

EDITORIAL - Doha: Business as usual, or an opportunity to change the world?

It was important that it happened – but was what happened important? The Doha Conference on Financing for Development took place in uncertain times, at the tail end of one US Administration, as the global economic crisis reached new depths, and Mumbai was under assault. It coincided with the Thanksgiving weekend, thereby explaining, it was said, Robert Zoellick’s if not Dominique Strauss-Kahn’s much-remarked absence.

President Sarkozy, the only western Head of State present, got things off to a cracking start, declaring the G8 obsolete, the need for a revamped global financial system, and a much greater role for developing countries and Africa in the IMF and the G20. He reaffirmed the EU’s commitment to increasing ODA to 0.56% of GDP by 2010 and to 0.7% by 2015. These welcome words were met with skepticism by those tracking G8 commitments (see chart) including ODA levels, notably Italy’s as incoming G8 Chair.

Issues receiving attention included LDCs’ ability to mobilize domestic revenues, to maintain and boost trade, and to benefit from innovative financing not least to pay for adaptation to climate change. Gearing global finance to growth rather than profit loomed large. As financial flows to Africa drop, imperatives include making ODA more effective and arresting illicit capital flight which, according to some, dwarfs FDI, ODA, remittances and loans combined. There was renewed emphasis on increased investment in education. President Kikwete of Tanzania said he wanted an initiative in this area to be his legacy as AU Chair.

The side event co-sponsored by the AfDB, AU, ECA and APP was among the best attended at Doha, with an impressive number of Ministers from Africa and its donor partners. Ably chaired by Trevor Manuel, the emphasis was on the need for stronger African political leadership both on the global stage and at home to ensure that the impact of the global crisis is contained.

Featured in [This Week](#), Nigeria, 1 December 2008



News Overview

The follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, concluded in Doha, Qatar on 2 December 2008. Participants urged that aid commitments be maintained despite the global economic crisis and called for the convening of an inclusive international conference under the United Nations auspices to review the international financial and monetary architecture.

On 1 December, the latest round of the United Nations-led negotiations aimed at global climate change began in the city of Poznan, Poland. The two-week meeting: **COP 14 (The 14th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC), is addressing the details of a climate change treaty to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2012. On 3 December Africa and the EU outlined their common concerns for global warming and their common interest for an ambitious post-Kyoto international agreement through the endorsement of a joint declaration on climate change. It is early days but the event, attended by 10,000 people, is already attracting [criticism](#).

Zimbabwe has declared a national emergency and appealed for international aid to tackle the recent cholera outbreak, which has claimed nearly 600 lives. Taps in Harare ran dry last week. The state-run water company, ZINWA, ran short of the chemical used to purify water.

On Sunday 7 December Raila Odinga, in the latest sign of growing international frustration over Zimbabwe's slide into chaos, urged the African Union to call an emergency meeting to authorise sending troops into Zimbabwe.

Following their fact-finding mission to South Africa to address the crisis in Zimbabwe the Elders issued a report. [The Elders report](#) calls for the three parties to the GPA to make the humanitarian crisis their priority, for the SADC countries, especially those closest to Zimbabwe, to press the parties to implement the GPA in good faith as soon as possible, and for the international community to increase emergency relief and humanitarian assistance.

Days of **fighting between Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian city of Jos** (the capital city of Plateau State) have left an estimated 400 people dead. The clashes began on Friday, 28 November in the wake of a disputed local government election, taking the entire city by surprise. This is the worst religious violence Nigeria has experienced in at least four years.

It's too early to report on the election results in **Ghana** – but expect some surprises'

Featured Quote

// *With your election, Mr. President-elect, the American people have signaled to the world that our nation is on the path to change. Now we must fulfill that promise by joining with others to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st century -- to prevent conflict, to promote peace, combat terrorism, prevent the spread and use of nuclear weapons, tackle climate change, end genocide, fight poverty and disease.* //

[Susan Rice](#), accepting her appointment as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, 1 December 2008

On the blogs

[ONE - White Smoke, 2 December 2008](#)

As the Doha meeting drew to a close Sergius Seebohm blogged that 'we are not too overwhelmed by the results. Clearly: this was a difficult environment for such a conference with one of the biggest financial crisis since decades going on and the US as most important player in-between two administrations. In the final communiqué donors gave a weak reaffirmation of existing commitments'. He praises, however, the acknowledgement 'that adaptation to climate change in the developing countries will demand additional funds'.

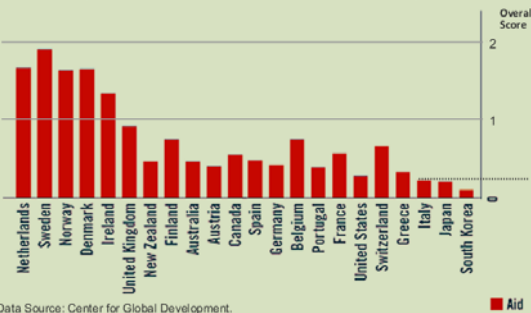
[Nicholas Kristof's Blog, New York Times - A Killer and a Cure This World AIDS Day, 1 December 2008](#)

Josh Ruxin, a Columbia University expert on public health, advises that President-elect Obama 'should give due consideration to what worked well in the Bush Administration's approach (to the fight against AIDS) and what could have been done more effectively with the same resources'. He warns that 'if we're found simply debating whether we have the means to win the battle, we will find that we have already lost it'.

