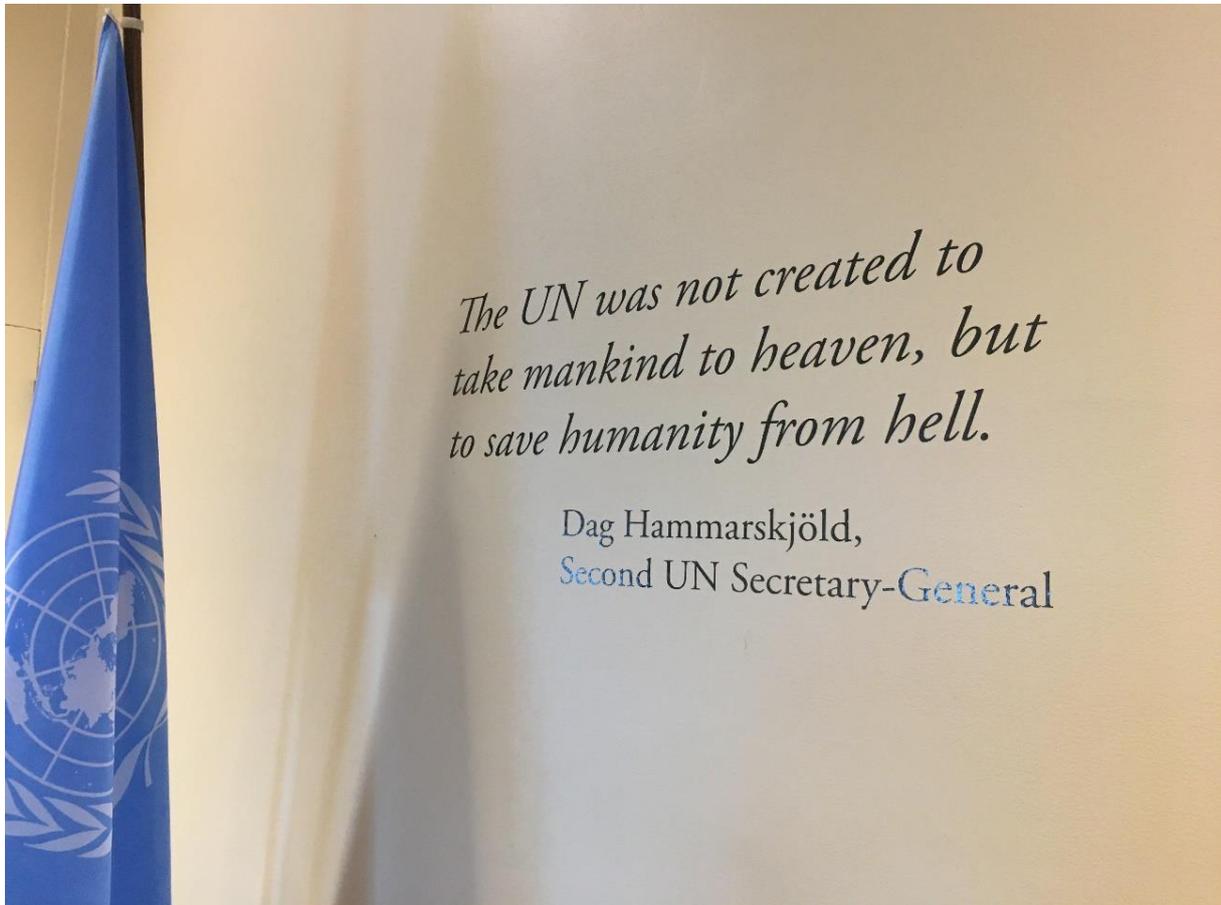


Report on thematic visit
UN General Assembly
New York
3-10 November 2019



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1. Background

Every year the official Danish delegation to the UNGA has participation from Danish CSO's. Jeef Bech from CISU was invited to participate as member of the official Danish delegation attending the 74th UNGA (see annex 1 and 2 for further information on the Terms of Reference and the programme for the delegation).

Jeef Bech participated in the delegation of 10 parliamentarians and 3 representatives from FH, DA and DIIS on behalf of CISU in the second leg of the UNGA (see annex 3 for further information members of the delegation).

