

# NEWSLETTER

of the Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order



Issue No. 2– September 2019

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## MESSAGE

FROM THE  
*UN INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON THE  
PROMOTION OF A DEMOCRATIC AND EQUITABLE INTERNATIONAL  
ORDER.*



**Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana**

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am pleased to share with you my second newsletter, in which I present the activities I have conducted since the beginning of this year, as well as my forthcoming reports to the UN Human Rights Council and the General Assembly which will be discussed this fall.

I look forward to continued engagement with many of you in the course of my mandate.

Warm regards,

Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana  
Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order

A biography of the Independent Expert can be found on the link [here](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IntOrder/Pages/LivingstoneSewanyana.aspx): <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IntOrder/Pages/LivingstoneSewanyana.aspx>

## JANUARY—AUGUST 2019 ACTIVITIES

Since the beginning of this year, I have had the pleasure to attend the following [events](#) :

**6th—8th March 2019:**

**The inaugural Global Citizen Forum, organized by Drake University, Des Moines, United States of America.** The forum addressed the current challenges of global migration and the efforts to deal with the problem through the global compact on migration.

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**JANUARY—AUGUST 2019 ACTIVITIES** *(continued from Page 1)*

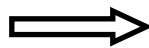
**8<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> April 2019:**

**The 57th International Affairs Symposium on culture and human rights, organized by the Lewis and Clark College, Portland, United States.**

The debate centered on whether human rights are universal or culturally relative.

**14<sup>th</sup> –15<sup>th</sup> April 2019:**

**The National Human Rights Committee of Qatar, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the European Parliament, in Doha organized the International Conference on “National, regional and international mechanisms to combat impunity and ensure accountability under international law”**



*The Independent Expert with some delegates to the Doha Conference.*

**13<sup>th</sup> –15<sup>th</sup> May 2019:**

**The high-level regional Conference on Justice and Good Governance in the Great Lakes region, convened by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and OHCHR, Nairobi.**



*Delegates to the ICGLR with the Minister of Justice (Republic of Kenya) 3rd on the 1st row and UN Envoy to Great Lakes Region 2nd right and UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights 1st on the right.*

## JANUARY—AUGUST 2019 ACTIVITIES *(continued from Page 2)*

16<sup>th</sup> –21<sup>st</sup> June 2019:  
The twenty-sixth annual meeting of special procedure mandate holders, Geneva.

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2019:  
A consultation organized by the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation on the role of United Nations human rights mechanisms in the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, Geneva.

26<sup>th</sup> –28<sup>th</sup> August 2019:  
The 2019 Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development's regional consultation on 'shaping a peoples' trade agenda', Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



*Delegates to the Asian –Pacific Forum , Kuala Lumpur discuss current democracy and trade related challenges in the region.*

## FORTHCOMING REPORTS TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### ***UN Human Rights Council***

The second thematic report to the Human Rights Council is due for presentation on **Thursday, 12 September 2019** in Room XX at Palais des Nations.

The report focuses on the intersectional topic of public participation and decision-making in global governance spaces and its impact on a democratic and equitable international order. Such spaces include the Group of Seven (G7), the Group of 20 (G20), the group of Brazil, Russian Federation, India, People's Republic of China and South Africa (BRICS), the Group of 77 (G77, including the Group of 24 on International Monetary Affairs and Development), the Non-Aligned Movement, the World Economic Forum, and the Bilderberg Meeting.

These intergovernmental, multisectoral and private groupings have gained significant importance at the geo political, economic and financial levels as they play a considerable role in developing the framework and functioning of the international order, in parallel to the United Nations system. However, these groupings remain largely inaccessible to the public, in particular to those whose lives and livelihoods are affected by the decisions taken, hence contributing to the democratic deficit in the global decision-making process.

After first analysing the overall impact of the economic and financial policies of the global

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## FORTHCOMING REPORTS TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

governance spaces on a democratic and equitable international order, and their methods of participation and decision-making, the report concludes that meaningful public participation by civil society at large in those spaces is of paramount importance for ensuring transparency and legitimacy of their decision-making processes.

The report looks at the various structural and practical obstacles in relation to access, inclusivity and ability to influence the decision-making process of the groupings and spaces at stake, before stressing the importance of accountability for the commitments made in the framework of these spaces.

The report includes a series of recommendations addressed to various stakeholders, including global governance spaces and their respective member States and non-State actors including civil society.

The report A/HRC/42/48 is available in all six UN languages here: [https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/42/48](https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/42/48) The Interactive dialogue will be broadcast at the following link: <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/human-rights-council/>

The Independent Expert plans to meet with civil society representatives present in Geneva, as well as with diplomatic representatives during HRC42.

### ***UN General Assembly***

The second report to the General Assembly is due to be presented on **Wednesday 16 October 2019**.

This report should be read in conjunction with my report to the Council as it mirrors a number of findings and expands on a number of issues, in particular the history and purposes of the global governance spaces and the importance of public outreach by these spaces to enhance public participation.

The report A/74/245 is available in all six UN languages here: [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/74/245](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/74/245) The interactive dialogue will be broadcast at this link: <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/general-assembly/main-committees/3rd-committee/>

In preparation of the two reports, the Independent Expert convened two informal consultations with civil society in Geneva and Washington DC in May 2019 (see photos), and sent out a questionnaire to Member States and civil society. Responses to the questionnaire can be found here: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IntOrder/Pages/GlobalGovernanceSpaces.aspx>



*Participants at the informal consultations with civil society in Geneva (left) and Washington DC (right) in May 2019*

## SUBMITTING COMPLAINTS TO THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT

The Independent Expert continues to welcome information from any individual, group of people, civil society organization, national human rights body or intergovernmental entity on threats to, and advances to a democratic and equitable international order. Further information and guidelines for submissions can be found here: <https://spsubmission.ohchr.org/en>

## HOW TO CONTACT THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT

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