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The Parliamentary Network Review July 2017, vol.10, n°2

Chairman's Foreword

In Dodoma Region in Tanzania earlier this year, I saw at first hand the benefit of pre-school education in rural communities. Children were being given lessons in numeracy and literacy to prepare them for primary school. As a result, more children had the confidence to begin primary school (which was about 5 km distant) and to benefit from it.

The teaching was done by a young man – a volunteer – who was supported by the village. They provided him with accommodation and an allowance. The classroom was a church – a simple building of wood, bricks and thatch.

It was an honour for me to see how proud the whole village was of what they had achieved by themselves, with the support of the Tanzanian government and some UK funding. The value which they placed on education for their children – girls and boys alike – was clear.

The same was true for the families of the children of Syrian refugees whom I saw in Lebanon and Jordan. The way in which their governments have worked to ensure that these children receive an education is outstanding. In Lebanon, Syrian children go to school in the 'second shift', in the afternoon, studying their own curriculum.



In Nigeria, I visited the largest school I have ever seen – a primary school in Kano with more than 13,000 students. I was impressed by the enthusiasm of the teachers and students alike. The curriculum had been updated recently and children with special needs were being taught appropriately.

On the outskirts of Lahore, there was a small school run by a lady with three helpers. It was educating children who had previously been working in a brick factory nearby. Now instead of being child labourers, they could learn.

Children in a remote rural community, or living as refugees, or in a vast city which had been hit by terrorist attacks, or former labourers – for all of them, education was seen by their parents and their governments as vital, a way out of poverty and towards a better future.

Education does not often receive the same attention in development as health, infrastructure or economic development. Yet it underpins all these. Without a sound education system, you cannot educate the health workers, technicians, engineers, accountants and – importantly – teachers upon whom all the other sectors depend.

Governments have the responsibility to provide education. Development aid cannot be a substitute for core funding, which should come from the national and regional budgets. However, development assistance can play a major role in providing technical and professional support – whether in designing the curriculum or teacher training –, and in helping to finance the infrastructure of education, whether that is buildings, equipment or materials.

As parliamentarians, education comes very high on the list of our constituents' priorities. We therefore have a responsibility to make it a priority for our governments, whether they are donors or recipients of development assistance.

Jeremy Lefroy, MP United Kingdom

Chair of the Parliamentary Network
on the World Bank & IMF



“A fair share: Universal basic income, et al...?” Notes from an OECD Forum session

PN Secretariat

Rampant unemployment and inequalities around the world have led many to consider adopting Universal Basic Income (UBI) as a means to tackle these issues and adapt to the new technological era. Will the introduction of UBI achieve these goals, or will it only widen the wealth gap?

The most widespread definition of Universal Basic Income is based on regular cash transfers guaranteed to everyone regardless of their age, work status, revenue, or any other condition. Today, different visions of basic income are circulating among experts, varying along many dimensions such as scope, source of funding, amount, or consequent reduction in social benefits. While it is often perceived as a utopian idea, today's challenges such as technological revolution, rising poverty and unemployment, and changing skill requirements are making UBI a highly relevant question.

On the occasion of the 2017 OECD Forum, a renowned advocate for universal basic income professor Guy Standing offered four justifications for Basic Income:

- It is a matter of social justice. As the role of inherited advantage grows with each generation, the opportunities for those who cannot rely on their family's support from childhood onwards are dwindling.
- UBI would potentially enhance personal and community freedom, protecting people (particularly women and other vulnerable groups) from exploitation and empowering them.
- UBI would provide a basic sense of security in an era of growing inequalities, which would lead to better achievements and social mobility.
- The marginalized groups, alienated from mainstream political agenda by the lack of stability and security in their lives, are susceptible to populists and neo-fascist agendas, destabilizing existing social institutions and exacerbating social crises.

Universal basic income also resolves the problem of a “poverty trap” or “cliff effect.” Ironically, many have to transition from unemployment with generous benefits to a low-wage job with loss of all benefits, which creates a disincentive to work. Under the UBI scheme, payment is guaranteed regardless of a person's work status.

Another argument in favor of UBI is the exponential improvement in new technologies, which suggests that more workers will soon become replaced by AI technology. As John Maynard Keynes wrote in 1930, we will face “unemployment due to our discovery of means of economising the use of labour outrunning the pace at which we can find new uses for labour.” More and more low-skilled and even higher-level analytical jobs such as accounting and medical diagnostics are being automated because of invention of more cost-effective solutions.



If so, can UBI be an efficient form of income redistribution in a world where work is scarce and wealth is highly concentrated?

The UBI model explored by the OECD in their latest policy brief "Basic Income as a Policy Option: Can It Add Up?" suggests abolishing or reducing existing social benefits schemes and introducing regular flat-rate cash payments. According to the brief, UBI will make the targeting of precarious groups less precise and in the case of a budget-neutral BI (unconditional payments system replacing social security benefits with no additional funding from elsewhere), all those in need will ultimately be worse off than before, since this scheme would redistribute wealth upward, taking money targeted to the poor and distributing it to middle- and higher-income groups.

However, in other UBI schemes proposed by its advocates, cash payments are to be supported with additional revenue from increased taxes as well as savings from social benefits, making UBI a politically challenging issue.

The alternative to UBI is restructuring and rethinking existing benefits systems, allowing for better targeting of precarious groups and providing particular support programs for disadvantaged children. Today, improving existing social security schemes is a more realistic solution in most countries.

The main arguments for the introduction of basic income are therefore twofold: first, it would reduce poverty and vulnerability and increase social stability, and second, it can potentially effectively address issues arising from work automation. However, in practice, we still do not know if UBI will ultimately reduce or increase inequalities, since implementation of a flat-rate cash payment for everyone will likely be smaller or equivalent to targeted benefits. The pilot projects introduced around the world to explore the possibility of UBI, while informative, do not provide us the entire picture: for example, the Finnish experiment with BI only targets the unemployed.

All in all, according to the OECD, BI may result in losses for considerable parts of the population, while not significantly reducing poverty. These losses can be alleviated by leaving the current benefits system in place while introducing UBI, but this option would require drastic tax increases. Another option would be to cut the duration, scope, amount or any other aspects of UBI, possibly defeating its original purpose.

Parliamentarians can play a key role in investigating potential effects of various models of Universal basic income proposed by scholars by requesting impact assessment studies, proposing policy experiments, and exploring possibilities of developing legislation on UBI. Ultimately, the future of Basic Income depends on the objective societies want to achieve and on whether they are prepared to rethink their entire socioeconomic and fiscal systems to achieve a more just and equitable system for all.



Opinion piece: Tax Evasion in Canada

Senator Percy E. Downe, Canada
PN Board Member

The issue of overseas tax evasion is a serious problem for Canada and is costing the Government of Canada untold amounts of lost revenue. The nature of the problem makes gauging its true size difficult, but estimates of the amount of money hidden in secret overseas accounts by Canadians range into the billions of dollars.

Overseas tax evasion is of great concern for two reasons. The first is obvious: if governments are to perform all the functions that are required of them, they must have adequate resources, resources that are almost completely dependent upon tax revenues. If a growing number of citizens refuse to pay their fair share of taxes, governments will either be forced to reduce the level of services they provide, or they will be forced to get extra revenue from law-abiding taxpayers. Second, if Canadians who pay their fair share see tax evaders shirking their duty with impunity, it will lead to a loss of confidence in the system.