2. Objective

The objectives for this thematic visit were 4-fold:

- To obtain (and disseminate) knowledge about the international (system for) dialogue on global development and trends
- To represent the broader field of people based Danish CSO's in the delegations' deliberations and activities on behalf of CISU (members and users)
- To obtain a constructive dialogue about the promotion and role of civil society in development - both in Denmark and globally within the delegation and in the delegation's work in the UNGA programme
- To connect and relate to other representatives from civil society globally

3. Observations on thematic issues

Dissemination of knowledge about global development and trends

The UN is presently facing a number of mega trends:

- Firstly, the UN and the importance of multilateralism is presently under heavy pressure. The US is under the present Trump administration not only ignoring its financial obligations but also politically undermining the work of the UN as it is pursuing its America First policy.
- Secondly, the general assembly is largely managed by China via its strong relations to the 77-group of developing countries.
- Thirdly, the Security Council is often being vetoed by three of its permanent members, and the EU which presently holds 5 seats in the Council is likely within 2 years only to have 1 seat.
- Fourthly, UN organisations organizational capacity is being weakened and specific programmes and funds being strengthened. The reason being that many bilateral donors, Denmark included, rather than providing core funding for UN organisations, increasingly are earmarking support for discrete funds and programmes reflecting national priorities of the various donor countries.
- Lastly, At the same time the challenges the UN has to deal with are increasingly getting more complex - e.g. climate migration, new technologies - and being of global nature they call for international responses as national actions will not suffice.

In the present situation it is difficult to mobilize support for new conventions and it is increasingly becoming clear that we live in an era of voluntary rather than binding commitments by UN member states even to existing conventions and treaties. At the same time there are many free riders – meaning that many countries only implement UN conventions found politically opportune to domestic political agendas. They are also slow in paying UN contributions – or not even paying at all. Only 40 (Denmark being one) out of 193 countries paid last year their contributions on time. This means that Antonio Guterres, the General Secretary of the UN, last year threatened that the UN due to financial contributions not being paid by member states mid-year would have to cease its operations.

Against this rather bleak picture there are also positive signs:

- Firstly, the multipolar power structure presently charactering the world allow for new players to engage themselves and that previous strong alliances are breaking up, thus providing room for new patterns of collaboration. As an example, the EU has realized that it can not rely on its alliance with the US and is thus much more proactive in its attempt to mobilize support from other countries.
- Secondly this trend is supported by the fact that we live in an era of voluntary commitments – as this on the positive side facilitates new networks of like-minded countries to push for various international agendas. An example is that many countries voluntarily have signed the Paris Climate agreement.
- Thirdly, the fact that 16.000 UN meetings are held annually indicates that there is still a strong interest in pursuing international themes through the UN
- Fourthly, the UN has in Antonio Guterres a strong and politically experienced Secretary General who is committed to carry out reforms focusing on the development system, crises and peace situations and enhanced management of the UN bureaucracy (hopefully leading to less than 16.000 meetings in the future).
- Fifthly, the Security Council is despite its institutional challenges rather active and discuss and produce more decisions and resolutions than previously seen.

In short it can be said that the UN despite a number of challenges is still functioning and to a varying extent delivering. The future development will be heavily affected by the increasingly fierce battle between member states with strong sovereign perspectives and other countries pursuing international agendas.

Representation of people based perspectives in the delegation

Throughout the formal programme as well as through informal discussions the perspective of people based civil society organisations were brought forward. Especially during meetings with UN bodies as well as the Danish Mission to the UN CISU specific perspectives were provided.

UN is formed by member states and the civil society perspectives – national and international – are often not presented fully in the UN processes anchored around member states. The role of civil society was therefore reiterated in the various meetings with UN bodies – and generally welcomed as the UN organisations are well aware of the importance of reaching out to civil society. In many cases it is, however, difficult as many member states does not include the civil society in its representations.

The meeting with OCHA was of particular relevance as it provided an opportunity to present the Danish Emergency Relief Fund (DERF) managed by CISU to the Secretary General of OCHA, Mark Lowcock. OCHA is besides of being overall responsible at the UN for monitoring humanitarian needs globally also managing the Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) which with respect to Early Actions prior to humanitarian crises have inspired the present set of guidelines of DERF to also include Early Action as a modality. This particular meeting furthermore provided an opportunity to present CISU to the Danish parliamentarians as a major player both with regard to developmental and humanitarian interventions.

Promotion of role of civil society in the delegation's work

During informal dialogue with other members of the delegation the perspectives and priorities of CISU were being brought forward.

