



Global Governance, the role of the United Nations.



*Thematic Debate of the United Nations General Assembly. New York, 27th
and 28th of June 2011.*



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The role of the United Nations in Global Governance¹

Since 2010 the Swiss Joseph Deiss, president of the 65th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA), has called a series of thematic debates in order to strengthen the role of the United Nations in Global Governance. The passed Tuesday, June 28th, one of these debates held was entitled "*Thematic debate about global governance*".

Since its beginning the UBUNTU Forum has as one of its priorities everything related to global governance. This is nowadays one of the most crucial topics in the global political agenda under an international context where the United Nations (UN) is the most legitimated body to endorse what is called "global governance", and it faces two major challenges: **to identify which are going to be the future challenges** and how are going to be faced within a context where power distribution does not correspond to its logical function; and **how to become more representative and inclusive** for actors like civil society and the private sector.

The UBUNTU Forum participated in this debate by organizing, together with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Foundation, a meeting at the UN headquarters entitled "*Global Economic Governance, Global inequality and the role of the United Nations*"; and participating in the thematic debate organized by the President of the UNGA.

UBUNTU Forum – Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

Global Economic Governance, Global Inequality and the Role of the United Nations. June the 27th, 2011. UN, New York City.



The meeting which was organized together with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Foundation on June 27th, addressed the role of the UN in the recent years marked by different **interconnected crises** (climatic, food, economical, financial, energetic, etc), that

¹ Report by Hernán Cortés (UBUNTU Forum); pictures by Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung



Global Governance. The role of the United Nations.

have increased global inequalities. The answers given by the international institutions have not had the expected scope and, therefore, have not generated the expected results, especially the ones related to the economical and financial crisis. The **economic global governance has ended in the hands of the G20**, an informal meeting that has relegated the UN to a secondary role. This crisis has shown that governance in these issues is not working properly. There is, therefore, an **urgent need to establish an effective, equitable, sustainable and responsible economic global structure which can meet the challenges** that the multilateral system faces.

The event was attended by Mr. Manuel Manonelles, UBUNTU Foundation's Director, and Werner Puschra, Director of the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung's office in New York, as in charge of the opening remarks. Among the participants, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul former minister of Economic and Development Cooperation from the federal government of Germany; the Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary General of the UN; and the professor of economics at the New University School, Anwar Shaikh.



The former minister Mrs. Wieczorek-Zeul highlighted the "direction" that globalization has taken due to what she called "market radicalism", and that points out the need to shape a global capitalism with social, economic and political norms. Also, coinciding with what the Ambassador Chowdhury explained, **Least Developed Countries** cannot be left apart, especially African countries. In this sense, the Ambassador specified that all these countries have been condemned to obscurity due to the apparition on the front page of the G20 group as opposed to the G77.

Meanwhile, Professor Shaikh focused on the frustrated feeling created by the economical situation and which has lead to uprisings. He explained that the economy should be focused on real institutions and real politics. It is, therefore, the view that is given to the economy that determines the decisions taken. The



Global Governance. The role of the United Nations.

prevailing orthodoxy has generated the crisis and the absence of effective solutions and alternatives.

The event was attended by officers of the permanent missions of different States, Ambassadors, Civil Society members, and senior officials in the UN system.

Thematic Debate of the President of the UNGA

Thematic Debate on Global Governance. Tuesday, June 28th.

UNGA, New York City.

The session organized at the proposal of the UNGA's President with the idea to "reaffirm the central role of the UN in global governance", came up due to the burst of new actors related to global governance that are "challenging the hegemony of the traditional multilateral institutions such as the UN". Therefore, **discussions about this subject were established in order to strengthen the multilateral institutions** and the intergovernmental framework for global governance and, particularly, on its economical side.



On the debate, one of the most commented subjects was the role of the G20. As explained by the President of the UNGA "the G20 has proved its own ability to quickly manage economic and financial crisis, but, which is its legitimacy? The efficiency does not give the G20 its legitimacy" (Deiss, 2011). The President concluded affirming that "global answers for the common good demand concessions".

The European Union noted that the **international development architecture has undergone a major transformation** with the apparition of new key actors in the international system; with the increase of regional cooperation, South-South and triangular; the role of civil society and the private sector; and new innovative mechanisms.



Global Governance. The role of the United Nations.

One of the most important statements of the meeting was made by the President of the Republic of Slovenia. In his speech he insisted on the idea that the moment has come for a **major ambition on the reform of a UN** which, in his words, “has to adjust and reform internally, and to establish effective relationships with other regional organizations and civil society groups” (Türk, 2011). Among the proposals that were put on the table stressed the one related to the role of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in the system, by proposing this organism to act as an intermediary between the G20 and the UN, as well as establish it as the **governing body of funds and programs working in the field of economical and social development**.

The global governance is a preoccupation that requires the highest attention and work of all the actors involved, mainly for economic issues and its impact on development. In a world where “the economical integration has been huge, and where the institutions are focused on its mandate and specific objectives, the international community has to establish effective global economic governance” (Aküz, 2009). It is a task and a compromise from all the involved actors to revert this situation in order to make that economics and finances answer the development needs in the world, as the UBUNTU Forum has always defended.

The UBUNTU Forum will continue to work on the same path. However, not only on issues related to economic governance, but also to achieve global, effective and real governance at all levels.

Quotations:

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