

Global Council Meeting

VIDEOCONFERENCE (2 hours)

MINUTES

6th May 2020

Attendees

Global Council Members

Adnan Bahiya, Iraq (MENA) AB
Athayde Motta, Brazil (Latin America) AM
Chadwick Llanos, Philippines (Asia Pacific) CL
Chenai Mukumba, Zambia (Anglophone Africa) (Chair) CM
Dupleix Kuenzob, Cameroon (ASC representative) DK
Isabel Munilla, USA (Global Reach) IM
Joe Williams, UK (Global Reach) JW
Mariatou Amadou, Niger (Francophone Africa) MA
Miles Litvinoff, UK (Europe and North America) ML
Olena Pavlenko, Ukraine (Eurasia) OP

Secretariat

Elisa Peter, Executive Director EP
Caroline Macleod, Director of Finance & Operations CJM
Stephanie Rochford, Director of Member Engagement SR

Summary

The GC was unanimous in stating that PWYP's agenda was as important as ever, to ensure transparency in the decisions that are being taken in the current crisis, including on issues related to public budgeting, contracting, procurement and public borrowing, etc. GC members also urged the Secretariat to prioritise protecting members and fundamental rights, including social and economic rights and women's rights that are under attack during the pandemic. Members thought this was a time for both continuity and responsiveness with a mixture of activities that should continue unabated to promote transparency, using data and putting transparency to work, demanding accountability and promoting citizen participation, including through processes such as EITI, OGP, etc. but also to be responsive to new opportunities. These include opportunities related to the fall in oil prices, to diversifying resource-based economies, to reduce overreliance on fossil fuels and to support a fair and equitable transition to a low carbon economy. Opportunities also lie in ways to consolidate the movement, through the use of more digital tools, webinars, online knowledge sharing, supporting coalitions to conduct and share relevant research and ensuring members and coalitions are able to come out of the crisis strongly connected to each other and financially resilient. Finally, the GC agreed to convene more regularly to ensure we are well positioned to seize global advocacy opportunities and support movement building. It agreed to issue a statement on Covid-19

and to establish thematic conversation threads, including on civic space, the energy transition and contract disclosure.

Decisions

- Prioritise research and opportunities to maintain a strong PWYP presence online, including to share core advocacy messages (contract and revenue transparency) and new opportunities (developing a PWYP position on the energy transition)
- Maintain as much as possible plans for PWYP convenings, but move these online (regional meetings, Africa Conference capacity building sessions)
- Invest in resources and strategies to defend and protect civic space and human rights, including women’s rights
- Maintain active PWYP contributions to policy and legislative processes including at the European Union, OGP, EITI
- GC to meet more regularly online for 2 hours at a time throughout the rest of the year (exact timings to be determined)

Actions

Action	By who	By when
Schedule regular GC calls for the next few months	Secretariat	
Circulate minutes and draft communique	Secretariat	9 May

Introduction

Following a short presentation of new GC member Olena Pavlenko representing Eurasia, CM welcomed participants to the virtual Global Council meeting. She noted that the GC had a number of agenda items to discuss but that the focus of the meeting would be on the implications of the Covid-19 crisis on PWYP’s work. The GC would also reflect on what ways of working could be adopted to provide strategic leadership to the movement in this time of crisis.

CM reminded participants that a background paper had been shared which would form the basis of the discussion. She indicated that it provided prompt questions for reflection, namely: the activities and/or messages that the Secretariat should prioritise; what new opportunities (if any) should be considered; and how the GC wanted to adapt its ways of working to be responsive during the crisis? The aim of the meeting was to have a clear way forward for prioritising the Secretariat’s work in the coming months, and to agree ways of working in that period.

Presentation

EP expressed her expectation that the GC will give a clear mandate to the Secretariat for how to strategically prioritise or adapt their work in the short and medium term in light of the risks and opportunities presented by the crisis. In addition, EP noted that there are potentially long term implications of the crisis in relation to PWYP's vision and mission. EP shared some of the questions and reflections that Secretariat staff have been considering since the crisis began, including:

- What will success look like if the Secretariat is not able to operate on a business as usual basis?
- How can we maintain resilience and momentum in the movement when we are not able to meet in person, and major events have been postponed (including the PWYP Africa Conference)?
- What aspects of EITI implementation should we prioritise?
- Are there opportunities that we need to take and risks that we need to mitigate?
- What are the key messages and framing that we need to adopt in the coming months? For example, a new group of members has started working on developing PWYP's position vis a vis the energy transition - is this the right time to invest in that work?

