Women's Major Group Briefer

ISSUE: Means of Implementation

Key Message: **Securing the Means of Implementation is at the heart of Agenda2030, including achieving women's human rights. There is an alarming absence of focus on MOI and associated systemic issues in both the Secretary General's report and the country reports submitted.**

Background: The Means of Implementation (MOI) in the 2030Agenda encompass development financing; capacity-building; technology transfer, trade; and systemic issues including the creation of an global macroeconomic and policy environment to facilitate the realization of the goals and targets adopted by governments in September 2015. The MOI goal (17) and targets in each goal were amongst the most contested throughout the negotiations. Developed countries, in the main, preferred to minimize the MOI elements of Agenda2030 and to merge MOI with the Addis Ababa Accord. Read more at the Women's Working Group on Financing for Development.

The MOI goal and targets are integral to realising women's human rights. A shortage of financing could, for example, mean that essential services and infrastructure that women rely on to reduce their unpaid care burden and access healthcare are not funded. Whether that financing is provided by the private or public sector can also have a considerable impact on the accessibility, affordability and quality of those services.

Decisions around financing, revenue and trade are not only decisions about revenue and growth. They are also decisions about the value of our shared commons, about wealth distribution and about the obligation to ensure economic policies advance human rights. Taxes on harmful industries and practices; like speculative financial transactions, military and arms trading, carbon emissions, and extractive industries, can provide means of implementation, support reductions in inequality, and limit practices that undermine sustainable development. While regressive taxes on goods and services, failure to prevent tax avoidance and evasion, trade mispricing and a failure to regulate and tax corporations exacerbates inequalities and reduces state capacity for sustainable development investment.

Relevant Language

Para61 - "The means of implementation targets under each SDG and Goal 17, which are referred to above, are key to realising our Agenda and are of equal importance with the other Goals and targets. **We shall accord them equal priority in our implementation efforts and in the global indicator framework** for monitoring our progress."

MOI is MIA – Failure to seriously address MOI in the Secretary General's and state reports to HLPF

Despite the commitment to afford MOI equal priority in monitoring, the Secretary General's report to the HLPF and most of the country reports (available at time of writing) have failed to provide more than a cursory glance at the MOI targets and commitments nor the relevant systemic targets. The omission is partly a reflection of the failure to agree to indicators for these targets highlighting the threat to the agenda arising from attempts to weaken the Agenda by, mainly, developed countries through the indicators process.

The **UN Secretary General's report** **"Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals"** misses almost every target that addresses the imbalanced global economic structural problems of finance, trade and regulation. Tax and fiscal policies are not mentioned once in the his report, nor is debt.

For example **Goal 1** includes no reference to MOI including the important commitment to

> 1.b Create **sound policy frameworks** at the national, regional and international levels, based on **pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies**, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions

Goals 2 and 3 selectively address MOI with reference to recent WTO decisions but not to measuring food export subsidies from the Global North and no reference to supporting TRIPS flexibilities for affordable medicines despite the contradicting pressures from Mega-Trade agreements that threaten the target.

There is **no reference to MOI at all for Goal 5**. In addition, there is no reference to public investment in services to recognise and redistribute unpaid care, another indication of the failure of indicators to reflect the ambition of the target.

The omissions in **Goal 8** relate to the substantive targets that relate to global economies that reduce labour rights. Labour rights are absent, including the rights of migrant workers, as is the Gender Pay Gap

Where differentiation is present in targets it is almost always ignored. Including Goals 9, 12 and 14.

The integrity of Agenda2030 should rest on the ability to genuinely address and measure **Goal 10**. The first HLPF does not bode well for this bellwether goal. No references can be found to inequality of wealth and resources between states, nor of the global concentration of wealth. There is no reference to fiscal policies here or elsewhere , the target to improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets is not addressed and safe migration addressed only in reference to remittances in 10.c

No MOI targets are referred to for **goal 12** and nor is the reference to the sole weak target encouraging multinationals to adopt sustainable practices.

Given recent revelations around tax havens it is disappointing that there is no reference to target 4 in **Goal 16** concerning illicit financial and arms flows.

Finally, the MOI stand-alone **Goal 17** is woefully inadequate. In relation to finance only ODA is mentioned. There is no reference to tax or debt relief targets. ICT issues are limited to internet access and Systemic Issues miss critical targets on policy and Institutional coherence.