That said, progress has been made in the fight against overseas tax evasion with the last two federal budgets which, combined, have given the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) almost one billion Canadian dollars in new money; the resources it needs to take on those who hide their money in overseas tax havens. That progress is as welcome as it is overdue, given that the amount of money lost to overseas tax evasion is staggering.

The centerpiece of the 2016 Budget commitment to the CRA was the investment of some \$444 million in new money to “enhance its efforts to crack down on tax evasion and combat tax avoidance”. That amount was more than matched in the 2017 Budget with an additional \$524 million. The government said in 2016 that it expected to recoup \$2.6 billion from its \$444 million investment, a low target given organizations like the Conference Board of Canada estimate that up to \$47 billion in uncollected tax revenue is owing to the Government of Canada.

Similar benchmarks from last year, such as “a twelve-fold increase in the number of tax schemes examined by the CRA”, the hiring of 100 additional auditors, and a commitment to institute better cooperation between investigators and legal counsel “so that cases may be quickly brought to court” are all measurable initiatives that will allow Canadians to know just how much progress is being made.

The CRA had suffered from a shortage of resources, staff and information, but this increased funding will lead to more auditors and other investigative resources. This means the Agency will be able to examine more thoroughly existing sources of information, like the Panama Papers, as well as actively seek evidence of overseas tax evasion. This represents a tremendous increase in capabilities which, if pursued zealously, cannot fail to pay future dividends for all Canadians since the additional billions collected will fund government programs, pay down the deficit and reduce taxes.



The only question remaining now that CRA has the additional billion dollars in resources, is whether they possess the competency and ability to perform the important work ahead. In the past, their lack of transparency and openness has raised serious concerns that two sets of rules exist. If you hide your money overseas, your chances of getting caught are very low, but if you cheat on your taxes domestically, you are very likely to get caught. Check the CRA website, where at any given time you will find all kinds of Canadians charged, convicted, and in some cases, imprisoned for domestic tax evasion. There are far fewer, if any, notices of anyone charged or convicted of overseas tax evasion.

I have recommended to the CRA that they reach out to the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) and make him a welcome and active participant in this process, particularly as it relates to their promise to start estimating the tax gap (the difference between what is owed in taxes and what is actually collected). The PBO's office has spent many years working on how to calculate such an estimate, and their expertise would be an invaluable contribution to the study.

My work on the tax gap goes back to 2012, when I asked the then PBO to investigate the economic impact of overseas tax evasion. That investigation evolved into an effort to measure the tax gap. After diligent effort, the PBO determined that it is indeed possible to provide an estimate of the tax gap—particularly as many jurisdictions around the world already perform such calculations—and subsequently approached the CRA to secure its cooperation in this endeavour. Unfortunately, years of stonewalling by the Agency prevented any progress. In the interim, however, groups as diverse as Canadians for Tax Fairness and the Conference Board of Canada have advocated such a study.

In calculating the tax gap, Canada would join countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and France, all of whom calculate the tax gap on a regular basis. The benefits of such an effort are twofold: it demonstrates to a society how many of its members aren't paying their fair share of taxes, and it provides a means of measuring the performance of a revenue agency, an important factor when developing future policy.

The CRA needs to increase its accountability towards Canadians, tell them what they are actually doing and stop using weasel words like the amount of taxes they have "identified" as opposed to actually collected. A new honesty and transparency policy, along with the promised financial commitment, would offer renewed confidence that all Canadians are treated equally, and Canadians will finally see how much uncollected tax revenue a fair and efficient system can recover.



Cooperatives and the Fight against Poverty in Uganda

Nathan Nandala-Mafabi, MP Uganda
PN Board Member

Uganda is often hailed for its successes in fostering GDP growth and bringing down poverty rates. The international development sector and the Government of Uganda argue that the country's liberal economic policy mix is responsible for these results. In other words, they say that liberalisation has helped the poor. And yet, given dynamics in agricultural markets it can be argued that these reforms have in many ways resulted in the exact opposite: for instance, agricultural workers that has been made disorganised, vulnerable, and economically stressed because of the reform; and that is regularly being exploited, deceived and humiliated by those who buy produce from them: middlemen, traders, and large companies including multinationals. The government, officially charged with protecting and helping poor farmers, has often rather done the opposite, weakening them as an economic group and subsequently allowing buyers to take advantage of and harm farmers.

The coffee sector in eastern Uganda is a good example of these reform-related dynamics of weakening the poor over the past three decades. It is also a good example of how farmers have tried to re-organise themselves again for over a decade now in the fight against an unequal and unjust trade system that has emerged out of the aforementioned reforms. And yet again, as I will argue below, this struggle for increased economic power of farmers, and the subsequent increased value capture of this group in market transactions, are being undermined regularly by the so-called pro-poor fighters: the government and the state.

There is a new book out that details some of these dynamics titled *Neoliberal Moral Economy: Capitalism, Socio-Cultural Change and Fraud in Uganda* by Jörg Wiegratz. I highly recommend it to fellow parliamentarians. It provides and discusses data from interviews with a wide-ranging market actors in agricultural trade in Eastern Uganda, especially the region around the main city, Mbale. It shows that liberal reforms have disempowered small-holder farmers: their cooperatives more or less collapsed in the 1990s and 2000s due to the reforms, with their bargaining power diminished and state support and services for agricultural production and marketing weakened. Severe power asymmetries and dependency relations in markets determine price negotiations and outcomes. Rural markets are often largely controlled by middlemen/traders, who often work for large buyers, including multinationals. Some of these middlemen are decent people, but many take advantage of vulnerable farmers who are under great financial pressures and therefore are forced to accept the very low prices offered.



Often there is routine and serious cheating and humiliation of farmers too; weighing scale manipulation is just one of many forms of deception that is ripe in these so-called “free markets.” All this results in robbing farmers of the fruit of their labour. Multinationals and large domestic firms, often owned by individuals with contacts with the government, benefit from all this: they get precious coffee at a very low price. The state has shown little interest in changing this set-up. It was eventually the activism of farmers and their supporters in the region that brought about significant change.

In the late 2000s they succeeded in reviving a major cooperative in the region, the BCU. This cooperative, like dozens of others across the country, has been weakened by the reforms. Also, corruption in top management was high. By the mid-2000s BCU was hardly operational and in debt. The revival took place over several years. The BCU was eventually freed from the corrupt management, and the economic strengthening of the organisation was able to take place. Notably, the state was often not supportive with this initiative, and many farmers believe that this was due to the government's fear that a revitalised, strong BCU would make it more difficult for the government to run the region politically.

Therefore, to create jobs for the youth, there is an urgent need for deliberate effort for governments in developing countries to invest in agriculture. After production, the marketing should be done through cooperatives. Even the farmers should be organized in cooperatives to get better bargaining power.

**Bugisu Cooperative Union (BCU) consists of 286 primarily cooperative societies, each with about 2,000 farmers-members who grow organic Arabic coffee. Hon. Nathan Nandala-Mafabi is the chairman of this union.