EP noted that not all of these issues can be discussed in detail today, but invited GC members to share their reflections on any of the above during this discussion.

Feedback and discussion

CM highlighted the perspective from East and Southern Africa that there is a correlation between countries rich in natural resources and where there are very weak health systems. PWYP Zimbabwe has recently highlighted the misuse of resources which leaves people with underfunded social services and at high risk during this time of crisis. CM noted instances of abuse by duty bearers of civic liberties. CM highlighted that there were opportunities presented by the move of many meetings and conversations online, to be part of a much broader range of conversations. CM proposed holding regular virtual GC meetings in order to remain responsive as the situation evolves; and also having monthly virtual meetings on thematic areas (with a smaller number of GC members).

CL highlighted ongoing challenges in communicating with PWYP coalitions in the Asia-Pacific region, with low responses on email. Nevertheless, he noted feedback from coalitions including that governments in the region were increasingly taking policy decisions with very minimal consultation and involvement of civil society, notably in the Philippines. PWYP PNG has a new National Coordinator. Members in India continue to be concerned with deep sea mining. A collaboration between Australia and Myanmar is being looked at. Interest in understanding Chinese activities particularly in extractives is stirred up within the region. Indonesia continues to engage in the discourse regarding an omnibus law for minerals management in the country.

IM noted the disastrous response by the US government to the health crisis and how PWYP US is pushing for transparency and accountability. PWYP's work is as important as ever to ensure oversight at a time where key decisions are being taken. One of the key trends is the massive debt that states are taking on and how IFIs are involved in managing the structures/conditionalities of that debt. The EI sector is undergoing massive changes, and trying to weaken regulations to decrease costs to the industry. We are re-evaluating how to do community consultation and FPIC in a Covid-19 context. It is more important than ever to keep communication channels open to everyone to ensure inclusive, effective and open conversations. Key activities/messages for the PWYP Secretariat should be 1) the protection of activists and journalists, particularly those speaking out on the misuse of Covid-19 funds; 2) establishment of shared knowledge on the new reality (oil price scenarios and how they are going to affect extraction; shared messages on risks such as related to EI contracts and how the EITI can still work; disclosure of contracts and how disclosure can be strengthened on social/environmental issues). New opportunities: 1) The issues around countries entering into borrowing agreements and the way that debt is structured and the scope for PWYP to focus on that area; 2) identifying new ways to make the movement work well; 3) identifying new ways to address government secrecy and how citizens are being left out (research). The GC should have more frequent, short calls. Setting up teams within the GC to lead on specific thematic activities.

JW reflected on 2019 and how he was looking forward to contributing to the implementation of Vision 2025 this year before Covid-19 forced us to halt and reflect. He encouraged the GC to be more proactive in communicating with the movement to demonstrate leadership at a difficult time for our members. NRGi has produced some information about the implications of Covid-19 for the EI sector and he welcomed the PWYP webpage collating the various analyses that have been produced. This is a time for reinforcing partnerships with a range of stakeholders and being smart about how we engage with the EITI. The most important activities/messages for the Secretariat at the moment should be: ensuring safety and security of members as well as boosting financial resilience of members; coordinating input in key processes such as EU, OGP, EITI; strengthening leadership across the PWYP movement and elevating voices from within the movement, including as spokespersons on COVID. New opportunities could include: acceleration of the energy transition - although this is going to be a difficult question for the movement; identifying transparency asks in regards to debt (including from commodity traders). JW advocated for the GC to speak more regularly (once a month) and more importantly for the GC to be more vocal about some of the new agenda we need to move forward and to ask fundamental questions about things the Secretariat may want to stop doing.

MA noted that Niger was suffering from a double crisis linked to the health situation and to the security situation, with three PWYP members facing arbitrary arrests (including an MSG member). Advocacy to demand transparency, accountability and respect for civic space and the right to peaceful assembly is even more important at this time. She advocated for the Secretariat to focus on knowledge sharing, including on gender, on the AMV, on benefit sharing. She also called on the

Secretariat to prioritise new ways for members to communicate with each other, including through the organisation of webinars, social media, etc. The pandemic has exposed the gaps in social services, especially public health care services, and provides an opportunity to enhance PWYP's messages on the use of extractives revenues.

