



## EDITORIAL

# Reflections on Closing Civic Space at the 2018 IMF-WBG Annual Meeting

Through decades of collective action, civil society has made headway in making governments, donor agencies, and multilateral platforms commit to conceding some space for civil society organisations (CSOs) to articulate the perspectives and demands of their constituencies in policy dialogues. United Nations agencies, global and regional forums, international financial institutions and multilateral development banks have introduced various 'CSO engagement mechanisms' to prove their transparency, accountability, and effectiveness.

Such gestures, however, have been overshadowed by the increasing constraints on movements and organisations, as recently shown by the clampdown on dissent during the 2018 Annual Meetings of the IMF and World Bank Group last October in Bali, Indonesia. While the red carpet was rolled out for high-ranking state officials and big business in Nusa Dua, social movements and CSOs were subjected to blatant violations of their right to free expression and assembly.

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**BUBARKAN**  
International Monetary Fund  
**BUBARKAN**  
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### **Konfrontasi in Bali**

Outside the Bank and Fund spaces, government-sponsored repression descended on the Peoples' Global Conference against IMF-World Bank (PGC), an independent initiative of 34 Indonesian and international social movements and non-government organisations. The PGC represented grassroots communities and sectors that have been excluded from the development process in their respective countries and have suffered from rights violations associated with the policies and programmes of the IMF and World Bank (see Observer Autumn 2017, Autumn 2018).

A week before the PGC was scheduled to begin, the Bali Intelligence Police denied the local organisers a permit for the conference scheduled at the Radio Republik Indonesia. The organisers were told by hotel establishments that the police had instructed them to refuse services to the PGC. Anonymous numbers blasted a series of text messages maligning the PGC as "anti-development" and threatening the lives and security of coordinators. Hoax event posters were seen around Bali, maliciously linking the PGC to outlawed radical Islamic organisations, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, seemingly to justify the escalation of violence against the conference and its organisers.

Meanwhile, the national police insisted on a new set of ludicrous requirements, such as copies of passports and the itineraries of PGC's international delegates, as well as details of the conference's programme. This harassment soon morphed into physical violence against organising members of the PGC. In the early morning of October 11, a local militia attacked the Bali Legal Aid office in Denpasar and chased away PGC youth volunteers staying there. Intelligence personnel were also seen around the hotels where PGC delegates were staying, taking their pictures and videos without consent.

### **A win for resilient peoples' movements**

While the Indonesian government succeeded in disrupting the event, the PGC earned the recognition as the people's alternative forum to the official IMF-WBG meetings. With good flexibility, creativity, quick wit, and firm political resolve, the PGC broke the imposed silence in Bali.

Civil society groups at the Bali International Convention Center (BICC) – the official Annual Meetings venue – held a lightning rally to denounce Indonesia for attacking the PGC and shutting down public activities. The rally exposed the pretence of hospitality, openness, tolerance, and good governance peddled by the Indonesian Government with complicity of the IMF and World Bank.

Seemingly to avoid embarrassment, Bank and IMF staff and the Indonesian police swiftly herded the protesters into a holding room and offered to host the PGC, all expenses paid. Meanwhile, outside the negotiation room, security personnel armed with guns peeping out of their Batik shirts harassed the demonstrators and denied entry to six West Papuans seeking to register at the official Civil Society Policy Forum. Despite these apparent attempts to co-opt the event's independence, the PGC organisers stood firm and continued.

Upon regrouping, PGC organisers and participants jointly decided to proceed with the activities, albeit scaled down and decentralised to avoid further police sabotage. At least 250 individuals attended discussions, workshops, and solidarity actions held in different venues around Bali. PGC statements and mass actions were extensively covered by both local and international media. Civil society, peoples' movements, and individuals across the globe expressed their support for the PGC. Towards the end of the week, the conference issued a declaration calling on organisations to build a strong peoples' front to contest international financial institutions in every arena of struggle.



## Another low for global governance diplomacy

Infringement of civil liberties and freedoms by a host country during an international meeting is not unprecedented. Complete bans on protests were imposed during the IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings in Dubai in 2003, as well as the 2006 Annual Meetings in Singapore. Last year, the Argentine government revoked the accreditation of 63 civil society members a few days prior to the 11th World Trade Organisation Ministerial in Buenos Aires. The extreme actions undertaken by the Indonesian government bring global governance diplomacy to another low and set a worrying precedent for all future international meetings.