The 5th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Enrique Guerrero Salom, MEP

As Standing Rapporteur for Humanitarian Aid in the European Parliament, I had the opportunity to attend the 5th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR), which took place in Cancun (Mexico), 22-26, May 2017. I represented the European Parliament's Committee of Development and was part of the overall EU Delegation led by Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid, Christos Stylianides.

The meeting was successfully organised by Mexico and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk (UNISDR) and was the first opportunity to examine the practical implementation of the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction (DRR). This is an important subject for myself as Standing Rapporteur for humanitarian aid, and more broadly for our parliamentary committee. I was present at the Sendai conference in 2015 where the new framework was agreed upon, and have since then monitored its implementation in the EU's humanitarian and development policy, ensuring coherence with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

During the Global Platform, I took part as speaker in the parliamentary meeting co-organised by UNISDR and the Mexican Senate on 23 May. The meeting was co-chaired by María Elena Orantes López and Ángelica Araujo Lara - Chairs of the Civil Protection Committees in the Mexican House of Representatives and the Senate respectively - and opened by the UN Special Representative, Robert Glasser. During this day-long event, parliamentarians, as well as representatives from government agencies and NGOs from Argentina, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Mongolia, Bangladesh and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) outlined the different ways in which new legislation and inclusive DRR governance and monitoring systems – at both national and local levels – can contribute to the implementation of the commitments made in the Sendai framework. In my intervention, I outlined how the EU is implementing the commitments made in Sendai through a dedicated Action Plan, as well as the revised European Consensus for Development and the new strategy on resilience.

I also had the opportunity to participate in the forum for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States. The meeting aimed to review the progress in implementing EU-funded DRR programmes in ACP countries, with collaboration from a variety of partners, including UN agencies, the World Bank, the African Union and the African Development Bank. It was also a unique experience to share good practices and experiences.



The meeting was attended by representatives from Haiti, South Sudan, the Solomon Islands and the African Union Commission, as well as from Pacific and Caribbean regional organisations and the ACP secretariat. All stakeholders stressed the importance of DRR projects funded by the EU, since they allow to build essential capacities, while stressing that funding be coordinated and aligned to national priorities. Participants highlighted the importance of integrating DRR into sustainable development strategies – a task in which the Pacific region is a pioneer – and the important role of regional organisations in translating global commitment into nationally-tailored strategies, and the need to promote inclusive strategies and partnerships with local communities. In my concluding remarks, I noted how DRR needs to be a fundamental aspect of development strategies, notably as there is a growing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters. I also stressed that the European Parliament continue to advocate for a robust relationship with the ACP group of states, building on stronger regional pillars.

In addition to the sessions during which I actively participated in the debate, I also had the opportunity to attend different plenary and working sessions, and to hold a number of meetings including a breakfast working session with women leaders, and a meeting with NGO representatives. Overall, this was a productive and interesting conference, with a strong representation of parliamentarians from around the world - a necessary involvement in order to secure the successful translation of the Sendai framework into national legislation for disaster risk reduction, and to monitor its implementation.



Dealing with Counterfeit, Expired, and Fake Drugs: The Role of Parliaments in the ECOWAS Sub-Region

Appiah-Pinkrah Kwabena, MP Ghana,
Member of the ECOWAS Parliament

Counterfeit, expired and fake drugs in West Africa are about the health of the people, the economy of countries, and the lives and productivity of the workforce within the sub-region. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines counterfeit medicine as such: "one which is deliberately and fraudulently mislabeled with respect to identity and/or source. Counterfeiting can apply to both branded and generic products and counterfeit products may include products with the correct ingredients or with the wrong ingredients, without active ingredients, with insufficient active ingredients or with fake packaging."

According to the World Health Organization, about 100,000 deaths a year in Africa are linked to counterfeit drug trade, and about 25% of all the medicines in developing countries are counterfeit. In West Africa, the issue is more complex, and there is no clear distinction between counterfeit and substandard drugs.

Most countries in West Africa have weak drug regulatory bodies, which are poorly funded and staffed. Enforcement of rules and regulations on drugs by the Customs services and other policy agencies in these countries is also failing, thus creating a fertile ground for counterfeiters to flourish. Corruption, and conflict of interest, insecure and unfriendly environment, discriminatory regulations by exporting countries, lack of, or inadequate legislation, limited collaboration and cooperation among governmental agencies are some of the driving factors in providing a fertile ground for the unflinching growth of counterfeit drugs in West Africa. The consequences of the proliferation of fake, falsified and substandard drugs are devastating. It is a form of terrorism against public health as well as an act of economic sabotage.

"The evil of fake drugs is worse than the combined scourge of malaria, HIV/AIDS, armed robbery and illicit drugs. Malaria can be prevented or treated, HIV/AIDS can be avoided, armed robbers may or may not kill, cocaine and similar drugs are taken out of choice and by those who can afford them, but fake drugs are taken by all, and anybody can be a victim."

Unfortunately, the penalties for crimes associated with drugs are not strong enough to deter criminals. This paper highlights the incidence of counterfeit, expired, or fake drugs in West Africa, examines the measures so far undertaken by these countries, and emphasizes the role Parliament must play towards reducing the volume of counterfeit drugs.

The Incidence of Counterfeit, Expired, and Fake Drugs in West Africa

There is an increasing global concern about the wanton growth of counterfeit, expired, and fake drugs in the West African sub-region, especially, Nigeria, Benin, Ghana and Liberia.



The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) acknowledged that “drug trafficking is an enemy of the state and the rule of law, existing as a parallel power that rivals the legal system and is compelled to fight it” (West African Commission on Drugs, 2013). Almost all kinds of drugs in West Africa are fake, ranging from antibiotics and anticancer to endocrine drugs (WHO, 2006). More than 65 million counterfeit drugs were discovered over the last decade, with viagra, anti-malarial drugs, and antibiotics being the most frequently counterfeited in Africa.

In sub-Saharan Africa, 30% of drugs were found to be counterfeit during the last decade. According to the West Africa Health Organisation 2014 Plan, 30 to 60% of medicines in the markets of most West African countries are counterfeits, and in 2011, 64% of anti-malarial drugs in Nigeria were found to be counterfeit. Estimates of the extent of counterfeit medicines in Nigeria were over 41%, from various studies done prior to 2001. A study conducted by Poole in Nigeria in 1989 indicated that 25% of samples studied were fake, 25% were genuine, and 50% were inconclusive .

In 1990, a study by Adeoye for a pharmaceutical firm in Lagos showed that about 54% of drugs in every major pharmacy shop were fake. It also indicated that the figure had risen to 80% in the subsequent year.

The situation is not different in Ghana, where a study carried out by Professor Ofori-Kwakye and Mariam El-Duah, which found that 14 of 17 (82.4%) sampled Artesunate tablets sold in pharmacies in Kumasi failed to meet European Pharmacopeia content requirements. The Minister of Health, at a workshop on 26th March, 2013 indicated that the illegal trade of counterfeit medicines in Ghana is assuming a threatening dimension, which could lead to the loss of public confidence in the health system. A report by the International policy Network (IPN) entitled “Combating the spreading of fake drugs in poor countries” reveals that fake tuberculosis and malaria drugs are estimated to kill 700,000 people yearly in developing countries, including Ghana.

