



BD

BERNE DECLARATION

Conference by The Berne Declaration (BD)

Poverty Reduction with the International Monetary Fund?

17 November, 2004, 09.30 – 17.00 hrs

Tagungszentrum Blumenberg, Schänzlistr. 33, Bern

60 years International Monetary Fund and World Bank

The Berne Declaration (BD) invites you to a conference on:

Poverty reduction with the International Monetary Fund?

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been criticised for the last twenty years for its structural adjustment programmes and the negative consequences these were found to have. In 1999 the IMF reacted to criticisms by replacing its Structural Adjustment Fund by a new Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). Now the lending programmes for the poorest countries are linked up with the drawing up of poverty reduction strategies.

The conference is devoted to the following questions:

- Does the IMF lending programme "Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility" (PRGF) meet its many and diverse targets, and does the new policy really help achieve more growth and less poverty?
- How did the IMF Independent Evaluation Office assess the IMF lending programmes in its latest survey?
- What are impacts of the new programmes, in particular for women?

The main focus of the conference will be on the impacts of IMF policies for women and children, who in the past have suffered most from structural adjustment measures. Experts from Tanzania, Bolivia and Serbia-Montenegro will comment the new IMF lending programmes from a gender-critical angle and report on their own experience relating to poverty reduction strategies. Finally speakers and audience will discuss what political strategies should best be pursued in future by Switzerland as well as by the IMF.

Invited key speakers:

- **Marie Shaba**, Chair of the Tanzanian NGO network Tango. Marie Shaba has participated in the Tanzanian process of drawing up the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.
- **Aleksandra Vladislavjevic**, with the Economic Policy Initiative of the Association for Women's Initiatives in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro. In 2003 she released, jointly with the US Gender Action Network, a report on the impacts of structural adjustment loans on women in Serbia and Montenegro.
- **Cecilia Ramos** has participated in the Bolivian process of drawing up the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers as a member of the Bolivian CEDLA-Institute (Proyecto Control Ciudadano).
- **James Vreeland**, Professor for politics at the University of Los Angeles and author of the book "The IMF and Economic Development" (Cambridge 2003), in which he takes a critical look at the IMF growth and distribution targets.
- **Fritz Zurbrügg**, Swiss Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund. He also chairs a voting rights group whose other members include Serbia and Montenegro, Poland, Azerbaijan, the Kirghiz Republic, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and Turkmenistan.
- A representative of the **IMF Independent Evaluation Office**, which has just published an evaluation of the PRGF/PRSP.

Presenter Markus Mugglin, from the Swiss national radio broadcaster DRS

Simultaneous interpretation provided in English – French – German.

Programme:

Hours	Topics	Speakers
9.30	Welcoming address by the President of the Berne Declaration	
9.45	After 25 years of structural adjustment programmes – Is there a re-orientation at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank?	Christine Eberlein, Jean-Claude Huot, Berne Declaration
10.00	Is the International Monetary Fund capable of learning? – An introduction to the IMF lending programmes for poorest countries (followed by question time)	Fritz Zurbrügg, Swiss Executive Director at the IMF
10.30	Does the new lending programme for Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) live up to its promise? – Findings of the latest evaluation undertaken by the IMF Independent Evaluation Office (followed by question time)	Representative, Independent Evaluation Office (IMF)
11.00	<i>Break</i>	
11.30	Does the IMF policy really encourage growth and equitable distribution in poorest countries? (followed by question time)	Prof. James Vreeland, Yale University, USA
12.00	Panel with the IMF representatives and Professor Vreeland	
12.30	<i>Stand-up buffet</i>	
13.30	From the IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programmes to programmes focussing on poverty reduction. What are the changes, in particular for women? 1 Report from Tanzania 2 Report from Serbia/Montenegro 3 Report from Bolivia	Marie Shaba, Tango Alexandra Vladislavjevic Cecilia Ramos
14. 15	Discussion in small groups chaired by the experts	
15.15	<i>Break</i>	
15.45	Brief report on discussions held in the country groups	
16.00	Presentation of the Swiss point of view in relation to "Poverty Reduction with the IMF" followed by - Panel discussion on the results of the conference and the question, what political strategies should Switzerland and the IMF best pursue in future?	Swiss Federal Direction for Development and Co-operation (DEZA)
16.50	Concluding words	

Booking form

I herewith register for the conference on 17 November, 2004, at Berne, Switzerland:

First name:Family name:

Address:

Telephone E-mail:

Date: Signature:

Cost CHF 70.-, reduced entrance fee for students CHF 50.-

Reduced entrance fee applies

You will be sent an invoice together with the conference documentation.

Please complete and return this to: Erklärung von Bern, Quellenstr. 25, CH 8031 Zürich
Tel. 0041 (0)1 277 70 08, Fax: 0041 (0)1 277 70 01 or **register on-line at www.evb.ch**.

-----✂-----