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights defenders. Ironically, harassment, criminalisation, enforced disappearances, and at times, killings of frontline defenders are on the rise. Multilateral institutions and organisations ostensibly acknowledge the importance of civic participation and social accountability in development and have promised to advance civil society inclusion and empowerment. By failing to prevent reprisals against defenders, the IMF and particularly the World Bank in relation to its projects, have not only failed to uphold their human rights obligations, but also significantly contributed in fostering a climate of intimidation that dissuades civil society organisations from exercising their role as development actors (see Observer Spring 2016, Winter 2018).

The 2021 Annual Meeting of the IMF and World Bank will be in Marrakech, Morocco. In light of the current global democratic deficit, global civil society should press the IMF and World Bank and the future host country to honour their legal commitments to respect peoples' rights to organise and mobilise, including through independent conferences and protest actions, and concretely demonstrate ways to allow the exercise of such rights without fear of reprisals. We call on peoples' movements everywhere to forge solidarities, push back attacks on fundamental human rights, and carve their own democratic spaces of engagement and resistance in the face of adversity and repression. ■

*(This article was first published by the Bretton Woods Project.)*



Photos by Carlo Manalansan





# SHUT DOWN THE IMF-WORLD BANK, NOT THE PEOPLE'S DISSENT! FIGHT FOR PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT!

Declaration of the People's Global Conference against the IMF-World Bank  
Bali, Indonesia | October 13, 2018

We, the participants to the People's Global Conference (PGC) against the IMF-World Bank, representing 93 organizations from 18 countries, coming from various sectors such as workers, peasants, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, migrants, women, and youth, gathered in Bali, Indonesia. The PGC is a venue for discussion on people-led and people-centered development and an occasion to register the peoples' resistance against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group's corporatization of development and the people's assertion of their right to define and chart their own path towards a democratic, just, and equitable future.

We strongly condemn the repressive measures taken by the Indonesian government to derail the PGC. We likewise hold the IMF and World Bank accountable for sabotaging the efforts of people's movements, non-government groups and people's rights advocates to gather in Bali under the PGC. We assert that the PGC is a legitimate and peaceful assembly to expose how the IMF-World Bank have severely impacted countless communities around the world, to challenge their policies, and to offer our alternatives. Nothing in the PGC is a threat to the security of Indonesia, especially of the people of Bali; but certainly, the PGC is a threat to the lies being peddled by the IMF-World Bank.

For more than seven decades, the IMF-World Bank have been effective and ruthless agents of imperialism. Since their establishment, these undemocratic and unaccountable global institutions of monopoly finance capital have enabled the massive pillaging of the economic and natural resources of the world. The disastrous impacts of their operations have been most felt by the poorest countries and by the poorest peoples – the peasants/farmers, fisherfolk, migrants, indigenous peoples, workers, urban poor, women, children and the youth, and other marginalized and vulnerable sectors.

With global monopoly capitalism still reeling from the financial meltdown of 10 years ago and even as scandalous wealth become increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, the IMF-World Bank have become ever more aggressive in propping up a system built on exploitation for corporate super profits, wanton violation of people's rights

and sovereignty and destruction of the planet. As in the past, these multilateral institutions are again peddling their deceitful brand of sustainable development, inclusive growth and equality, and poverty reduction to legitimize the same discredited neoliberal policies that have already destroyed countless livelihoods and caused unspeakable misery for billions.

Their promotion of the so-called Maximizing Finance for Development (MFD) in recent IMF-World Bank meetings including here in Bali, for instance, is nothing more than a fresh wave of neoliberal privatization to create new profit-making ventures for monopoly capital amid a prolonged global recession, particularly targeting the US\$12-trillion market opportunities in poor countries. Riding on the financing gap – said to be at more than two and a half trillion US dollars a year – to meet the supposed requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the MFD will pave the way for transnational corporations (TNCs) and banks and their local agents to further squeeze profits from transport and other infrastructure, agriculture and food production, and even social services and welfare, among others. This even as the reality is that public resources for development have been severely and systematically undermined by structural adjustments and neoliberal policy reforms promoted by the IMF-World Bank including through anti-people fiscal reforms, austerity measures and privatization.