This gloomy picture of the sub-region of widespread counterfeit drugs does not only affect the health status of the average citizens of these countries, but also businesses, productivity and the economy as a whole. In recognition of the gravity of the problem, ECOWAS Parliament, in its meeting in plenary session in May 2017 asserted that “member States should: Launch a large-scale investigation into this drug trafficking; sponsor a campaign against counterfeit medicines and or expired drugs; take all necessary and possible measures to combat this trafficking”.

The good news is that in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and other West African States, reviews of legislation are ongoing with respect to drug trafficking.

The Institutional and Legal Framework in Ghana

In Ghana, prior to 1990, drug regulation and the practice of the pharmaceutical profession were under the Pharmacy and Drugs Act (Act 64) 1961. In 1992, the Food and Drugs Law 1992 (PNDC 350B) was enacted to control the manufacture, importation, exportation, distribution use and advertisement of food, drugs, cosmetics, chemical substance, and medical devices.



It has since been replaced by the Public Health Act 2012 (Act 851) which upgrades the Food and Drugs Board (FDB) into an Authority. The Public Health Act (Act 851) 2012, places the control of, manufacture, importation, exportation, distribution, use and advertisement of food and drugs, cosmetics, medical devices and household chemicals under the purview of the FDA, with respect to ensuring their safety, quality and efficacy.

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) is the body responsible for regulating medicine on the Ghanaian markets to ensure that medicines on the Ghanaian markets are safe and meet the required standards. FDA registers all medicines, prior to their manufacture, or importation into the Ghanaian market, issues certificates for each product, after passing it through a set of prequalification procedures, which may be renewed by the FDA after three years. It also **licenses all pharmaceutical companies** in the country, and renews their licenses annually. FDA also **controls importation of medication** by liaising with Ghana Ports and Harbors Authority port officers to monitor medicines imported into the country, and is responsible for the issuance of import permits which authorize importers of pharmaceutical products to import registered products. It also undertakes **post market surveillance** on medicines that have been given market authorization or are in distribution on the Ghanaian market. The purpose is to check and take action on non-compliant medicinal products on the Ghanaian markets. Finally, FDA, through its departments and units undertakes such other activities to ensure that all medicines manufactured and distributed in the country meet their approved standards. FDA also monitors the activities of pharmaceutical companies to ensure that they comply with approved manufacturing procedures.

The Role of Parliaments: Ghana

In spite of having these institutional and legislative measures in place, Ghana, like any other countries in the sub-region, is bedeviled with counterfeit, expired, and fake drugs. This calls for concerted efforts by all stakeholders, including parliaments which can contribute their quota to the fight against this menace through legislation, oversight, representation, and financial power.

The legislature exercises legislative powers and parliamentary oversight by passing laws that define and regulate the manufacture, import and export of drugs as well as the distribution and display of medicines.

a. Legislation

One of the key contributory factors to the growth of the menace in West Africa is weak or inadequate laws in the sub-region. This means that Parliaments' role through effective legislation is a sine qua non in the fight against counterfeit drugs in the sub-region. This is mainly done through enacting new legislation, accompanied by their legislative instruments, or amending existing laws to reflect the exigencies of the drug trade in West Africa. In many parts of Africa, such as Ghana, legislation is only introduced by the executive. However, the Parliament scrutinizes it to ensure that its provisions represent the interest of the people it represents. Individual members of Parliament should introduce private member bills to deal with this canker, if deemed fit.



b. Oversight

Using their powers of the purse, and by adopting the corresponding budgetary appropriations, Parliaments can authorize such expenditures as they see necessary in fighting fake drugs. Such oversight may also include establishing a parliamentary permanent/ad hoc committee that may launch investigations into complaints made by the public in respect of fake drugs. The legislature also has the constitutional right and duty to call members of the Executive before its committees and to question them, including high-ranking officers whose testimony may be necessary in order for the parliament to carry out oversight.

Parliaments must make it mandatory for member countries to include in their country reports, at the beginning of each Parliamentary session the status of the fight against counterfeit drugs in their respective countries.

c. Representation

In their representative roles, MPs can develop professional relationships with civil society organizations, think tanks, media and individual experts specialising in medicine and health issues in general, so that they can collaborate with them in the fight against counterfeit drugs.

Members of Parliament also have the responsibility of educating their constituents on issues of counterfeit, fake, and expired drugs, the dangers involved when taking these drugs, and ways of checking and avoiding them. They must also remain in tune with the constituents' concerns and be receptive to their input in their roles as legislators.

Challenges Ahead

There are several challenges, facing member countries of ECOWAS in their fight against counterfeit, fake, and expired drugs. These challenges include but are not limited to border porosity, inadequate technological and human resource capacity, weak regional collaboration amongst security agencies and regulatory institutions, under-regulated local pharmaceutical industries, poor law enforcement structures, vulnerability to organized crimes, and corrupt practices.

In conclusion, there is no denying that counterfeit, expired and fake drugs abound in West Africa. This constitutes a grave development challenge to these countries. Although drug counterfeiting is a global problem, developing countries are most heavily affected, and the poor bear the brunt. The impact of counterfeit drugs knows no geographical boundaries. The consequences of the proliferation of counterfeit drugs are dehumanising. It leads to the loss of lives, collapse of legal businesses, and increase in illegal cross-border activities. Though most countries in the region have laws and institutions in place to deal with this challenge, these are inadequate. Fortunately, new technologies are assisting in the fight against counterfeit drugs in Africa. Countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya have integrated mobile telephone –based consumer verification into their safety regulations. This low-technology innovation is helping to restore the public's trust in the health sector.



The Route to Economic Reforms

AlBinMohamed Bassam, MP Bahrain

The world is going through a difficult time of slow economic growth and growing national debt. Some governments are in better positions, having accumulated surpluses in the past, which helps them through this challenging time, but others are less fortunate. One common issue that all governments, regardless of their economic positions, are struggling with is the obvious change in the way their economies function. Some call this the "4th wave" or the "4th revolution," and governments must readjust their policies to fare in this new era.

Examining the economies of the Arabian Gulf Countries, it is clear that the dependence on oil revenues is no longer sustainable. Therefore, all of the six GCC nations adopted new visions and plans to diverge from the oil-based economy into a more diverse and dynamic economy. Most notably, such efforts are the Saudi 2030 vision and the interesting UAE model. The Bahrain vision of 2030 that was launched by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa back in 2006 long before the current drop in oil prices and talk about a new economic revolution is another example. What drove Bahrain to make such a move includes its limited natural resources which helped Bahrain build on the many other strengths it possesses such as the wealth of its human capital, educational system, and the well-established financial system. However, the Bahraini version of Vision 2030 showed that Bahrain could use its strategic location to develop new industries such as tourism and modern technology infrastructure.

