

Saturday, July 12, 2014

Your Excellency,

I am writing on behalf of Academics Stand Against Poverty (ASAP), a global association of researchers committed to the eradication of poverty worldwide. On behalf of ASAP, I would like to thank you and the entire Open Working Group for the work you have done in developing a draft of the Sustainable Development Goals.

ASAP has just completed a study soliciting input from experts on how the Sustainable Development Goals can best address the problem of illicit financial flows. 28 experts on illicit financial flows from various backgrounds, including academia, NGOs, the private sector and multilateral institutions, participated in the study.

The study revealed that there is overwhelming expert support for policies that would increase financial transparency at both the domestic and global levels in order to curb tax avoidance and evasion. There is agreement that all governments should require

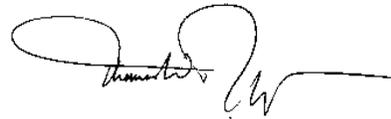
- a) disclosure of the ultimate beneficial owners of companies and of the controlling parties of trusts and foundations;
- b) public country-by-country reporting of profits and other tax-relevant information by multinational corporations;
- c) automatic exchange of tax-relevant financial information by national tax authorities worldwide; and
- d) public reporting on funds paid to governments for the extraction of natural resources such as oil, gas, metals and minerals, and on the use of those funds.

We were therefore distressed to see that all references to international tax evasion and avoidance have been removed from the Open Working Group's Zero Draft. Moreover, while we strongly support the call for greater transparency in proposed target 16.1, we believe that transparency must also be promoted through global cooperation and partnership.

Therefore, ASAP urges the Open Working Group to strengthen proposed target 17.1 by adding a call for global cooperation for transparency aimed at reducing global tax evasion and avoidance. Such a target would open the door for policy reforms that are essential to curbing illicit financial flows which, by draining developing countries of capital and tax revenues, are a great impediment to sustainable development.

We would be happy to share our full study results with you and to support you in any other way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas W. Pogge', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas W. Pogge
President
Academics Stand Against Poverty