OP provided a brief update on coalitions in the region of Eurasia: members in Azerbaijan continue to push the EITI agenda despite not being formally in the initiative; nevertheless they welcome staying closely in touch with the wider PWYP family. The newest coalition in Kosovo is very interested in environmental issues, along with PWYP Tajikistan which is also working on gender equality. Connections are a challenge for members in Tajikistan so webinars should be recorded and made available to download. In Kyrgyzstan the coalition is interested in working with journalists at a regional level and is seeking capacity building on data visualisation tools and storytelling. In Ukraine, the coalition has launched a campaign on contract transparency but is seeing strong resistance from companies and welcomes a wider PWYP campaign on this issue.

OP proposed that the Secretariat prioritise delivering workshops that would have been held at the Africa Conference which has been postponed (e.g. on storytelling, monitoring and evaluation). OP also encouraged the Secretariat to maintain the regional meetings and to hold them online if it's not possible in person. OP also strongly encouraged the Secretariat to keep advocacy a high priority. In terms of opportunities, OP proposed considering how to share PWYP principles to the renewable energy sector; to maintain a focus on staying connected by using digital technologies (zoom can accommodate 300 participants); to share strategies and tactics about how to do advocacy online (e.g. using social media more strategically). For the GC ways of working, OP also supported holding more regular online meetings and she also requested that more materials be made available in Russian, and that members in Russian speaking regions be invited to join webinars. Finally, OP supported the proposal to set up thematic groups within the GC.

ML shared that developing a PWYP position on energy transition and CC is a priority for members in his region, in the US there is a particular focus on preventing a bailout of the fossil fuel industry. Coalitions in the region continue to work on case studies using revenue data. ML exhorted the GC to pursue continuity plus responsiveness - he noted that PWYP's commitments to transparency still matter. While much can be done remotely, one big challenge is maintaining contact with affected communities. ML noted that the impact of the Covid-19 crisis is much more severe in less developed economies than in Europe/N America.

ML supported a focus on 1) defending and protecting human rights, including women's rights; 2) finding a way to respond to the multiple crises (the climate crisis, the economic crisis); 3) maintaining the continuity and viability of PWYP coalitions. ML strongly urged the GC to prioritise developing a PWYP position on climate, and agreed that civic space continued to be a priority agenda. ML asked for further information about how PWYP National coordinators are coping in the current crisis; he advocated for resources/seed money to be provided for research, documentation

and policy development projects to be undertaken by country coalitions and members to build understanding of connections between the EI, climate impacts/concerns and the Covid crisis and to inform PWYP's global response. ML noted an opportunity for PWYP to show more leadership on climate and the energy transition at the global EITI level. He also supported using Secretariat funds to support PWYP coalitions to survive. ML supported the GC meeting regularly and the creation of thematic groups.

DK highlighted challenges in Central Africa to stay informed and connected in this time of crisis. He noted the focus of the ASC on pushing for the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision but that advocacy opportunities are limited now. He advocated for a renewed focus on: transparency of budgets in order to fight against corruption and waste; protection of civic space; and on transparency of contracts, since companies may try to start negotiating different terms with the looming recession. In terms of opportunities, DK agreed that PWYP should use digital platforms to ensure ongoing communication and expression. He also noted that there will be delays in prospecting for new projects which we should take advantage of. In respect of methods of work, DK proposed online GC meetings every quarter with a specific thematic focus. He proposed developing and sharing positions on specific issues, for example on budget transparency.

AB summarised recent trends in the MENA region, including the high level of youth protests against corruption in Iraq, which resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives but ultimately led to the resignation of the government in November 2019. He highlighted the recent successes of PWYP coalitions in the region (Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia and Yemen) in securing funding. AB noted the adverse economic impact of the Covid-19 crisis on economies in the region, principally due to the fall in oil prices. He exhorted the Secretariat to protect human rights; to protect the environment and climate; and to support a narrative which contributes to the reduction of dependence on oil and gas.

AM endorsed much of what his colleagues proposed. He noted concern at the lack of consultation or monitoring on how mining companies are operating at the moment and continuing to spread the Covid-19 disease. He challenged the narrative which puts lives and the economy at odds. AM also noted a concern about future funding crises which will need to be addressed over time as the situation evolves.

Conclusion

EP summarised the trends among the feedback from each GC member (see summary above), and noted the actions agreed.