More than a decade has passed since the introduction of Bahrain's vision and we can see significant achievements such as the establishment of Tamkeen, an institution that has one mandate, which is to provide financial support to Bahraini entrepreneurs, SMEs and companies. Its support varies from providing marketing and financial support to equipment purchases to assisting them with their business plans and bookkeeping. Some shortfalls in the implementation of the Vision still exist, however, and there are areas where Bahrain could do better. Prior to the Vision, for instance, Bahrain had only one university, but now it hosts more than 9 universities; yet not all of them are up to the high standards of the Bahraini educational system, which affects the quality of human capital entering the labor market. Therefore, more effort should be made to attract top universities to be established in Bahrain and to link their programs to the economy that Bahrain wishes to build. In other words, we must invest in shaping our future economy through quality education infrastructure.

There are plenty of articles that have been published that discuss the major change in certain industries, for instance, the auto manufacturers with Google, Apple and Uber competing in introducing driverless cars. Technology has changed the way businesses are done in many industries, and jobs are being replaced by AI technology or with cheaper work force elsewhere. Therefore, if the educational system doesn't improve and governments do not interfere in shaping that change, we will fail in meeting the market needs in terms of labor. This will increase the unemployment rates to historical figures as we have been seeing in many places around the world, even in developed industrialized economies.



Even all the talk about increased protectionist measures in Trump's speeches and plans will not end globalization or halt the new economic revolution. Old industries simply exist no longer and even if Trump policies bring factories back to the US as he plans to do, they will still need to adapt to the new economy and its requirements. The US, for example, tried to implement many retooling programs for those who have lost their jobs because of new technologies or factories moving abroad for cheaper labor. Unfortunately, most of these retooling programs haven't worked because it targeted the wrong segment. The change needs to be done from bottom-up, training the workforce appropriately with quality education, not trying to force the current workforce to fit into an unplanned economy.

To do so, governments need to clearly and properly invest in planning and shaping their future economy, knowing what types of jobs it will need in the next 10 to 15 years and what kinds of economy (service-based or industrial or any other type) it will have, and then tailor the educational system and programs to better serve that economy. Having said that, governments should also pay attention to the execution of their policies. Long gone are the days where governments could quietly plan and execute their plans without involving all the stakeholders (Parliament, Citizens, and the Private Sector) in the process. All stakeholders must view one another as useful partners in achieving these policy changes.

To bridge the gap between today and the future economy and to encourage entrepreneurs and the private sector to venture and invest in these new economies, governments must establish a solid safety net system. In Bahrain, the public health care system is offered to all Bahrainis for free in most cases or with small charges. The government also has a housing program that provides homes to eligible Bahrainis for reduced costs, and public education is offered to all for free. Moreover, the government established a fund that provides financial support for up to one year to those who are unemployed and looking for a job. Such safety nets should create proactive entrepreneurs that can take advantage of the new economic revolution.

With its 2030 Vision, Bahrain is well-positioned to implement effective economic reforms. Therefore, revisiting the Vision and amending it to maximize its gains will be crucial. Meanwhile, Bahrain can benefit from the well-planned Saudi 2030 Vision and complement it in many sectors, including the logistics sector.



The Importance of the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor

Shakila Luqman, MP Pakistan

CPEC: China-Pakistan economic corridor is a very important joint venture between Pakistan and China. It is a known fact that the economic paradigm has been shifting due to the emerging Sino-Power.

CPEC is the part of China's new vision "One Belt, One Road," and this is its southern corridor of the Silk Road project.

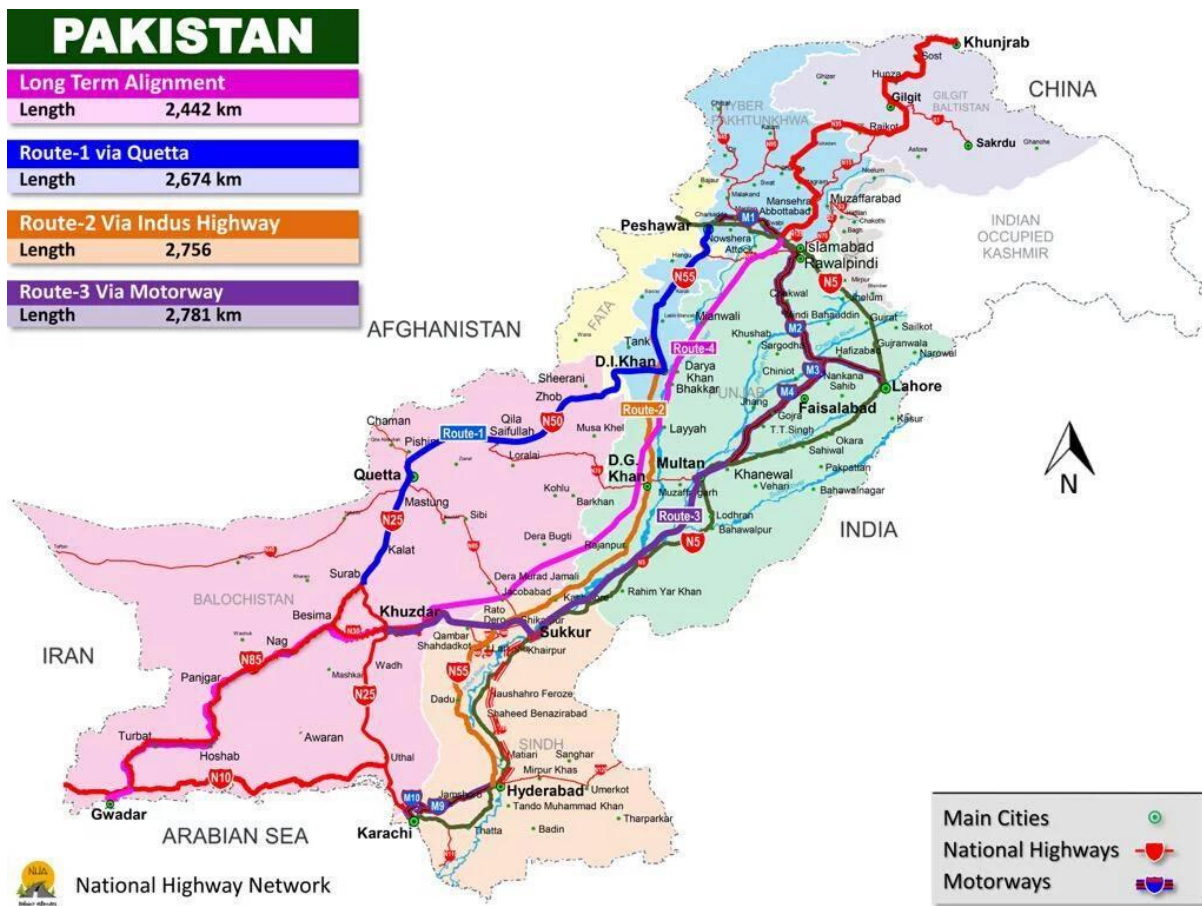
The strategic ties between Pakistan and China have been on an upward trajectory with a visible thrust on economic interaction after the initiation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Project. CPEC is a revolution in the field of economics. Under CPEC, China would invest \$52 billion in Pakistan for the development of infrastructure and energy. CPEC is a futuristic economic dimension of Pakistan in the 21st century. This multi-dimensional project has opened Pakistan's rebalancing options from geopolitics to geo-economics.

