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Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Development Policy and Analysis Division (DPAD)

Expert Group Meeting: “Macroeconomic challenges to development policies post-2015: lessons from recent country experiences”
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Bios of panelists and chairs

Yilmaz Akyuz

Yilmaz Akyuz is currently the Special Economic Advisor to South Centre, a Geneva-based Intergovernmental Think Tank of the Developing Countries. Prior to this position, he served as the Director of the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Here he was the principal author and head of the team preparing the Trade and Development Report, and UNCTAD coordinator of research support to developing countries (the Group-of-24) in the IMF and the World Bank on International Monetary and Financial Issues. He taught at various universities in Turkey and Europe and has published extensively on macroeconomics, finance, trade, growth and development. He is the second holder of the Tun Ismail Ali International Chair in Monetary and Financial Economics at the University of Malaya, established by Bank Negara.

Diana Alarcón

Diana Alarcón is currently Senior Economic Affairs Officer in the Development Policy and Analysis Division at UN DESA. In different capacities, she has been working on the MDG agenda since 2002 and has been part of the UN System Task Team to support the analytical work around the post-2015 development agenda. She has done research and contributed to the development of programs for employment creation, poverty reduction and social protection. Ms. Alarcon has a PhD in Economics from the University of California and has taught in various universities in Mexico and the United States.

Nagapudi Bhanumurthy

Dr. N R Bhanumurthy is currently working as Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi. Prior to this he worked as Assistant/Associate Professor at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi for nearly nine years. He received his Masters and M.Phil from the University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad and his Ph.d on international finance from the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore. He has worked for UNESCAP, Bangkok and also as macroeconomist for the UNDP Regional Centre for the Asia-Pacific region at Colombo. He was Visiting Fellow at Maison des Sciences d’homme, Paris, France and at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. Besides this he was a consultant to ILO, the World Bank, and Asian Development Bank. Currently he is the Secretary of the Indian Econometric Society and also Managing Trustee of Indian Economic Association Trust for Research and Development. At present, he is also serving on committees of Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Statistics, FICCI and CII.

David Le Blanc

David Le Blanc is an economist. He is currently working in the Division for Sustainable Development in the United Nations Secretariat in New York. While at the UN, he has worked on financing, integrated scenarios and strategies for sustainable development, mining, water and electricity subsidies and sustainable development assessments. Prior to joining the United Nations, David worked at the World Bank as Senior Economist in the Urban and Housing Finance groups, focusing on projects and technical assistance on housing policy, housing subsidies, and housing finance. Earlier in his career, David worked at the French Statistical Institute (INSEE) as official statistician and CREST, Paris as a research fellow. David holds diplomas from Ecole Polytechnique, Paris, Ecole Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Economique, Paris, and a Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies in Stochastic Modeling Applied to Finance from Paris VII University.

Roehlano M. Briones

Roehlano M. Briones is a Senior Research Fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development studies. He is the lead expert in the application of MAMS to the Philippines. His other research interests are agricultural policy, rural and agricultural development, and resource economics. He obtained his doctorate in economics from University of the Philippines and did postdoctoral study at the World Fish Center in Penang, Malaysia.

Gustavo Canavire Bacarezza

Gustavo Javier Canavire Bacarrezza is Director for the Center for Research on Economics and Finance at the School of Economics and Finance in Universidad EAFIT in Medellin Colombia. Previously he was a Research Associate at the International Center for Public Policy in the Department of Economics at Georgia State University in Atlanta. He received his PhD in Economics and a MA in Economics from Georgia State University and got an Advanced Studies Degree from the Kiel Institute for World Economics at Kiel University, Germany. Prior to this he got the degree of Licenciatura from the Universidad Catolica Boliviana. He has worked for the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, World Bank, the Bolivian Government and has been consulting for UN DESA, ECLAC, IDB and the Colombian Government.

Anisuzzaman Chowdhury

Anisuzzaman Chowdhury is the Director of the Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division at UN ESCAP. Prior to this he served as Senior Economic Affairs Officer in the Office of the Under Secretary General at UN DESA. He has been Professor of Economics, University of Western Sydney (Australia) since 2001. Moreover, he taught at the University of Manitoba, National University of Singapore, and the University of New England (Australia). Mr. Chowdhury has been a consultant to UNDP, ILO, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the Islamic Development Bank and has been a visiting fellow at UNU-WIDER, the Reserve Bank of San Francisco and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore).

Stephany Griffith Jones

Stephany Griffith Jones specializes in international finance and development with emphasis on the reform of the international financial system, specifically in relation to financial regulation, global governance and international capital flows. Currently she is Financial Markets Director at the Initiative for Policy Dialogue, based at Columbia

University in New York and Associate Fellow at the Overseas Development Institute. Previously she was Professorial Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University. She has also held the position of Deputy Director of International Finance at the Commonwealth Secretariat and has worked at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and in the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Elliot Harris

Elliot Harris joined UNEP as Director of the New York Office and of the Secretariat of the Environment Management Group in September 2013. Prior to this, he worked as an economist in the IMF from 1988 to 2013, gaining extensive policy and programmatic experience in African and Central Asian countries, as well as in the Fiscal Affairs Department on public expenditure policy issues. From July 2002 onward, Mr. Harris served as Advisor and Assistant Director in the IMF's Strategy, Policy and Review Department, including as Chief of the Development Issues Division. From September 2008 until May 2012, he was also the IMF's Special Representative to the United Nations. From September 2009 until October 2013, he was the Vice Chair of the High-Level Committee on Programs of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

Pingfan Hong

Pingfan Hong is Acting Director of the Development Policy Analysis Division (DPAD) of UN DESA. Prior to this position he served as Chief of the Global Economic Monitoring Unit of DPAD. He joined the United Nations in 1998 and has also worked as an officer in the State Planning Commission of China and as a Research Fellow and Assistant to Professor Lawrence Klein at the University of Pennsylvania. Mr. Hong earned a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Pennsylvania, a Dual Master in Computer Sciences and Management Sciences from Shanghai Jiao Tong University and a Bachelor in Engineering from Wu Xi Institute of Light Industrial Technology. He is the World Bank McNamara Fellow of 1985.

