



Financing for Development in a Fractured World

Organizer: NGO Committee on Financing for Development, A Substantive Committee of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO)

Date and Time: 8:30 am – 10:00 am EST on November 9, 2022

Please email the Committee at ngosoffd@gmail.com by November 7, 2022, to receive registration information.

Objective:

The General Assembly will decide during the current session whether it is ready to convoke the fourth Financing for Development (FfD) conference in the next few years. The global economy is in a difficult situation, especially for development, underlining the need for more effective international economic and financial cooperation. While it is not obvious that the international community as a whole is currently ready to effectively address the pending issues, it is time to start to try to build a new global consensus on financing for sustainable development.

The objective of the NGO Committee on FfD in organizing this workshop is to build the capacity of NGOs/CSOs that focus on a range of economic, social, and environmental issues to engage effectively in the FfD processes and to share updates on the current FfD discussions. While the session is geared towards NGOs/CSOs already engaged with UN processes, it is open to anyone interested in gaining an understanding of FfD. Speakers will provide a perspective of the FfD processes, clarify the larger impact of FfD-related decisions on the achievements of the 2030 agenda, and share insights on current developments and areas that require urgent action and strengthened advocacy efforts.

Background

The first FfD conference, over 20 years ago, held in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002, marked political agreement on a number of issues needing action at that time. In some of the issues, actions followed the words, as in boosting official development assistance, initiating action to boost aid effectiveness, completing negotiations on the UN Convention on Corruption, and responding albeit only partially to the inadequate voice and participation of developing countries in the governance of the Bretton Woods institutions and in

international financial regulatory reform. On other issues, follow-up was ultimately disappointing, notably in the trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization and in reforming the processes for a fair, timely, and effective workout from sovereign debt crises.

As in 2002, the issues requiring international action today are well known and it may be hoped that a fourth FfD conference would come to a political commitment to act on them. Even if the commitments made in the new conference do not all lead to intended policy measures, it may be hoped that the new conference would give many of them the political boost needed to get action over the finish line. What might those issues be?

Though COVID is still here, we deem this the *post-pandemic* era. The premise of the FfD process has been that international cooperation can help eradicate poverty, achieve sustained economic growth, and promote sustainable development in an inclusive and equitable global economic system. However, as governments continue to take measures to address the fallout from the pandemic, including austerity measures in some cases as they face added debt burdens, the poor and the most vulnerable continue to bear the brunt of regional and global policies that undermine social protection measures. The effects of climate change are also causing havoc in developed and developing countries. Hurricanes, tornadoes, monsoons, and typhoons have upended the lives of rich and poor alike, but with the gravest impact on those least able to respond and recover, in part because of financial constraints on policymaking.

The 2022 Financing for Sustainable Development Report identified a *great financial divide* – the inability of poorer countries to raise sufficient resources and borrow affordably for investment. This financial divide made it difficult for many developing countries to respond adequately to the COVID-19 pandemic – they will be left behind. In the forward to the Report, UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, reminds us: "*We must close the financing gaps that prevent so many countries from investing in recovery, climate action, and the SDGs.*" "*To build a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient global economy that works for all, we must also reform the international financial architecture with rules that are inclusive, effective, and fair.*"

Financial regulations that turn a blind eye toward tax havens are indicators of the extent to which the privatization of wealth has generated today's culture of short-sightedness. Morality is not arbitrary. The well-being of our planet and its 7.5 billion human inhabitants require a readjustment of perspective that justly distributes wealth, recognizing that shared prosperity sustains life.

This moment calls for a more holistic vision of the world that ought to lead to more than the empty promises of our current global social compact. We as civil society need to join forces to remove the malignant addiction to individual/private gain/profit and promote community well-being by calling for economic and financial structures that support collaboration, transparency, and accountability.

Topics Panelists May Raise

- Making the Fourth Financing for Development Conference an opportunity for the UN to again serve as a forum for global economic and financial policymaking;
- Financing an inclusive, equitable, and rapid recovery from the pandemic and climate catastrophes, then transitioning to sustained and sustainable growth paths;
- Enhancing domestic resource mobilization through more effective, efficient, and progressive national tax systems, and more effective international cooperation, including ending illicit financial flows;
- Achieving sovereign debt sustainability through more effective and timely restructuring of unsustainable debt;
- Accelerating job creation and the adoption of universal social protection;
- More frankly assessing public-private partnerships: the good, the bad, and the ugly;
- Realizing initiatives to mobilize additional climate finance for developing countries, including suggested policies for international development banks;
- Increasing the ODA volume and realizing the aid-effectiveness agenda;
- Realizing gender and other human rights obligations through economic policies;
- Enhancing stability in global financial markets and trading systems through systemic policy reform;
- Finally, how should civil society prepare for the Fourth FfD Conference?

Proposed Speakers

- Mr. Ivaylo Gatev, Second Committee Expert, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations
- Ms. Shari Spiegel, Chief, Policy Analysis and Development Branch, Financing for Sustainable Development Office, United Nations
- Ms. Beate Andres, Director of ILO's New York Office
- Mr. Roberto Bissio, Executive Director, Instituto del Tercer Mundo
- Mr. Aldo Caliarì, Senior Director of Policy and Campaigns, Jubilee USA Network

Moderator: Dr. Barry Herman, Social Justice in Global Development; Member, NGO Committee on Financing for Development

Opening remarks: Anita Thomas, Chair, NGO Committee on Financing for Development, Representative to the UN, Women First International Fund

Closing Remarks: Yvonne O'Neal, Vice-Chair, NGO Committee on Financing for Development; Representative to the UN, Africa Development Interchange Network (ADIN)