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Gabriele Köhler

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The Millennium Development Goals – A Critical Review and an Optimistic Outlook

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) followed a series of United Nations development decades and gave new momentum to international development cooperation. The article shows that, contrary to its aspirations, only three goals were nominally met in 2015: those regarding poverty, education and drinking water. Key goals concerning hunger, maternal and child mortality, or sanitation, were seriously missed. Even the goals deemed successful were only superficially achieved. However, the ensuing normative and methodological critique of the MDGs informed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the much broader development agenda adopted by the international community in September 2015. The challenge now is to ensure that this new, universal agenda for sustainable development will result in more serious, equity-oriented, economic, social and environmental policies world-wide.

Jens Martens

pp. 249–254

Ways and Means.

Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Before the United Nations came into being as a world organization in late 1945, a long and often stony road had been traveled since the first draft of a postwar world order. From the Atlantic Charter of 1941 to the deliberations at Dumbarton Oaks in 1944 and the ‘Big Three’ meeting in Yalta early 1945, the planning itself had largely been a point of contention between the three major powers, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States. At the ‘United Nations Conference on International Organization’, taking place in San Francisco from April to June 1945, other nations came into the picture and colliding interests became apparent. The article shows how the issue of Security Council voting nearly broke up the whole conference. As a privilege of the ‘Permanent Five’, it remains contested to this very day.

Marianne Beisheim

pp. 255–260

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. How Will Its Implementation Be Monitored?

While the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not legally binding, UN member states have agreed to follow-up and review their implementation. This shall be done by way of voluntary and participatory reviews at the national, regional, and global level. The UN High-

level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) will play a critical role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes. Since many details of the HLPF’s thematic and national reviews have to be clarified, the UN Secretary-General has been asked to prepare a report with recommendations. In July 2016, the HLPF will conduct the first round of reviews. Germany has already offered to participate in this round and should lead by example by piloting a robust review that demonstrates political will, identifies best practices and ensures accountability to citizens.

Karin Nordmeyer

pp. 261–265

20 Years Beijing World Conference on Women No Country Has Yet Achieved Gender Equality

Twenty years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, progress has been made towards its full implementation through concerted policy action at all levels. But global progress has been slow and inequality between women and men and between girls and boys persists. This article assesses the achievements in some of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action. The author concludes that today many women and girls still experience multiple forms of discrimination, vulnerability and marginalization throughout their lives. To put it bluntly: no country has fully achieved equality and empowerment for women and girls. The author sees the reasons for this in persisting patriarchal structures, traditions and religion, and cultural and social norms. Strong accountability mechanisms are needed to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women plays a key role in completing the unfinished work of Beijing through the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Simone Wisotzki

pp. 266–270

Women and Peace and Security. 15 Years of UN-Security Council Resolution 1325: Little Reason to Celebrate

The 15th anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was prepared for quite well. UN institutions and transnational civil society organizations (CSO) undertook a critical review process in order to evaluate the implementation of the ‘Women, Peace and Security’ agenda. While on the normative side eight UN Security Council Resolutions have been passed over the course of 15 years, the process of implementing these resolutions remains cumbersome. This is particularly true for women in conflict and post-conflict situations. During the celebrations, many CSOs vocally criticized states as well as the UN for not living up to their promises.