We already know too well how neoliberal privatization or what the IMF-World Bank have packaged as so-called public-private partnership (PPP) has turned out in many poor countries in the past 40 years. While the private sector composed of the TNCs and local big business interests as well as foreign and domestic banks rake in enormous profits, the public sector is saddled with the ever-growing burden of debts and sovereign guarantees as well as exorbitant user fees to keep the so-called "partnership" as lucrative as possible for the corporations.

The IMF-World Bank are not only facilitating the opportunities for TNCs through lending, development aid, technical assistance, political risk insurance and credit

enhancement guarantees as well as policy setting to create the most favorable investment climate; they are also investing directly or via private equity funds in large-scale extractive industries such as plantations and mining, and in big infrastructure projects in transport, water and energy. Many of these ventures result in the marginalization and exclusion of the poor; extensive land and resource grabbing; militarization and gross human rights violations with impunity especially of peasants/farmers, workers, indigenous peoples and other poor people; and environmental degradation.

Like the monopoly capital they serve, the IMF-World Bank profit immensely too from the destitution of the people and from the systematic erosion of national sovereignty and the plunder of patrimony, especially of the poor countries. They too profit enormously from the takeover of development by corporate interests.

We must continue to expose the IMF-World Bank for their key role in corporatizing development at the utter expense of the people, of their rights and aspirations. We must continue our unwavering resolve to oppose the IMF-World Bank's every destructive project, investment and policy imposition. We must harness our wealth of diverse experience, build on our victories and learn from our setbacks to continue building and sustaining a strong people's movement that will challenge the legitimacy of the IMF-World Bank and the powerful forces behind them in every arena of struggle – from primarily mobilizing the communities and taking direct political actions to parliamentary engagements at the local, national and international levels.

We must trumpet our alternatives to the IMF-World Bank's corrupt and decaying brand of development that excludes a great majority of the world's peoples. We will continue to rally peoples and leaders to create a front of indebted countries demanding non-repayment of IMF-World Bank loans and to create an alternative multilateral financial cooperation anchored on people's rights and sovereignty, complementarity, equality, justice and solidarity, accountability, and people's collective power over the economy.

We will carry on our tasks despite the repression and schemes of the IMF-World Bank and their client governments to silence our voices and to stifle our movement. Despite state repression and IMF-World Bank schemes, we have successfully carried out the People's Global Conference against the IMF-World Bank!

We also take this opportunity to express our deepest sympathies and solidarity with the people of Palu in Sulawesi and in Lombok who have been hit by powerful earthquakes and a tsunami recently. We take note that most of the thousands killed and who suffer from the impacts of these disasters are the poor. We join the calls that immediate and sufficient assistance be provided to the victims even as we warn that disasters are often made profitable ventures as well by corporations, aid agencies and multilateral institutions like the IMF-World Bank.

We strongly support and stand with the struggles of people in Bali against the Celukan Bawang coal power plant and the Benoa Bay reclamation project, as well as other peoples who are fighting to defend their rights under unjust development projects.

We thank and salute our colleagues and comrades in Indonesia who helped make the PGC possible through determination and hard work amid the repressive environment in Bali created by the machinations of the Indonesian government and the IMF-World Bank.

A world without the IMF-World Bank and the exploitative and oppressive global political and economic order that they perpetuate is not only possible; it is necessary and urgent in order to reclaim our rights and future as a people.

Shut down the IMF-World Bank, not the people's dissent! Fight for people's right to development!





# APRN: 20 Years of Advancing Research for and with the People

The Asia Pacific Research Network, the leading network of nongovernment research organizations in the region, is celebrating two decades of delivering progressive researches and raising the capacities of peoples' movements in education, information and advocacy.

APRN was established in 1998 to develop cooperation among alternative research centers and social movements in Asia-Pacific to exchange information on international issues and experiences and methods in research. The APRN was initiated through a process that started in a conference in Canada in 1997, and culminated in its first research conference in Manila in 1999 on the WTO and the impact of trade liberalization on Asian countries.

