

CSO Planning Group for 2009 Annual Meetings in Istanbul

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

In recent years, the participation of representatives from civil society in the Annual Meetings of the IMF and the WB has grown as part of an effort by the institutions to make the Meetings more transparent and to encourage public debate on development issues. However, the vast majority of civil society organizations (CSOs) at the Annual Meetings have traditionally come from developed countries, especially from Europe and the United States.

In order to address this imbalance, the External Relations Department of the International Monetary Fund (EXR) and the External Affairs Vice-Presidency of the World Bank Group (EXT) launched an effort several years ago to sponsor CSO representatives and journalists from developing countries to participate in the Annual Meetings. As a result, CSOs were sponsored to participate in the Annual Meetings held in Doha (2003), Singapore (2006), and Washington (2007, 2008). For the Singapore Annual Meetings, we convened a CSO planning group which was quite effective in generating the interest and participation of CSOs from the Asia region in the planning process for the civil society outreach efforts.

The purpose of this joint planning effort, therefore, is to enlist the participation of CSOs from the Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA), Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Africa, Europe, and North America regions to help plan the civil society outreach events at the 2009 Annual Meetings. This participation, in turn, will enhance the quality and diversity of policy dialogue at the Annual Meetings, and help strengthen the capacity of developing country CSO representatives to participate in these global meetings.

A Planning Group of 20 national and regional civil society networks from Turkey (6 representatives), and the ECA (5), Middle East (3), Africa (3), Europe (1), North America (1), and Asia (1) regions will be established to encourage civil society participation in the Annual Meeting events. The Istanbul CSO Planning Group members will be expected to participate in a conference call in June and possibly in a planning meeting in July in Istanbul, as well as communicate via email throughout the months of June through October. The CSO members will volunteer their time to this planning effort, but the Bank and Fund will cover the travel, hotel, and per diem costs of the Planning Group members for the possible July meeting in Istanbul, and to participate in the Annual Meetings in early October.

Overall Objectives

- Increase the visibility and quality of civil society participation in Bank/Fund Annual Meetings.
- Improve the policies and development outcomes of the Bank and Fund.
- Promote greater transparency and accountability of Bank and Fund policies and programs.

- Build greater trust and understanding between the Bank/Fund and civil society.

Specific Objectives

- Participation in the Annual Meetings by a diverse group of CSO representatives, particularly from Turkey, and the ECA, MENA, and AFR regions.
- Provide CSOs with the opportunity to frame the agenda at the Policy Forum and youth events, as well as provide input into the Program of Seminars and the Annual Meetings.
- Provide an opportunity for CSOs to dialogue with Bank, Fund, and government officials, as well as to network with other civil society actors.
- Provide opportunities and strengthen the capacity of CSOs to interact with the media.

Activities

The participants will work with the Bank and Fund staff on all aspects of civil society participation at the 2009 Annual Meetings, including:

- Proposing topics and organizing policy sessions for the Civil Society Policy Forum, including a townhall meeting with the Messrs. Zoellick and Strauss-Kahn;
- Helping to organize youth events;
- Helping to identify CSO candidates to be sponsored to attend the Annual Meetings;
- Inviting civil society CEOs to attend;
- Write a final report on the CSO Planning Group experience and recommendations for improving the process further in future Annual Meetings.

Participant Selection

EXR and EXT will consult widely with regional and global civil society networks for CSO candidates to be both part of the Planning Group as well as to be sponsored to attend the Annual Meetings. Selection criteria will include: geographic coverage; thematic diversity (e.g. environment, governance, health); institutional complementarity (e.g. NGO, foundation, youth); and gender balance.

Timetable

<u>June:</u>	CSO Planning Group members selected and first conference call held.
<u>July:</u>	Possible CSO Planning Group meeting to be held in Istanbul to start planning the civil Society events at the Annual Meetings.
<u>August:</u>	Sponsored CSOs identified and invited.
<u>August-September:</u>	Virtual consultations continue between the Planning Group CSOs and Bank and Fund staff on the organization of the various CSO events at the Annual Meetings.
<u>October 1-7:</u>	CSOs attend the Annual Meetings and participate in the Civil Society Policy Forum and the Program of Seminars.