



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

tax justice network- Africa



TWN Africa
Third World Network Africa

TRUSTAFRICA

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

CONCEPT NOTE

UN FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT III SIDE EVENT

**Implementation of the AU/ECA High Level Panel Report on IFF and the Civil
Society ‘Stop the Bleeding’ Africa IFF Campaign as a citizen’s response**

Date: Wednesday, 15 July 2015

Venue: Radisson BLU Hotel, Sholla 1

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

AUC and ECA in collaboration with Africa Civil Society Interim Working Group (IWG)
led by Tax Justice Network Africa, TrustAfrica and Third World Network Africa (TWN-A)

Background

The Report *of the AU/ECA High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa* was finally presented at the 24th AU Summit in Addis Ababa and adopted by African leaders. The findings from the former South African president Thabo Mbeki led HLP echoes civil society voices from across the continent in highlighting illicit financial flows as a serious threat to inclusive development in Africa and calling for urgent practical policy action to stop the hemorrhage. One of the most notable findings of the HLP process is that illicit outflows from Africa are large and increasing at an alarming rate of 20.2% per year (according to Global Financial Integrity (GFI) calculations for the period 2002 – 2011). While observing that the dependence of African economies on natural resources extraction makes them particularly vulnerable to IFFs, the panel also point to emerging new and innovative ways of generating IFFs enabled by the digital economy and new technologies. In addition, the report singles out the issue of weak national and regional capacities as a major obstacle in efforts to curb illicit outflows, while making it clear that ending illicit financial flows is ultimately a political issue.

In the last few years there has been a notable emergence of concerted advocacy efforts from various civil society based groups across the continent rallying against the issue of illicit movement of finances from Africa. Indeed, today the subject of illicit financial flows is a key part of conversations on Africa's development road map as reflected in Agenda 2063 and ongoing processes such as the Financing for Development and the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

While the present global attention around illicit flows is positive and indeed creates an important hook and rallying point to discuss key issues concerning Africa's development, especially the domestic resource mobilization component, it is equally important to recognize some of the contradictions and limitations of the present discourse and put forward coherent policy solutions that effectively respond to the specific African context

It's against this background that AUC and ECA are collaborating with a group of African Civil society networks led by the Tax Justice Network Africa to co- host a side event at the FfD3 meetings that will provide a platform for interactions among African policy makers, civil society, donors and international organizations delegates that will be present in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Invited Speakers:

- Chair of the High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows (Chair)
- President of the Republic of Zambia
- Prime minister of the Kingdom of Sweden
- Representative of the African Union Commission
- Representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
- Representative of the African Development Bank
- Senior Representative of the Civil Society

Invited speakers for signing the register for “Stop the Bleeding” Campaign

- Minister of Finance of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chair of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, Denmark
- Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway
- Senior Representative of the Civil Society

Session objectives:

- Strengthen the appreciation of the specificities of tax and development in Africa and the challenge of illicit financial flows as regards the African Union agenda for inclusive economic transformation.
- Signing of the campaign register
- Appraise the findings and recommendations of the *AU/UNECA Report of the High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa* for a strengthened Africa response.
- Facilitate strategic consultation among key African governments, Institutions, civil society and partners to strengthen ongoing independent and collaborative efforts to curb illicit financial flows at national, sub-regional, continental and global levels.
- Introduce the recently launched Africa IFF campaign platform dubbed “STOP THE BLEEDING” as an avenue for African citizens participation
- Push for country level implementation of key actions to tackle IFFs on the continent

Organizing partners

AUC, ECA and the Africa Civil Society Interim Working Group (IWG) led by Tax Justice Network Africa, Trust Africa and Third World Network Africa (TWN-A)

Context

Our goals in contributing to the FfD discussions, including through this side event in Addis, include:

- Discussions on the ongoing and prospective Global to National efforts to deter, prevent, detect and recover illicit financial flows out of Africa. .
- Persuading countries on the need to involve national citizens and stakeholders as agents of changes in the drive to improve national and regional tax policies that would help tackle IFFs;
- Convincing governments to commit to specific time bound, measurable regional and national actions aimed at implementing the recommendations the AU/ECA HLP report on IFFs.
- Demanding that international tax cooperation delivers fair international tax standards for all countries - including ensuring that African countries have an equal seat at the table in setting international tax rules.

Contacts

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