From 21 founding organizations, APRN has grown to 52 international, regional, and national coalitions and organizations from the Pacific to the Middle East. APRN's former campaigns have led to the formation of independent regional and global networks. APRN also participates in other global or regional networks such as the Our World is Not for Sale (OWINFS) and People Over Profit.

We look back at the 20 fruitful years of the network and look forward to more years of walking hand in hand with the people as they struggle to achieve a truly democratic, just, and sustainable society.

## Trade Liberalization

APRN's inception was the fruit of the 1997 campaign against the multilateral investment agreement (MAI) in the WTO. The 1997 campaign against MAI was characterized by conscious global planning to unite on the analysis on globalization and the impact of investment liberalization. From then on, trade has been central to APRN's research and advocacy work.

APRN's 21 founding member-organizations from 12 countries held its first formal meeting in Manila, Philippines in July 1999 hosted by IBON Foundation. This was also the network's first annual conference with the theme of Trade Liberalization. The conference was pivotal in consolidating the delegation of social movements at the March of Asians in Seattle Ministerial of the WTO in 1999. The intense peoples' opposition expressed by the crowd of protesters in Seattle led to the collapse of the WTO Ministerial.

In 2002, in recognition of the crucial role that the WTO Cancun Ministerial Meeting would have in the development of the trade body and overall expansion of globalization in investment liberalization, APRN once again selected WTO as its theme for its 4th Annual Conference, expanding to include the implications and challenges of China's accession to the WTO as a key issue for Asia and Asian social movements.

Aside from annual conferences, APRN also held several workshops and seminars on the WTO and trade issues. These include the workshop on Women Confronting Globalization: Research on Women, Food Security and WTO Agreement in Agriculture, and the national workshop on the WTO AoA and its Impact on Malaysia held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2000; the workshop on WTO in Solo, Indonesia in 2001; the Policy Advocacy Training Workshop on WTO-AoA in Madras, India in 2001; the workshop on WTO, TRIPS and the







Struggle for Food Security in Bangladesh in 2001; and the Trainers' Training on Economic Literacy and Globalization in Bangkok, Thailand in 2004.

In July 2005 APRN organized a Policy Research Conference on Trade in Hong Kong that looked into the intricacies of the WTO negotiations towards the 6th Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong and its implications on the people. During the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting in December 2005, APRN participated significantly in the Peoples' Action Week (PAW) organized by the Hong Kong Peoples' Alliance. It was here that the APRN first adopted an 'inside-outside' strategy as it engaged inside the official Ministerial and high level meetings while figuring prominently in the many marches and street actions outside.

With the deadlock in the WTO, trade negotiations increasingly shifted to bilateral and regional free trade agreements. APRN felt the need to conduct research and advocacy campaigns on bilateral and regional free trade agreements as these posed deleterious impacts to peoples' rights and their development since rich industrialized countries tended to dominate and control these negotiations.

In September 2007, APRN co-organized with AidWatch a strategy workshop on the FTAs in Sydney Australia, in time for the APEC Leaders Meeting. In 2011 we released a policy paper on the Transpacific Partnership Agreement to raise awareness on the impacts of the trade agreement to peoples, environment, and nations' sovereignty.

In March 2013, APRN held a research conference on Trade and Development to promote a peoples' trade agenda in the context of 9th Ministerial Conference of the WTO.

In December 2013, APRN celebrated its 15th year of research for and with the people with a series of activities at the Peoples' Global Camp for Sovereignty and Development in Bali, Indonesia. The Peoples' Global Camp was the civil society alternative forum to the WTO Ministerial in Bali. The network conducted the Public Forum on the People's Trade Agenda to expound on alternative frameworks to neoliberal trade. The book on WTO and Maldevelopment was launched.