It includes four pillars i.e. the infrastructure, the energy requirements, workforce development and economic progress. CPEC project is not an economic aid given to Pakistan but an investment for the next 15 years. This time frame is important for Pakistan for it to utilize all its resources and manpower with a view of entering the global economic mainstream. It has been said that the CPEC, if utilized properly, would rebound the economy of Pakistan three or even fourfold.

CPEC would be a game changer for Pakistan and for the entire region as well. It would play pivotal role, providing economic incentives and promoting regional integration in the form of networks, connectivity, and partnerships. It is a mega-project that has the potential to transform the lives of the people in the region by opening common vistas of cooperation and development in the field of economics. CPEC is the broader part of the Chinese leadership and ambitious vision of reconstruction of the ancient Silk Road under the new "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR) initiative. This would incorporate countries such as Egypt in the Middle East and European countries and important global points in Eurasia. The network expanding in the form of Land Silk route and Maritime Silk route would link the regional countries through trade, leading to an economic boom in the region.

Gwadar Port is unique in that it is one of the few points where "One Belt, One Road" would intersect. Therefore, Pakistan should deal with all challenges in the building of CPEC with optimism and convert this golden opportunity into an economic reality. The Pakistani approach must be forward-looking with respect to CPEC, which would also address the grievances of the Province of Baluchistan. The sense of deprivation, discrimination, and lack of proper management and allocation of resources would be tackled under CPEC. People would experience economic progress and find opportunities to trade and invest. The oil and mineral resources of the Province would be explored, and the establishment of Gwadar Port, Gwadar International Airport and Special Economic Zones (SEZ) would further enhance the significance of the strategic and economic location of Baluchistan. CPEC would create job opportunities for the Balochi youth who would acquire modern innovative.





The symbolic and strategic role of Karakoram Highway (KKH) is another crucial aspect of the CPEC strategy. The CPEC is not only passing through developed areas of Pakistan but also covers its underdeveloped parts; hence, it has great economic benefits for Pakistan. CPEC has created job opportunities for locals in Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan as some routes of CPEC will pass through GB. The CPEC project would not just integrate the commercial or business classes of the society, but the role of youth and local masses would be central in all development plans and projects. The CPEC would not only attract tourism and direct foreign investment in Pakistan, but would also help it overcome its prevailing energy crisis.

The challenges pertaining to the building of the CPEC must be identified by the government of Pakistan and tackled in time to address the problems in the implementation of the project. The security concerns on the Chinese side have already been addressed by setting up a Special Security Division (SSD) for the security of Chinese personnel working on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Similarly, issues such as the CPEC routes controversies and tensions between various political parties and leaders related to CPEC project must be resolved and set aside, and completion of CPEC should be given the top priority by the Pakistani government. Pakistan must move forward united, with CPEC being the central focus.

Introduction of VAT in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Redha Faraj, MP Bahrain

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consisting of the six Arab Gulf States continues to adjust to low oil price environment and the consequent fiscal budgetary deficits. In November of 2016 at the GCC summit in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the member countries collectively agreed to introduce a unified Value Added Tax (VAT) law anytime between January 2018 and December 2019. Comprised of 78 articles, the framework for the Value Added Tax will also make it flexible for member countries to adapt the convention regarding issues relevant to their nations to be introduced into law.

The Kingdom of Bahrain ratified the convention in February 2017; however, the law and its procedure implementation are yet to be agreed upon and issued.

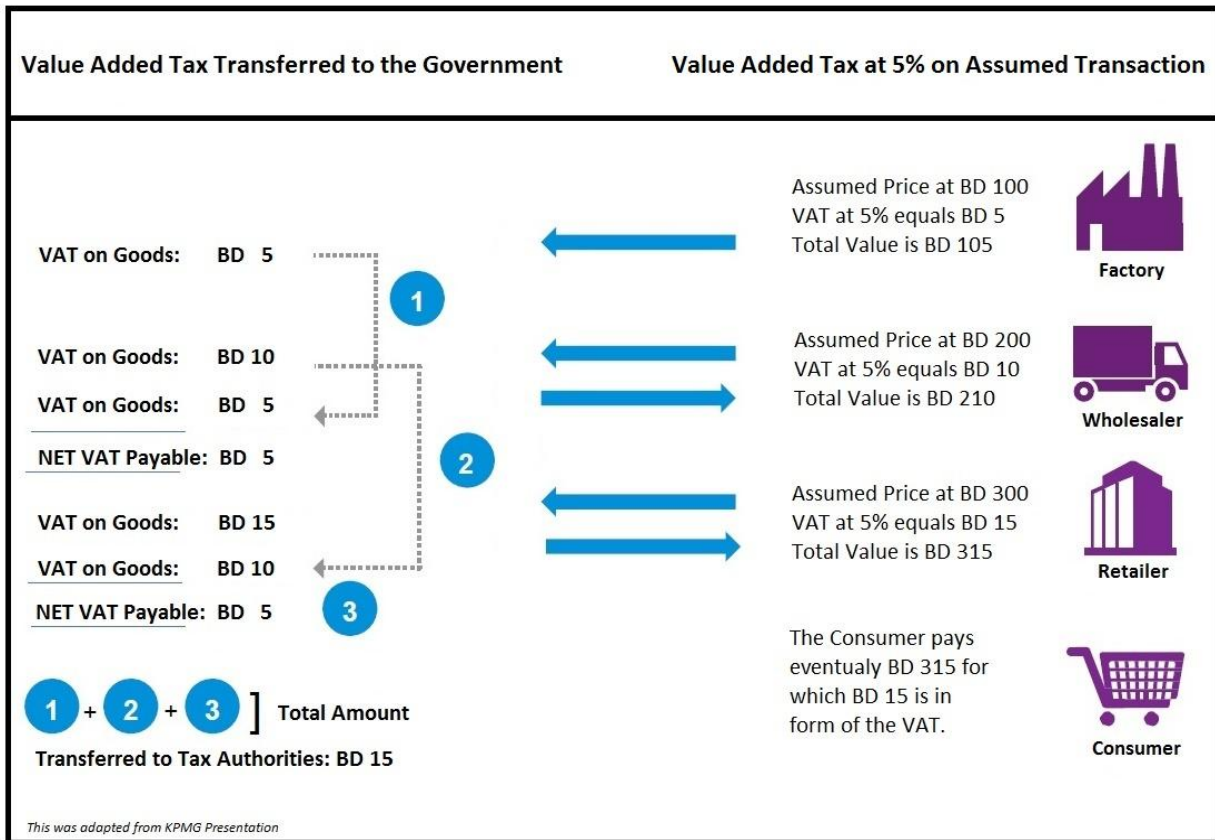
According to the IMF, the Kingdom of Bahrain witnessed a real GDP growth of 3% in 2016, driven primarily by the non-oil sector which grew by 3.7%. The Kingdom's Public Debt has been rising in recent years; with debt to GDP reaching 82% in 2016. This fiscal adjustment has led to a search for alternative sources of income, which, coupled with cost rationalization, has been the main focus for the Government. A number of measures have already been taken which include accessing the debt capital markets, subsidy rationalization and redirection, increasing revenue sources and overall cost control. The introduction of VAT will support government revenues; however, the amount of contribution to GDP is not yet known.