APP Activities

Kofi Annan participated by video conference in the side event on African perspectives on the global financial and economic crisis, co-sponsored by the APP, at the Doha conference ◊ In his role of United Nations Special Envoy, **Olusegun Obasanjo** arrived in the DRC on the 28 Nov. Obasanjo has met with President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo, President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and with the Head of the National Congress in Defence of the People, Laurent Nkunda ◊ **Muhammad Yunus** gave this year's Romanes lecture on 2 December, on 'A poverty-free world: When? How?', on the financial institutions he stated "There is something fundamentally wrong with an institution that leaves out more than half the population of the world, because they are considered not credit-worthy" ◊

Aid component of the Commitment to Development Index



Data Source: Center for Global Development.

[Chart with all CDI components](#) (Aid, Trade, Investment, Migration, Environment, Security, and Technology)

Multilateral and Policy

International Conference on Financing for Development, Doha

- [UN - Doha Conference succeeded in reaffirming need to continue development aid, says Secretary-General's envoy](#)
- [UN - Final Communiqué of the Follow-Up Conference on Financing for Development held in Doha, Qatar](#)
- [AfDB, AU, ECA and APP - Side event on African perspectives on the global financial and economic crisis](#)
- [AfDB - President Urges International Community to Meet Commitments to Africa](#)
- [AfDB - Donald Kaberuka discusses 'Going Forward From Doha'](#)
- [World Bank - Debt Management Facility to help developing countries prevent future debt problems](#)
- [World Bank - Meeting Aid goals is critical as private capital flows fall](#)
- [IMF - welcomes call for multilateral action at Doha Conference](#)
- [WTO - Director-General says a meeting is possible around Dec 13-15 to seek a breakthrough in Doha round](#)

UN

- [UN agencies to launch project to support youth employment in the Mano River Union](#)
- [Ban Ki-moon welcomes announcement of inclusive dialogue in Central African Republic](#)

World Bank

- [World Bank Delegates Gather to Discuss Angola's Economy](#)

African Union

- [The AU, ECA and AfDB have reiterated that land policy and land reforms are fundamental in addressing poverty in Africa](#)

Opinions

The last fortnight has seen comment and debate in the media around microfinance, the recent attacks by Somali pirates, the Conference of Financing for Development in Doha, the elections in Ghana, World AIDS Day, and the launch of Greenpeace Africa. The crisis in Zimbabwe and the launch of a report from the African Child Policy Forum have also stimulated discussion.

[Financial Times Weekend - The battle for the soul of microfinance, 5 December 2008](#)

Tim Harford, senior columnist for the FT, discusses how "the commercialisation of microfinance has sparked a fierce debate between profit advocates such as the founders of Compartamos, and traditionalists such as Muhammad Yunus, who see microfinance lenders such as Compartamos as indistinguishable from the moneylenders he set out to replace in 1976".

[New York Times - Piracy is terrorism, 5 December 2008](#)

Douglas R. Burgess Jr., author of "The Pirates' Pact", warns that "the world's legal apparatus is woefully confused as to how to respond to piracy".

[Daily News - Doha: Another meeting, another failed promise, 2 December 2008](#)

Daily News correspondent, John Kulekana, writes that the Doha meeting 'for financing development ended here with delegates admitting failure to marshal resources needed to lift millions out of poverty, hunger and diseases'.

[AllAfrica.com - Ghana: Election Focuses on Issues, Not Personalities, 2 December 2008](#)

Writing as a guest columnist for AllAfrica.com Ken Ofori-Atta, co-founder of the Africa Leadership Initiative, writes that in the lead up to the upcoming elections in Ghana many people 'will cast their ballots based on issues, not on personality'.

[Mail and Guardian - An environmental renaissance, 28 November 2008](#)

Amadou Kanoute, the recently appointed executive director of Greenpeace Africa, writes in South Africa's Mail and Guardian that 'Africa could become a world leader in renewable energy and environmental protection'.

[Pambazuka News - Zimbabwe: Towards a government of national impunity?, 26 November 2008](#)

Writing on Pambazuka News, human rights activist Sam Kebele warns that 'there are signs of further economic collapse, increased repression of civil society and opposition and increasing hunger and death for Zimbabweans'.

[Economist - It's hard to be young, 26 November 2008](#)

An article in the Economist discusses the report from the African Child Policy Forum, which ranks African countries according to their budget allocation for children's education and health care and for the "child-friendliness" of their laws and policies.

G8 Update

Social Sectors

[GERMANY - The German Development Ministry's budget is to rise by 12.4% to 5.772 billion euros in 2009](#)

[EU - Africa and the EU outlined their common concerns for global warming and their interest for an ambitious post-Kyoto international agreement through the endorsement of a joint declaration on climate change](#)

[UK - DfID gives £15 million boost for South Africa in new struggle against AIDS](#)

[USA - USAID Administrator, Henrietta H. Fore states renewed commitment on World AIDS Day](#)

Financial Flows

[CANADA - Beverley J. Oda states that 'Canada will live up to its commitment to double our aid to Africa' at the Doha conference](#)

[USA - USAID's Henrietta Fore has said that there is every indication that Obama will honour the commitments made in the Monterrey Consensus in 2002, and that he has pledged to double international aid](#)

[EU - The EIB is lending €20 million to a group of commercial banks based in Zambia to support investments by SMEs](#)

[CHINA - Chinese Sovereign Wealth Fund is looking for investments in Africa](#)

Governance and accountability

[FRANCE - Nicolas Sarkozy says that the Group of Eight major industrialised nations has become outdated](#)

Calendar

7-9 Dec	Africa Finance & Investment Forum 2008: Paris
8 Dec	Investing for Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa: Paris
8 Dec	Global Fund Partnership Forum: Dakar
9 Dec	The Regional Agricultural Policy for West Africa: Paris
10 Dec	60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights
15-17 Dec	International HIV/AIDS Conference on Challenges & Insights by the African Health Research Organization: London
16-18 Dec	EFA High level Group Meeting: Oslo

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