APRN explored spaces for raising peoples' awareness and building peoples' movements' unities and resistance against new mega-regional trade agreements. The network was instrumental in the founding of People Over Profit, a global network of social movements against free trade agreements and corporate plunder. APRN also co-organized the Peoples' Strategy Meeting on RCEP in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

We pursued critical engagement with policy makers on the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). APRN spearheaded the stakeholders consultation with RCEP negotiators in May 2016 and September. More importantly we joined peoples' mobilizations outside the negotiating halls to call for an end to neoliberal trade agreements. (Insert pictures of POP and APRN mobs in Indonesia, India, and Philippines)

In December 2017, APRN participated in CSO-led activities and mobilization against the 12th WTO Ministerial in Argentina, highlighting peoples' critiques and positions regarding new issues in the WTO such as e-commerce, fisheries, and trade in services.

APRN built the capacity of peoples' organizations to launch campaigns on neoliberal trade agreements in the Asia Pacific through seminars and materials that raise awareness on FTAs and their impacts.





## International Financial Institutions

The Asian financial crisis and the Jubilee campaign for Third World debt cancellation brought to fore the issue of debt, and development financing and financial liberalization became contentious issues. The financial crisis is the cumulative result of the economic crisis and financial liberalization, sharpening the focus of critique and protest on the neoliberal policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and other international financial institutions.

APRN fleshed out the issues of debt and aid through research and campaigns. APRN's 2nd Annual Conference in Jakarta, Indonesia in August 2000 took as a theme Poverty and Financing Development to highlight the issues on debt and poverty. We went back to Jakarta in 2006 to hold the International Conference on the Cancellation of Illegitimate Debt.

In May 2009, APRN organized A Peoples' Tribunal on ADB in Bali, Indonesia to expose the ill effects of ADB on the lives and livelihoods of peoples across the region. The outcomes of the conference were documented in the book of the same title and published by APRN.

In May 2017, during the network's biennial conference in Japan, APRN joined peoples' mobilization in Yokohama against the 50th Annual Governors' Meeting of the ADB.

In May 2018, APRN, in cooperation with People Over Profit, organized a peoples' forum on the ADB in Manila, co-hosted Reality of Aid-Asia Pacific's Review of ADB's Development Effectiveness, and delivered an intervention at the 51st ADB Annual Governors' Meeting.

Yet another monumental achievement of APRN was the successful Peoples' Global Conference against IMF-World Bank. Despite tremendous political harassment and violence the conference earned the re

## Aid and Development Effectiveness

From 2009 to 2011, the network was the coordinator of the Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness for country outreach work, initiating and providing leadership to around 25 country and regional consultations in Asia, Pacific, and West Asia and North Africa.

APRN engages with the Policy Forum on Development, and previously with the Structured Dialogue, of the European Commission. In 2013, at the Third Interim Meeting of PFD in Brussels, APRN was chosen to be part of the Asia Regional Group.

In October 2013, APRN co-organized the Asia and the Pacific Stakeholders' Dialogue on European Development Cooperation in Bali, Indonesia.

APRN currently serves as one of the two global co-chairs of the Working Group on CSO Development Effectiveness of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE). In 2017, APRN published the book *Breaking Ground, Taking Roots: The Istanbul Principles @7* in time for the seventh year anniversary of the Istanbul Principles. This year, we published

the Case Studies on the Implementation of CSO Commitments in the Nairobi Outcome Document to help fellow CSOs, policy makers, and researchers compare experiences and formulate their own actions to enhance CSO development effectiveness in the context of achieving Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development objectives and targets.

## Transnational Corporations

Policies of privatization, liberalization, and deregulation have resulted in the rapid expansion in the number and size of TNCs. As TNCs grow, so do the violations of peoples' rights and the destruction of the environment. Blatant display of corporate power in the economic and political spheres heightened peoples' resistance.

In September 2001, in Sydney Australia, APRN's 3rd Annual Conference had for its theme Corporate Power or Peoples' Power? TNCs and Globalization. In coordination other research and peoples' organizations, APRN also launched its first collaborative research on Effective Strategies in Confronting Transnational Corporations. The results of this initiative were compiled in the book "Effective Strategies in Confronting Transnational Corporations) in May 2003.





## Food Sovereignty

In November 2004, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, APRN's 6th Annual Conference was transformed into Asia Pacific Peoples' Convention on Food Sovereignty in cooperation with Peoples' Food Sovereignty Network Asia Pacific. The Convention gave birth to the Peoples' Coalition on Food Sovereignty.