A two hour meeting with Lars Engberg was held outside the formal programme of the delegation. During this meeting trends related to international developmental and humanitarian themes were discussed. As Lars has been nominated by CISU (and DIIS) as member of Danidas Udviklingspolitiske Råd (UPR) and CISU therefore has working relations with Lars prior to and after UPR meetings optimisation of these working relations were discussed. CISU is vrye pleased with the present arrangements as it facilitates that CISU is up-dated on strategic discussions in Danida and allows for CISU perspectives to be sent to Lars for his information. The UPR December 2019 meeting will discuss Danida's civil society support and it was agreed that CISU prior to this meeting would forward information to Lars on current themes important to CISU.

Connections to other representatives from civil society globally

A meeting was together with CISU chairperson Katrine Skamris held with *CIVICUS' representation* at the UN. Besides of exchanging perspectives on the global situation of civil society CIVICUS is together with a number of other civil society networks in the process of starting a 'UN2020 - We the Peoples initiative'. This initiative is aiming at influencing the UN 75 years jubilee in 2020 to include civil society perspectives on multilateralism. One of the challenges is that the multilateralism in the UN is based on the member states and that is important also to raise the voice and perspectives of civil society.

The initial strategizing meeting would be held the following week and it was agreed that Katrine on behalf of CISU would participate in this meeting with the aim to be involved in relevant working groups under the 'UN2020 - We the Peoples' initiative. CISU has after the visit to New York signed up and supported this initiative (see annex 4) and Katrine will continue her engagement in relevant working groups under the initiative.

Another meeting together was together with Katrine held with *Kirsten Brosbøl*, former Minister of Environment and founder of the SDG network in the Danish parliament. Kirsten is presently based in New York on an Obama scholarship participating in a one year programme at Columbia University. Kirsten has together with Steen Hildebrandt initiated the work on SDG baselines in Denmark launched on 30.10.19. This work which is anchored at Danmarks Statistik and to be carried out by Deloitte was also discussed by the CISU board during its study visits on 28-29.10.19.

During the meeting with Kirsten shared the background, timing and perspectives of the work on the Danish SDG baseline – and the potential roles to be played of CISUs members were discussed. The idea is that the SDG baseline based on a consultative process will be completed by April 2020, presented to the Danish SDG network of parliamentarians and to the relevant ministers (especially Dan Jørgensen) as to influence them to use the baseline for developing a new Danish SDG Action Plan. This plan will possibly be presented to the UN as a Danish commitment to the international SDG agenda.

It was discussed how CISU members possibly could provide inputs to Deloitte, who according to their contract is to carry out a consultative process. It was also discussed whether CISU in order to support the SDG agenda in Denmark could become a member of the SDG Panel. Kirsten mentioned that CISU had already been listed as a potential member of the Panel and recommended CISU to contact Kristian Jensen and Mette Gjerskov who form the chairmanship of the Danish SDG network of parliamentarians. CISU responded that we had done that 1 month ago and Kirsten urged CISU to contact them again.

4. Recommendations and Dissemination

Recommendations:

- CISU to sign and support the 'UN2020 - We the Peoples' initiative and Katrine to engage in relevant working groups in New York under this initiative (Jeef)
- CISU to explore opportunities for CISU members to engage themselves in the SDG baseline formulation process (CISU SDG group=)
- CISU to write (again) to Kristian Jensen and Mette Gjerskov on inclusion of CISU in the Danish SDG Panel (CISU POL group)
- CISU to provide CS information to Lars Engberg prior to the discussion on next UPR meeting of Danida's civil society support (Jeef)
- CISU to maintain contact with relevant parliamentarians participating in the Danish Delegation (POL group)

Dissemination:

- Information from this thematic visit will be shared at meetings with the board of CISU and internally at the secretariat.
- This report will furthermore be up-loaded to www.cisu.dk so members can access the information
- Finally, the information will be used during the meetings with Lysa John, General Secretary of CIVICUS, who has been invited by CISU and Danida to visit Denmark in 19-21 January 2020

Annexes:

1. ToR
2. Members of the UNGA delegation
3. Programme for the UNGA delegation
4. UN 2020 – We the Peoples

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

ToR for thematic visit to UN General Assembly (UNGA) 2019 3-10 November 2019 as part of the official Danish delegation Jeef Bech Hansen

1. Background

Every year the official Danish delegation to the UNGA has participation from Danish CSO's. Jeef Bech Hansen from CISU has been invited to participate as member of the official Danish delegation attending the 74th UNGA.

Jeef Bech Hansen will together with 9 parliamentarians and three other representatives from FH, DA and DIIS participate in the second leg early November of the UNGA.