The Secretary General's report for this year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) revealed how important the MOI and Macro Economic reform is to Women's Rights. Addressing financing and the MOI for gender equality throughout Agenda2030 it addressed the barriers and possible solutions that must also be core to the HLPF's work:

> *30. The challenges to generating sufficient domestic resources and tax revenues for gender equality can be addressed. Financial globalization and dominant macroeconomic policies have led to a decline in corporate taxes and tax rates on the wealthiest. Decreases have been substantial, with global corporate income -tax rates falling on average from 38 per cent in 1993 to 24.9 per cent in 2010.19 Tax exemptions and other incentives, including relaxing labour and environmental standards, to attract foreign direct investment have also deprived developing countries of a significant amount of revenue and regulatory efficacy. Tax avoidance by transnational corporations has resulted in an estimated loss to developing countries of $189 billion annually, which effectively limits the ability of those countries to secure resources for sustainable development and gender equality. An estimated $98 to $106 billion per year in tax revenues was lost between 2002 and 2006 from trade mispricing alone — distortions in the price of trade between subsidiaries of the same multinational corporation in order to minimize taxes. Some 60 per cent of trade occurs within multinational corporations. Lost revenues amounted to nearly $20 billion more than the annual capital costs needed to achieve universal water and sanitation coverage by 2015. Especially affected are the poorest countries where the possibilities for sustainable development are most compromised by the disappearance of tax revenues (A/HRC/26/28).*
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> *The Addis Ababa Action Agenda urges countries to reduce and eventually eliminate illicit financial flows from tax evasion and corruption by strengthening national regulation and international cooperation. 31. The substantial reduction in corporate and trade taxes has led to national tax systems becoming more regressive and a shift to consumption taxes, which have had clear gender implications. Increases in taxes on basic consumer goods and on smallscale farmers and enterprises, for example, disproportionately affect women. The inability to mobilize sufficient resources curtails State capacity to finance public services and social protection and invest in time- and energy-saving infrastructure.*
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> *Progressive taxation on income, wealth and inheritance, as well as financial transactions, would help to provide the domestic resource base for gender responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda (see A/HRC/26/28).23 32. Regarding domestic resource allocation, a number of policy*

options are available for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of a gender-responsive implementation of Agenda 2030. Public investment in physical and social infrastructure can promote gender equality, reduce women's unpaid care work, stimulate employment and lead to productivity growth. Such investments strengthen capabilities and have positive economy-wide spillover effects.

Country Reports

Like the Secretary General's report many developed country reports (released as of 7th July) fail to address any of the systemic macro-economic and regulatory changes required to realize just and sustainable development. Reports continue to frame developed countries obligations only in terms of ODA. Countries have failed to recognise their extra territorial obligations in relation to multi-national corporations, to their own role in International Financial Institutions, in spear-heading contradictory trade agreements nor to their role in enabling global financial speculation, tax havens, mis-pricing nor to the obligations creditors.

Switzerland's summary report (full report unavailable) makes no reference to reforming tax havens and financial markets. Like most developed country reports it deflects its MOI obligations to the weak AAAA.

Means of Implementation: The implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy 2016–19 is funded via the budgets that have been approved by the individual federal offices, which are responsible for incorporating the necessary financial resources into their financial planning. The Swiss Confederation also supports the comprehensive financing and implementation framework adopted by all UN member states at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA). Moreover, Switzerland is highly engaged in support of international conventions and standards in order to strengthen the normative global framework favouring the achievement of the SDGs.

Germany's short summary refers to its intention to "address impacts in other countries and on global public goods, i.e. on global well-being (worldwide impacts – e.g. from trade or climate policy)"

South Korea limits its focus to ODA

***Means of Implementation**: ODA should remain as an important development resource in the SDGs era, especially for poor and vulnerable countries with special needs. As such, Korea will continue to increase its ODA. Korea's second mid-term ODA policy (2016-2020) states that the government will aim at increasing the total volume of ODA so that it reaches 0.2% of GNI by 2020. The current level is at 0.14%. Korea also supports the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) which provides a comprehensive framework to maximize the potential of all development actors and resources for financing sustainable development. Also, Korea has been actively engaging in various initiatives and activities to promote collective efforts. In this regard, Korea is taking part* *in the Addis Tax Initiatives and it has continued to provide assistance to developing countries to modernize their tax administration system and build capacity.*

France has not made reports available. However, the recent concluding observations of the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) should guide the review. The observations point to the Responsibility to Act (R2A), of the extra-territorial obligations of states (ETOs) to advance human rights globally and, consequently, to reflect those obligations in their trade negotiations, role in international financial institutions and other multi-lateral or bi-lateral processes and to regulate French corporations.

9. The Committee expresses concern with regard to the lack of attention given to the impacts on Covenant rights in trade agreements or partner countries of bilateral and multilateral investment being negotiated or entered into by the State party or the European Union. The Committee is particularly concerned that the resolution mechanisms for disputes between investors and States under several agreements could reduce the capacity of the State to protect and realize certain rights enshrined in the Covenant (art. 2 (1)) .

10. The Committee urges the State party to fully meet its obligations under the Covenant in connection with the negotiation and implementation of trade agreements and bilateral and multilateral investment. It encourages in particular:

a) Ensure consultation with relevant stakeholders, including affected communities are engaged in the development stages of negotiation and ratification of these agreements, based on an assessment of expected impacts;

b) Ensure that an impact assessment is systematically conducted during their implementation in order to adapt, if necessary, the content of the commitments; and

c) Ensure that the dispute settlement mechanisms will not compromise the ability of the State party to fulfill its obligations under the Covenant.

11. The Committee urges the State party to take all possible measures to ensure that decisions and policies adopted within international organizations to which he belongs comply with obligations under the Covenant.