In 2012, APRN launched the book *Sowing Seeds of Change and Hope: Farmers Confronting the Impacts of Food and Climate Crises* which featured case stories of farmers and peoples' resistance against food insecurity and climate change.

## Labor

APRN saw the need to take up the issues of job and injustices stemming from workers' exploitation under globalization.

In December 2006, in Cebu, Philippines, APRN organized the Jobs and Justice Conference. The conference provided a venue for trade unions, NGOs, and labor advocates to exchange information on current trends in neoliberal labor market restructuring and share experiences in struggles.

In September 2009, APRN co-organized the Asia Pacific Roundtable on ASEAN, Labor Migration and FTAs with the Asia Pacific Mission on Migrants. The activity provided a critical analysis of the ASEAN and its processes in relation to labor migration, deepened the understanding on major trends in bilateral agreements and strengthened grassroots engagement with the ASEAN process.

## Sustainable Development

20 years after the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, APRN took the lead in holding authorities to account for their commitments made at the Summit.

In 2011, APRN co-organized with Reality of Aid – Asia Pacific and Ibon International a regional conference on development models and a strategy meeting for Rio+20 attended by around 60 civil society organizations across the region.

In 2012, in Hanoi Vietnam, APRN held its Second Biennial Conference with the theme *Rio for the People: Strengthening Peoples' Capacity for Genuine Sustainable Development*.

In 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand, APRN co-organized with partners the Asia Pacific Consultation on a Just and Transformative Agenda in Bangkok.

The initiative evolved into the creation of the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism that promoted CSO collective action and policy engagement with the UN and other intergovernmental institutions. APRN is currently one of co-chairs of APRCEM.

APRN continues to engage and monitor the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 through the APRCEM.

## Women

Women and children are the most vulnerable in the face of the impacts of climate change, food and agricultural crises,



wars and militarism, forced migration, and many other forms of social, economic and gender violence.

In 2010, in Baguio City, Philippines, APRN held its first Biennial Conference with the theme *Women Resisting Crisis and Wars*. Inputs from the conference were compiled in a book and published in time for the International Women's Day in 2012. APRN also addressed the problem of how globalization has affected women's labor through a Research Conference on the Impact of Globalization on Women Labor held in Bangkok, Thailand in June 2003.

In 2005, APRN published the results of the conference discussion with the book titled *Working Women's Burdens: The Impacts of Globalization on Women Labor in Asia*.

## War and Globalization

APRN expanded to West Asia with the 5th Annual Conference in Beirut, Lebanon, on the theme *War and Terror: Peoples' Rights and the Militarization of Globalization*.

In June 2004, in Olongapo, Philippines, APRN co-hosted a policy workshop on Regional Economic Cooperation and Human Rights in Asia.

In April 2005, in commemoration of the 50th historic anniversary of the historic Bandung Conference, APRN held a conference in Bandung, Indonesia with the theme *Bandung in the 21st Century: Continuing the Struggle for Independence, Peace against Imperialist War and Globalization*.

In December 2006, in Cebu City, Philippines, together with other civil society organizations, APRN organized the International Conference on US Militarism and War on Terror. Militarism and war are aggravating the climate crisis and devastating communities. This compromises peoples' resilience to combat global warming and climate change.



In response, in August 2017, in Toronto, Canada, APRN held a workshop on Climate, Militarism and War.

APRN published a number of materials on the theme of militarism and its linkages to other development issues.

In 2016, APRN published the book *Militarism and Democracy* investigating the link between militarism and how it destroys democratic rule and how people respond in situations of intensive militarism in their communities.

In May 2017, APRN's Biennial Conference adapted the theme *Resisting Militarism: Building Peoples' Power and Democracy*.  
Regional Integration and ASEAN

The continuous and heightened rivalries between traditional and emerging superpowers is an important area of concern for the network.

In 2011, APRN gave a closer look at Asian regionalism and regional formations as expressed in increasing investment cooperation for infrastructure and free trade agreements.

APRN came up with a critique of ADB's pan-regionalism framework, mainly its neoliberal underpinnings and disregard for peoples and their rights. The paper was distributed among CSOs and governments attending the ADB Annual Governors' Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam.

