting systems for fund flows at the local, national and international levels.
- The government and the private sector can renew their pledges to civil society by serving as core funders. Holding on to the vision of a comprehensive SRHR does not exclude a country-by-country contextualisation, and influencing local government support for the same. All social movements must insist on gender equality measures and budgets from elected governments. Alliance building with like-minded agencies, donors and committed government members can strengthen the political voice of people. Such financial support can be called 'People's Funds,' where the political vision guides the campaign for funds.

The author is the Guest Editor of ARROWs for Change and can be reached at shobha.raghuram@gmail.com This editorial is part of ARROWs for Change Vol. 16 No. 2, which will be released on 31 May 2011. Write to the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) at afc@arrow.org.my to subscribe, and access past issues at www.arrow.org.my

Vox Populi at the Istanbul Conference

From more than 180 countries, about 10,000 people participated in the 4th UN LDC conference. Participants spoke their mind about the gathering.

Dr. Tania Bulbul, Representative of a volunteer organisation in Bangladesh

"I think governments and civil societies should work together, we have to learn from our past experiences, the number of poor countries was not minimized but increased, so we have to look at the matter and ask why, what makes LDCs poor. And another issue is the name itself, LDC, what is the real parameter to measure development, in which perspective? This word by itself is negative, it should be omitted from the dictionary. Finding out the real definition of LDC leads to where the gap is."



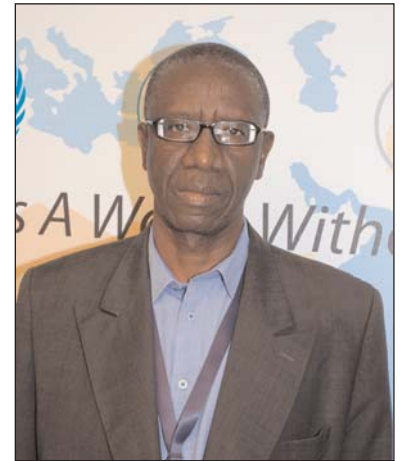
Yorgos Altintzis, Globalisation, Trade and Finance, From Greece

"I think this conference failed to involve trade unions and we think that the whole process did not allow much space for the civil society organisations to provide their inputs in a meaningful way. The Istanbul plan of action did not meet expectations of LDCs."



Demba Moussa Dembele, LDC watch, Chair Person, From Senegal

"We had high hope that things would change this time, especially after all these crises in the world. Unfortunately in the produced document, we see cynicism, it is business as usual. Developed countries do not seem ready for a new kind of partnership, it is really disappointing. We actually knew from the very beginning that things would be disappointing, because we didn't see a high level western leaders here except the president of EU Commission. Civil society organizations are frustrated by the whole process. So I think the next thing to do is to follow up the process, mobilize public opinion at local level, at national level and globally to find out who betrayed the Istanbul summit and who did their best."



Prerna Bomzan, From LDC watch Secretariat, Nepal

"We were quite optimistic about the new programme of action, but the adopted plan is a disappointing one, which doesn't bring any paradigm shift for the development of the LDCs."



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