The VAT application could be summarized as follows:

- The Base Rate. The average rate of Value Added Tax for goods and services has been agreed at 5%.
- The Reduced Rate. The rate lower than the Base Rate is applicable to the basic food staples, books, and necessities (dependent each Council Member's discretion).
- Zero Base. No VAT is imposed on products and services classified under this category. However, the seller may deduct the tax on goods and services that are exported.
- Exempt. No VAT is imposed on products and services, and the seller has no right to deduct VAT on products such as financial, medical, and educational services.
- Out of Scope. All charitable societies and non-profit organizations fall outside the scope of the law.



The Value Added Tax Applied to a Typical Good Sold



The impact the introduction of VAT will have on the economy remains to be addressed by the governments and their respective business community. The areas estimated to be impacted are as follows:

- Points of sales and the IT systems need to be carefully examined to ensure that VAT is correctly calculated and accurately classified for financial and tax reporting purposes.
- The impact of VAT on the cash flow of an organization would also be affected as the sums collected as VAT would have to be properly accounted for and passed to the government.
- Sales and purchases contracts will need to be amended to account for the introduction of VAT.
- Inter-company and inter-council member transactions will require clear definition and treatment to avoid double taxation or in some cases excluding the required tax depending on the circumstances.
- Education and training of the staff on the implementation of VAT needs to be adequately planned and executed. Misunderstanding of the concept and the working of the VAT could lead to mispricing and lost revenues.



- Establishment of the appropriate infrastructure, in the form of registration, reporting, accounting, claiming, etc. could cause considerable difficulties if not planned and executed well in advance.
- Raising public awareness on VAT legislation for each of the member state and its detailed procedures should be communicated to ensure that the procedures are well understood and implemented.
- Monitoring the introduction of the VAT will be the responsibility of each member country as to avoid any price manipulation on goods and services domestically and across the GCC.
- From the corporate perspective, developing a well-tested accounting system which is understood by the users and IT systems to support it. This is vital for the system to run smoothly and reap the benefit that has been envisaged.

The question which remains unanswered relates to the social impact of the introduction of VAT into a society which is not accustomed to any form of taxation. While there has been no study conducted by the GCC to better understand the acceptance of such a tax, the fiscal adjustment as a result of the low oil price has received a general acceptance from the people in the GCC. This acceptance gives some indication of the social contract between the government and its population, and provides some confidence for the introduction of a VAT.



Investing in Nigeria for Sustainable Recovery

Onyereri Jones, MP Nigeria

Chair of the Committee on Banking and Currency

It is an incontrovertible fact that mismanagement of national resources leads to an economic crisis. Crisis is an inherent characteristic of any organisation under the administration of bad leaders or managers regardless of whether private or public sector-oriented. Undoubtedly, the ability and capacity to effectively manage people as well as resources in order to deliver the dividends of democracy have been the subject of study by governments, scholars, and professionals. This crisis posed challenges to leaders and managers of the wealth of nations across various spheres of life, especially the public sector. However, leaders and managers cannot be exempted from being part of the causes of most of the crisis that have bedeviled the nation's economy.

Nigeria is a country richly endowed with human and material resources, such as petroleum/natural gas, coal, bitumen, iron ore, barytes, gemstones, kaolin, and rock salt. The country has seventeen dams: Ede-Erinle Reservoir (2,369 hectares); Bakolori Dam (450m³); Challawa Gorge Dam (930m³); Dadin Kowa Dam (2,800m³); Goronyo Dam (942m³); Jibiya Dam (142m³); Zobi Dam (177m³); Kafin Zaki Dam (2,700m³); Jebba Dam (3,600m³); Kainji Dam (15,000m³); Shiroro Dam (31,200 hectares); Kiri Dam (615m³); Tiga Dam (1,874m³); Zauro Polder Dam; Ikere Gorge Dam (690m³); and Oyan River Dam (270m³). The water from the dams is a natural gift for potential water supply, irrigation and hydro-electric power supply, yet their potential remains unrealized. Electricity supply is still a major obstacle for national transformation, and industrial and technological development.

In addition to the list of the resources mentioned above is the human capital. Nigeria's population is over 186 million people with an average annual growth rate of about 2.6% - a potential factor for the country to emerge as a major global economy. Our leaders have failed to understand and address the fundamental challenges related to human capital development, the short-term stability effects on development and long term growth, prosperity and competitiveness of the Nigerian nation. The dependency on oil revenues has radically undercut this potential. The decline in crude oil process between 2014 and 2016 threw Nigeria into a recession. This has added to and compounded its existing leadership problems, led to endemic corruption, and gave birth to Niger Delta militancy and Boko Haram insurgency. The effects on the education system, consumption, employment, GDP, or the financial system were unprecedented. All the economic indices - income & wages, consumer price index (inflation rate), interest rate, unemployment rate, currency strength (exchange rate), corporate profit and balance of trade, have grown above the average manageable limits.



Investment and the Game Plan

The immediate short-term solution to the current recession requires an economic reform that involves an economic stimulus plan which will involve a number of measures aimed at boosting Nigeria's economy in the short run. These include tax cuts for local industries (tax holiday for small and medium-scale companies and tax cuts for big and multinational companies), reduction of current interest rate, additional spending on infrastructure, youth employment, payment of benefits to retirees and the less privileged. This economic stimulus plan will empower the citizens to withstand the shock associated with the recession, and encourage them to spend on locally produced goods and services and revive the economy.

The medium-term approach could involve a comprehensive constitutional review of government administrative expenditures. Government should develop the political will to review some constitutional provisions that will address the issue of the federal structure, embark on massive agricultural programs, set the pace for sustainable information technological development, and continue training and retraining of the needed manpower for the expected industrial revolution ahead.

In the long run, there is an urgent need to set the nation's agenda: reviving the abandoned National Development Plan as an instrument of sustainable growth and development. The failure to adopt National Development Plans in Nigeria since the advent of democracy has resulted in various crises including the current recession. It is therefore imperative to revert to National Development Plans to enable them to serve as an appropriate instrument of sustainable recovery strategy for national transformation, development, and growth.





Rethinking Development Finance

Dr. Jim Yong Kim

President, World Bank Group

As Prepared for Delivery

April 11, 2017 – Positioning Speech at the London School of Economics

Dame Shirley Pearce, Director David Webb, distinguished faculty, students, and guests,

Thank you for hosting me this evening. It's a great honor to be here with you, and with representatives from our close partners: the UK Government, including the Department for International Development and Her Majesty's Treasury.

And I want to commend the UK Government for its continued leadership in meeting the commitment to spend 0.7 percent of GNI on development assistance. Your commitment is a source of great hope for all of us in the world of development.

To the students in the room, you must take great pride in joining the ranks of some of the great business leaders, politicians, and economists who earned their degrees here: President Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia; Thomas Piketty; George Soros; and of course, Mick Jagger – how cool is that?

LSE is one of the world's great academic institutions, a fitting place to talk about the forces in the world that are making us fundamentally rethink our approach to development at the World Bank Group.

Last fall, before the IMF-World Bank Group annual meetings, I told the world about our two goals – to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity – and I talked about the three paths we would follow to get to our target.

The first path is to accelerate inclusive and sustainable economic growth. We're doing this by laying the foundations for more effective public services, by improving governance and tackling corruption, by accelerating infrastructure investment, by lowering real and perceived risks for private investment, by making trade work for everyone, and by creating markets to bring the benefits of private sector rigor and innovation to developing countries.