APRN also came up with various statements criticizing ADB's anti-people agenda during the Annual Governors' Meetings in 2012, 2013, and 2018. We also published a primer on the ADB's corporate agenda in time for the ADB meeting in 2018 in Manila.

In view of ASEAN's centrality and role as the driving force in charting regional architecture and its poor CSO engagement, APRN organized a strategy meeting to contribute to efforts at making ASEAN engaged, proactive, and more meaningful and beneficial to people.

In 2011, it became a steering committee member of the ASEAN People's Forum which held various activities parallel to the ASEAN summits.

In 2017, APRN co-lead the ASEAN Peoples' Forum's Convergence Space on Corporate Greed and Power. It organized various activities such as strategy meetings and webinars prior to the Forum to consolidate CSOs and peoples' organizations on the campaign against manifestations of corporate greed and power in ASEAN.

APRN and its partner organizations led workshops focusing on the ASEAN Economic Community, the ASEAN working peoples' concerns regarding food sovereignty, climate justice, energy and extractive industries, and free trade agreements such as the RCEP and TPPA. Hundreds of civil society organizations from different ASEAN member countries attended the workshops.

## New challenges ahead

The region continues to face new challenges which can be new opportunities for forging stronger peoples' unities toward a just, equitable, democratic and sustainable Asia Pacific.

### *IFIs*

International financial institutions contribute greatly to the maldevelopment of poor countries' economies. The renewed push of IMF/WBG and ADB to put big corporations at the front and center of development will further chain poor countries to maldevelopment and dependency.

APRN will continue to organize activities and publish communication, advocacy, and information materials on international financial institutions such as ADB and IMF/WB.

APRN will support civil society and peoples organizations in drumming up peoples' actions for the IMF-WB meeting in Bali in October 2018.

APRN will look into new development banks such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank and implications of their investments and projects to peoples' rights, sovereignty and wellbeing.

### *FTAs*

APRN will continue to monitor free trade agreements and provide its expertise and knowledge to enhance social movements' capacity in campaigning against free trade agreements such as RCEP.

APRN will look into regional free trade agreements such as that between the EU and Asean and EU and individual ASEAN member countries and their potential consequences to peoples' rights, environment, and self-determined development of countries.

### *TNCs*

APRN intends to pick up its work on monitoring and holding TNCs to account. APRN aims to contribute in engaging and building the capacities of organizations in conducting campaigns and mobilizing against the top 5 corporations violating peoples' rights, destroying the environment, plundering resources, and inducing economic backwardness.

### *Militarism*

APRN has recently launched the Militarism Monitor website to keep track of and provide key information on military exercises and related activities in Asia Pacific including military spending and security partnerships, among others.

APRN will provide support to movements in confronting the challenges of militarism by coordinating campaigns, disseminating information and cutting-edge research and other similar common activities.

### *Communities resisting and rebuilding*

APRN looks forward to strengthening movements in documenting their struggles and developing their alternative models of development. We will aim to analyze and demystify existing alternatives or sustainable development modes, conduct research and analysis on people's alternative theories and practices for development and mainstream these alternatives being practiced on the ground into concrete proposals and mobilization campaigns.

**The APRN looks ahead to continuing its work of research for and with the people! ■**





# Samir Amin

(1931 - 2018)

*A Tribute to a Scholar from the Periphery*

The Asia Pacific Research Network is one with the world's peoples in remembering the legacy of Samir Amin, a prolific scholar, staunch anti-imperialist and Marxist political economist. Amin passed away on 12 August 2018.

Amin worked in Cairo at the Institute for Economic Management from 1957 to 1960. He became the director of the Third World Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 1980 and was a co-founder of the World Forum for Alternatives. He wrote a number of books in French and Arabic, many of which have been translated into a larger number of other languages. His most famous works were *Accumulation on a World Scale* (1970); *Unequal Development* (1976); and *Eurocentrism* (1989). A number of his essays were published by the Institute of Political Economy and IBON International. His most recent works documented the rise of neoliberal capitalism, the financial collapse and debt crisis, and the endless US-led imperialist wars, along with the pauperization of the peoples of the periphery.