2. Objective

The objective for this thematic visit will be:

- To represent the broader field of people based Danish CSO's in the delegations deliberations and activities on behalf of CISU (members and users)
- To obtain a constructive dialogue about the promotion and role of civil society in development - both in Denmark and globally within the delegation and in the delegation's work in the UNGA programme
- To connect and relate to other representatives from civil society globally
- To obtain (and disseminate) knowledge about the international (system for) dialogue on global development and trends
-

3. Outputs

The thematic visit will lead to the following outputs:

A thematic - easy to read - report regarding the relevant themes, collected from the meetings – including observations, to be used in the future work of CISU

4. Thematic issues for the visit

The present situation regarding the SDG's, HDP, human rights and democracy in the UN system and globally
The general role of the broad based and people centred CSOs including their rights and responsibilities in a world here space for CS are increasingly being restricted and shrinking.

5. Stakeholders to be involved in the visit

The journey will include contact and dialogue with the following main stakeholders:

Members of the Danish Parliament

Other Danish labour market and research representatives

Other international country and CSO representatives

Danish officials in MOF, the UN-system and the Danish UN-Representation

6. Plan of work

The visit will be based on the following main methods and activities:

Participation in the activities related to the programme for 3-10 November of the UNGA.

Programme and activities will primarily be planned in accordance with the program prepared by the MOF and can also include other activities from other opportunities that shows up

7. Travel schedule

Expected:

DK - NYC SAT 2 November 2019
NYC - DK SAT 10 November 2019

8. Dissemination

The short report will be distributed to CISU Board/Steering committee and secretariats and followed by a short oral presentation

A short written presentation of the observations in the CISU news and newsletter

Annex 2 : Members of the UNGA Delegation

UNGA74: Den danske parlamentariker og civilsamfundsdelegation

Parlamentarikere

A	Orla Hav
A	Rasmus Horn Langhoff
C	B. Bergman
RV	Katrine Robsøe
SF	Halime Oguz
V	Preben Bang Henriksen
DF	Marie Krarup
DF	Jens Henrik Thulesen-Dahl
Færøerne	Jógvan Skorheim
Grønland	Sofia Geisler

Civilsamfundet

CISU	Jeef Bech, faglig leder
FH	Bente Sorgenfrey, vice-generalsekretær
DA	Lisbeth Dalgaard, formand
DIIS	Lars Engberg-Pedersen, seniorforsker

