

## Hybrid Session

### “IMF's strategy on social spending facing austerity: New direction or bandaid?”

Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm EDT in the IMF HQ2-03B-768B meeting room. To participate online, [here is the link](#) for the session:

<https://imf.zoom.us/j/98300942112?pwd=NlZQLzVvdU5pbGVjeGdyZThvWFZxZz09>

Furthermore, the session will be broadcast on the IMF website: [www.imf.org/cso](http://www.imf.org/cso).

Civil society welcomed the IMF's new policy on social spending in 2019. However, we are concerned that spending on social protection, health and education is still not given sufficient priority in government budgets. Indeed, we fear conditionality in IMF country programs will continue to negatively impact essential social spending. How should IMF and other international agencies, labor movements and CSOs each work to enhance and protect national social spending programs? And, how might international cooperation be strengthened to assure more adequate, efficient, universal and sustainably financed social protection and social services in all countries.

This session will be held in the framework of the 2023 Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and the IMF and the [Civil Society Policy Forum](#) will take place from April 10 to April 16, 2023 in Washington DC.

Co-organized by the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors (GCSPF), Bretton Woods Project, Human Rights Watch, International Trade Union Confederation, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, NGO Committee on Financing for Development, Oxfam International, Social Justice in Global Development, Social Policy Initiative (South Africa).

**Moderator: Alex Campbell, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)**



Alex Campbell is Director of the International Trade Union Confederation/ Global Unions Washington Office, which connects the global labor movement to the international financial institutions.

## ***Panelists***

### **Rodrigo Cerda, Division Chief, Expenditure Policy Division, Fiscal Affairs Department International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

Rodrigo Cerda, a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Chicago, is the Expenditure Policy Division Chief at the Fiscal Affairs Department of the IMF. He was, up to March 2022, Minister of Finance of Chile. His public sector experience encompasses a series of senior-level roles including his most recent position as the Minister of Finance in the Government of Chile, Budget Director, and Chief Economist and Head of Advisors with the Ministry of Finance of Chile. He has held positions as Associate Professor in Economics at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and as Alternate Director at the Centro de Políticas Económicas y Sociales at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. He has published articles in academic volumes and journals on fiscal policy, pensions, political economy, and corporate taxation.



### **Shahra Razavi, Director, Social Protection Department, International Labour Organization (ILO)**



Shahra Razavi is the Director of the Social Protection Department at the International Labour Organization. She is a development economist, with more than 25 years of experience working on social policy, social protection, gender and development. Before joining the ILO in 2020, she was Chief of the Research and Data Section at UN Women, and Senior Researcher at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). She obtained her Bsc. from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and her MSc. and Ph.D. from Oxford University and has published extensively on social policy, social protection, gender, labour markets and the care economy in a development context.

### **Alexander Kentikelenis, Oxfam International**

Alexandros Kentikelenis is an associate professor of political economy at Bocconi University, and was commissioned by Oxfam to develop its new report “IMF Social Spending Floors: A fig leaf for austerity?” He has written extensively on global economic governance and social protection issues. Prior to joining Bocconi, he held research posts at Oxford, Cambridge and Harvard.



### **Ahilan Kadirgamar, Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka**



Ahilan Kadirgamar is Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. He holds a PhD in Anthropology from the Graduate Center, City University of New York, a MA in Economics from the New School for Social Research and a BS in Electrical Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology. His research interests include agrarian change, co-operatives and economic alternatives, and regularly writes on the political economy of Sri Lanka. He is

currently a Vice President of the Federation of University Teachers’ Associations (FUTA) and the Honorary Chair of the Northern Co-operative Development Bank.