The second path is to invest more – and more effectively in people. We believe that the premium on human capital will get higher and higher every year. The demands for digital competency are accelerating, as indicators suggest that automation will replace many of the less complex and low-skilled jobs. The remaining jobs will demand new and more sophisticated skills.



So investing in human development has to start early – by ensuring that pregnant women have access to prenatal healthcare, including the right nutrition; by preventing malnutrition in children, so they can develop properly; by ensuring access to quality health care for all; by providing education that prepares students for the jobs of the future and by building social safety nets that meaningfully protect the poor.

And the third path is to foster resilience to global shocks and threats. We're living in a time of multiple overlapping crises: pandemics, climate change, refugees, famine. Right now, in parts of East Africa and Yemen, we're seeing what the UN is calling the worst famine in 70 years.

It's critically important to help countries prepare for these crises. The World Bank Group is now the world's largest funder of climate-related investments. We're pioneering a first of its kind pandemic insurance facility. We're working with the affected countries and partners to help end the famine – and we will use every tool we have, including financial tools, to prevent famine in the future.

We're also continuing our work on the global displacement crisis by allocating \$2 billion under IDA18, our fund for the poorest, to support the low-income countries that are hosting refugees.

For the first time, we're also providing concessional, essentially below market interest financing to any middle income country hosting refugees through our new Global Concessional Financing Facility, starting with support to Jordan and Lebanon, who are hosting millions of Syrian refugees.

In the midst of these crises and our efforts to respond, the world is changing rapidly. In some quarters, we've seen a rejection of globalization, and there's debate about the benefits of the global market system.

Read the entire speech [here](#)





Building a More Resilient and Inclusive Global Economy

Christine Lagarde

Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

As Prepared for Delivery

April 12, 2017 – Positioning Speech at the Bibliothèque Solvay, Brussels

Thank you, Jean-Claude Trichet and Guntram Wolff, for your kind introductions. And thank you to Bruegel for hosting this event here at the wonderful Bibliothèque Solvay.

As I experience this beautiful building, it reminds me that good architecture is not about geometry or design in the first instance—it is about fostering human relationships in private and in public spaces.

I hear about this often from my son who is an architect — and I also thought about it when reading about the Pritzker Prize – the “Nobel prize” of architecture.

Last month, when a little-known firm in Catalonia was announced as the winner of this year's prize, the jury said:

“More and more people fear that because of international influence, we will lose our local values, our local art, and our local customs. The prize winners help us to see that we can aspire to have both—our roots firmly in place and our arms outstretched to the rest of the world.”

Being concerned with the global economic and financial architecture, we should take inspiration from this statement.

We are at a moment where the global economy needs both — a foundation of sound domestic policies combined with a steadfast commitment to international cooperation.

We need these two elements – the domestic as well as the international – to create a more resilient global economy with sustainable, more durable, and more inclusive growth.

Outlook

The good news is that, after six years of disappointing growth, the world economy is gaining momentum as a cyclical recovery holds out the promise of more jobs, higher incomes, and greater prosperity going forward.

But just as we see this momentum unfolding, we also see — at least in some advanced economies — doubts about the benefits of economic integration, about the very “architecture” that has underpinned the world economy for more than seven decades.



These issues will be on the minds of finance ministers and central bankers from the IMF's 189 member countries when they meet in Washington next week for our Spring Meetings.

They will assess the state of the global economy and, as usual, we will release our World Economic Outlook a few days before the meeting. Today, I will touch on some broad trends.

For advanced economies, the outlook has improved with stronger manufacturing activity. This upswing is broad-based across countries — including in Europe — although some countries here still face high debt and weaknesses in some banks.

The prospects for emerging and developing economies also bode well for global growth. These countries have driven the global recovery in recent years, and they will continue to contribute more than three-quarters of global GDP growth in 2017.

Meanwhile, higher commodity prices have brought relief to many low-income countries. However, these economies still face difficult challenges, including revenue levels that are projected to stay well below the boom years.

Putting all this together, we see a global economy that has a spring in its step — benefiting from sound policy choices in many countries in recent years.

Risks

At the same time, there are clear downside risks: political uncertainty, including in Europe; the sword of protectionism hanging over global trade; and tighter global financial conditions that could trigger disruptive capital outflows from emerging and developing economies.

And underneath those short-term issues lies a weak productivity trend that continues to be a severe drag on strong and inclusive growth — largely because of population aging, the slowdown in trade, and weak private investment since the 2008 financial crisis .

We estimate that, if productivity growth had followed its pre-2008 crisis trend, overall GDP in advanced economies would be about 5 percent higher today. That would be the equivalent of adding a country with an output larger than Germany to the global economy.

Policies

This suggests that there is no room for complacency when it comes to economic policies.

We need to build on the policies that have delivered so much for the world. And at the same time, we must avoid policy missteps — or as I have described them, “self-inflicted wounds.”

How do we do this? I see three dimensions of economic policies:

- Supporting growth, with an emphasis on productivity;
- Sharing the benefits more equitably; and
- Cooperating across borders through a multilateral framework that has served the world well.

Read the entire speech [here](#)



Emmanuel Macron and Policy-driven Politics

Göran Pettersson, MP Sweden

PN Review Head Columnist, Discussions Section Editor

The election of Emmanuel Macron as president of France followed by a convincing victory for his movement in the following parliamentary election have shown us that you can win elections when following the traditional macroeconomics principles.

I have heard from many fellow parliamentarians from different countries that, to quote one, "following the advice of IMF before you are forced to it by a crisis is an electoral suicide." Let us hope that Macron's election success will give other politicians the courage to listen to the doctors' advice in the form of the results of the Article 4 Consultations. Even for countries where the Article 4 consultations give a clean bill of the health on the general level, there are observations of potential problems and recommendations which if acted upon speedily could be handled at a low cost before building up to a crisis.

In my own country Sweden, over the ten years that I served as a parliamentarian, the Parliament has regularly consulted the IMF reports, which contain recurring warnings and effective recommendations, and as a result we are praised for our solid macroeconomic policies. In contrast, governments of different political agendas have looked the other way, arguing that the recommendations are easy for an economist to give out, but we have to present policies deviating from them for political reasons, namely to increase our chances at re-election.

I, for one, will, with moral support for the Macron victories, would like to spearhead the Swedish housing market reform. The challenges of the Swedish housing market have been an obstacle for labour mobility and have led to a severe increase in individuals' housing debts. I urge fellow parliamentarians to take some time this summer to peruse the IMF reports on your respective countries- there might be recommendations there that you could turn into good politics, now that we know that voters can be won by sound policies.



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I thank the authors of this issue for their valuable contributions. If you have suggestions for improving the publication, please contact me at olivia.e.noh@gmail.com.

Eu Na Noh, Editor, The Parliamentary Network Review

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

If you would like to contribute an article to The Parliamentary Network Review, please send your submission to Hana Rakem, Consultant, at jpo1@parlnet.org.

If you would like to write for the Network Featured Discussion, please contact discussions column editor Göran Pettersson at goran.pettersson@riksdagen.se.

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