Mandag 4. november	Tirsdag 5. november	Onsdag 6. november	Torsdag 7. november	Fredag 8. november
<p>Intro og arrangementer</p> <p>08.30-09.00: Velkomst og gennemgang af program, herunder temaer samt praktiske forhold.</p> <p>09.00-10.00: Velkomst og orientering om FN, arbejdsformer og FN's globale udfordringer ved ambassadør Martin Bille Hermann.</p> <p>11.00-12.00: Orientering om New Yorks kulturscene ved kulturattaché Maiken Derno.</p> <p>12.00-13.00: Frokost ved egen foranstaltning.</p> <p>13.00-15.00: Rundvisning i FN for delegation og partnere ved ambassadør Martin Bille Hermann.</p>	<p>Folke- og menneskerettigheder</p> <p>08.30-08.45: Morgenmøde.</p> <p>8.45-09.15: Briefing om Danmarks menneskeretlige prioriteter ved Missionen.</p> <p>10.00-11.00: Møde med International Planned Parenthood Federation og International Women's Health Coalition. <u>Sted:</u> IPPF.</p> <p>11.30-12.30: FN's arbejde for at forebygge og bekæmpe tortur samt vigtigheden heraf ved OHCHR. <u>Sted:</u> FN-sekretariatet.</p> <p>12.30-13.30: Frokost ved egen foranstaltning.</p> <p>13.30-14.15: Vigtigheden af inddragelse og beskyttelse af oprindelige folk ved Sekretariatet for det Permanente Forum for Oprindelige Folk. <u>Sted:</u> FN-sekretariatet.</p> <p>15.15.-17.00 Meeting with Kirsten Brosbøl regarding SDG agenda</p>	<p>2030 dagsordenen, FN's humanitære og udviklingsarbejde</p> <p>08.30-08.45: Morgenmøde.</p> <p>08.45-09.15: Briefing om dansk tilgang til 2030 dagsorden og udviklingsindsatsen ved Missionen.</p> <p>09.45-10.45: FN og den private sektor – besøg hos Global Compact ved Julie Kofoed. <u>Sted:</u> Global Compact.</p> <p>11.00-12.15: FN's udviklingsorganisationer – møde med danske repræsentanter fra UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN WOMEN. <u>Sted:</u> UNICEF.</p> <p>12.15-13.15: Frokost ved egen foranstaltning.</p> <p>13.30 – 14.15: FN's humanitære indsatser – møde med USG Mark Lowcock eller ASG Ursula Mueller: <u>Sted:</u> FN-sekretariatet, 33. etage.</p> <p>13.00-15.00 Meeting with Katrine Skamris 15:00-16:30 Meeting with Jeffery Huffines, CIVICUS N.Y</p> <p>19.00-21.00: Arbejdsmiddag med ægtefælle/partner i FN-ambassadørens residens.</p>	<p>Fred og sikkerhed</p> <p>08.30-08.45: Morgenmøde.</p> <p>09.00-10.30: Briefing om Sikkerhedsrådets rolle i international fred og sikkerhed samt FN's fredsbevarende operationer ved Missionen.</p> <p>11.00-12.00: "Hvorfor er det relevant for små lande at være medlem af FN's Sikkerhedsråd?" Oplæg ved Sveriges FN-ambassadør. <u>Sted:</u> Sverige FN-mission.</p> <p>12.00-13.00: Frokost ved egen foranstaltning.</p> <p>13.00-14.30: Aktuelle dynamikker i Sikkerhedsrådet: Udfordringer og muligheder. Møde med UN Director hos International Crisis Group, Richard Gowan. <u>Sted:</u> TBD.</p> <p><i>15.00-17.00 Meeting with Lars Engberg, DIIS</i></p>	<p>Fred og sikkerhed</p> <p>08.30-08.45: Morgenmøde.</p> <p>09.00-10.00: FN's rolle i Europas sikkerhedsarkitektur, og hvad EU og EU-samarbejdet betyder for Danmark i FN ved herværende EU-delegation. <u>Sted:</u> EU-delegationen.</p> <p>10.30-11.30: FN's rolle i konfliktforebyggelse. Møde med Marc-André Franche fra FN's kontor for fredsopbygning. <u>Sted:</u> FN-sekretariatet.</p> <p>11.30-12.30: Frokost ved egen foranstaltning.</p> <p>12.30-13.30: Møde med Parliamentarians for Global Action.</p> <p>[15.00-18.00: Mulighed for at overvære af åbent møde i Sikkerhedsrådet]</p>

Annex 3: Programme

Annex 4: UN2020 – We the Peoples



STATEMENT

We the Peoples – It's time to give citizens a voice at the UN

The biggest challenges facing us such as climate change, violent conflict and inequality are global and cross cutting in nature. They need collective responses from the international community. The UN is the key arena to make this happen.

As the UN celebrates its 75th anniversary, it's time to give people a direct voice in its affairs. The UN's legitimacy, relevance and ability to tackle contemporary challenges can be enhanced by making it more open and accessible to ordinary citizens.

As global citizens and as representatives of civil society from around the world, we urge the UN to establish the instrument of a World Citizens' Initiative which will enable citizens to put forward proposals on key issues of concern for discussion and further action at the highest political level. The UN should put any matter that reaches a certain threshold of support from people onto the agenda of the opening debate of each annual session of the General Assembly.

We firmly believe that the addition of the new instrument of a World Citizens' Initiative will enhance the agency of citizens all over the globe, empowering them, the UN and its member states alike to tackle global challenges in our increasingly complex and interconnected world more effectively.

The time has come to give a voice to citizens of the world and realize the promise of the Preamble of the UN Charter which begins with the words, "We the Peoples of the United Nations".

Add your support to our call and join our campaign! We are stronger together.

This statement and a list of initial supporters will be published on 14 November 2019. Initial supporters of the UNWCI campaign so far include Asia Democracy Network, Asia Development Alliance, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation*, Democracy International*, Democracy Without Borders*, Global Justice Now, Nigerian Network of NGOs, Mehr Demokratie, UNA-UK, World Academy of Arts and Science, and the World Federalist Movement (* Steering Committee members). Check our website for an up-to-date list.

YOUR ENDORSEMENT

Please use the online form at www.worldcitizensinitiative.org/endorse/ to register your endorsement or return this paper to hello@worldcitizensinitiative.org:

Name of organization: _____

Country (or international): _____

Website URL: _____

Name of representative: _____

Email: _____

Add email to campaign mailing list? Yes, please

www.worldcitizensinitiative.org