Hans Lofgren

Hans Lofgren is a Senior Economist in the Development Economics Prospects Group (DECPG) of the World Bank. He is the key developer of MAMS (Maquette for MDG [Millennium Development Goal] Simulations), a model for medium- to long-run country-level policy analysis that has been applied to some 50 countries with a focus on fiscal policy, MDGs, education, and the labor market, including collaborative projects between the World Bank, UN DESA, and researchers and governments in developing countries. He joined the World Bank in June 2004. Prior to this he was a Senior Research Fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Mr. Lofgren holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Texas at Austin.

Marvin Miranda

Marvin Miranda is a Nicaraguan economist who graduated from the Universidad Centroamericana - UCA (Nicaragua) and holds a Master in Economics from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ (Brazil). He currently works at the Central Bank of Nicaragua as Chief of the Financial Analysis Office. The office's main objective is to monitor the Nicaraguan financial system from a risk perspective. He also worked at the Economics Research Office at the Central Bank of Nicaragua, as a Researcher Economist and as Research Assistant at the market research company, Mercaplan – Millward Brown.

Roman Mogilevskii

Roman Mogilevskii is senior research fellow at the Institute of Public Policy and Administration, University of Central Asia, Kyrgyz Republic. He has extensive experience in research of macroeconomics, trade policy, public finance, social policies of the countries of Central Asia and Eastern Europe; worked as a consultant for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UNDP and other international development organizations.

David O'Connor

David O'Connor is Chief of the Policy and Analysis Branch of the Division for Sustainable Development at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Before joining the UN, O'Connor was Senior Economist at the OECD Development Centre, researching the many areas of sustainable development. He has also published extensively on climate policies and their co-benefits in developing countries.

Marie Oveissie

Marie Oveissie is Head of the Capacity Development Office at UN DESA.

Hamid Rashid

Hamid Rashid is Senior Advisor for Macroeconomic Policy at UN DESA. Prior to this he served as visiting lecturer and fellow at the Initiative for Policy Dialogue and as Senior Advisor in the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP.

Eustaquio Reis

Eustaquio Reis is currently Director of the Sustainable Development Division at the Ministry of Strategic Studies in Brazil. He has been a researcher at the Macroeconomic Studies Division of IPEA (Advanced Economic Research Institute) in Brazil since 1975. Here he also served as Director (1985-87 and 1999-2003) and Research and Economic Planning Editor (1989-91). He was a professor of international economics at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (1975-86) and at the Fluminense Federal University (1971-72). Since 1997 he is coordinator of the Center for Systemic Studies and Spatial Models (NEMESIS / PRONEX).

Peter Richens

Peter Richens is a Technical Advisor with Uganda's Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED). A beneficiary of UN-DESA's capacity building activities in the MAMS (Maquette for MDG Simulations) model, he has used this tool in the preparation of Uganda's 2013 MDG progress report and to inform Uganda's long-term fiscal strategy, and is working to institutionalise the use of macro-micro modelling within the Government of Uganda. He was previously an Overseas Development Institute (ODI) fellow, also with MFPED, where he worked on the Uganda Poverty Status Report, as well as Uganda's employment strategy and a study on budget execution. He holds degrees in economics and economic history from Cambridge University and the London School of Economics.

Marco Sanchez

Marco V. Sánchez holds a Ph.D in Development Studies from the International Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands. He specializes in quantitative methods for development policy analysis. During the past seven years he has been economic affairs officer at the Development Policy and Analysis Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, New York, and was previously associated with the Sub-Regional Office in Mexico City of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. He accumulates a respectable record of publications on cross-cutting economic development issues at both the macro and micro levels, including in peer-reviewed international journals and books. Most recently, he led the editing of and contributed a number of chapters to two volumes on financing strategies to achieve human development goals in, respectively, 18 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 9 countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Oliver Schwank

Oliver Schwank is a development economist in the Financing for Development Office of UN-DESA.

Roberto Carlos Sevillano

Roberto Carlos Sevillano is an Economist in the Unit of Analysis of Social and Economic Policies (UDAPE) of the Ministry of Planning of Bolivian Government. As a researcher of the Macroeconomic Division at UDAPE, he worked in the implementation of CGE MAMS for Bolivia. Mr. Sevillano holds a Master in Economics from the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven at Flanders, Belgium.

Qija Wei

Qija Wei works at the Economic Forecast Department of the State Information Center in China. He received his PhD in Economics and his MSc in Economics and Finance from the University of Bath, UK, and his BSc in Management from the Beijing Jiao Tong University in China.

Eduardo Zepeda

Eduardo Zepeda is Inter-Regional Policy Coordinator in the Division of Political Analysis and Department at UN DESA. Prior to this he was policy advisor in the Poverty Group of the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP. Selected previous positions include Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, Senior Researcher at the International Poverty Centre in Brasilia as well as Economic and Social Policy Coordinator in the Analysis Unit of the Chief of Staff Office of the President, México. He taught as Professor at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco in México. Mr. Zepeda received his PhD in Economics from the University of California, Riverside.