APRN is privileged to have worked with Amin on a number of occasions. Amin was a keynote speaker for APRN's 5th Annual Conference with the theme "Peoples' Rights and the Militarization of Globalization". His interview with Remy Herrera "Fifty Years after the Bandung Conference: towards a revival of the solidarity between peoples' of the South" was published by APRN for the Golden Jubilee of the Bandung Afro-Asia Conference in 2005.

Amin's scholarship has shown a clear partisanship for the peoples of the global South victimized by the ravages of imperialist plunder. The underdevelopment of the South was not a coincidence, but systemic. It was the reverse side of the development of the rich countries that depended on the active and wanton exploitation of the natural and human resources of other countries, which rendered Southern economies backward and maldeveloped.

Amin was justly skeptical of emerging development hypes such as sustainable development goals. For Amin, the narrative of sustainable development formed part of a series of discourses intended to legitimize policies and practices implemented by dominant capital and its supporters. Extreme privatization, deregulation, and liberalization remained the unspoken agenda of global governance institutions such as the IMF-WB and WTO.

Amin never wavered on his faith in the power of the people to lead and create transformative change. He saw new opportunities from the reconstruction of a 21st century Bandung. Such a democratic and anti-imperialist front of the peoples' of the South would be the main force for the economic and political delinking of countries at the periphery from the unequal exchange controlled by developed capitalist countries and move toward the path of genuine self-reliant development.

In his passing, we reflect on Amin's critical interventions and celebrate his life and activism by continuing the work of championing research for and with the peoples. ■



# Grab your copies of these new publications!

## **Briefers: Possible impacts of RCEP on the labor sector and on the people of India.**

After 22 negotiation rounds and several missed deadlines, the 10 ASEAN countries and their 6 free trade partners continue their negotiations to try and move forward the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

APRN has released two briefers which tackle the possible impacts of RCEP on the people and livelihood of India written by Ajay Kumar Jha of the Center for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society, and on the workers of the negotiating nations by Rochel Porras and Otto de Vries of the Ecumenical Institute for Labor Education and Research.

Downloaded a copy at [aprnet.org](http://aprnet.org)

## **Primer on the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group**

Released on the run up to the 2018 Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group, this primer gives an in-depth analysis of IMF and WBG's role in shaping the neoliberal framework of global development, and how it seeks to push this narrative further amidst an imminent financial crisis, soaring global debt and global interest rates, declining profitability, and flaming trade wars.

You may download the primer at [aprnet.org](http://aprnet.org) or at the website of the Peoples' Global Conference Against IMF-World Bank at [peoplesglobalconference.weebly.com](http://peoplesglobalconference.weebly.com)

## **IBON International's Primer on the World Bank Group's MFD approach**

The World Bank notes that the MFD approach is not altogether new as private sector support has been among the fundamental priorities of its institutions, especially for instance the IFC and MIGA. The way that the MFD is different, says the WB, is in how it makes private sector support "more systematic, making this increasingly the norm for how the WBG does business." This paper looks into the implementation of the MFD in selected countries, and why there is a need to move beyond these current models.

Visit [iboninternational.org](http://iboninternational.org) to download a free copy.

## **Maiden issue of IBON International's TNC Watch is out**

Aside from the largest transnational corporations (TNCs) in the mining industry, there are so-called "junior" mining corporations. They operate with relatively smaller capital, but sizeable enough to invest abroad for the extraction of mineral resources. An important example of this "junior" corporation is OceanaGold which operates in mineral extraction in parts of New Zealand, the United States and the Philippines, among others.

This primer threshes out the issues surrounding Oceana Gold's operations in the global south and the danger of persisting neoliberal institutions and norms which this mining firm and other TNCs benefit from.

Get this paper through [iboninternational.org](http://iboninternational.org).

## **Case Studies on the implementation of CSO Commitments in the Nairobi Outcome Document**

This book contains five studies aimed at providing insights on how civil society organizations are fulfilling their commitments contained in the Nairobi Outcome Document at the country level. Published by APRN and the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), this book showcases the experiences of CSOs in Bolivia, Kyrgyzstan, Philippines, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

You may download a copy at [csopartnership.org](http://csopartnership.org) and [aprnet.org](http://aprnet.org) ■