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BOILING POINT TO TURNING POINT

8th Financial Transparency Coalition Conference

April 1st- 2nd, 2020, Bangkok

Agenda

Day 1

8:30 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 - 9:30	Welcome, introduction to the Financial Transparency Coalition and value of the conference
10:00 - 10:45	Keynote TBC
10:45 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 12:30	1. A boiling point in the international financial system?

The current international institutional architecture is inadequate for dealing with the phenomenon of illicit financial flows (IFFs). Recent leaks have highlighted the systemic nature of problem, yet the debate is compartmentalized in multilateral processes, reflecting the lack of any common lens through which to view IFFs. Processes are managed across the multiple international financial institutions responsible for global rules and guidelines on tax, transparency, anti-money laundering and anti-corruption. The priorities of developing countries are under-represented, with effective engagement of developing countries limited by their capacity to engage in multiple processes within multiple institutions.

There is a need to assess where we are in the 'current state of play' in regard to tackling IFFs and this panel will explore the processes that are 'in play' in 2020 which have the potential to help tackle IFFs, looking across the evolving landscape of tax reform, transparency, anti-money laundering and the 'gatekeepers' of the financial system. How are different voices represented and what are the implications in terms of different outcomes?

Moderator: tbc

Panelists: tbc



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12:30 - 13:30

Lunch

13:30 – 14:30
development

2. Situating illicit financial flows in the context of rights and sustainable

Illicit financial flows are defined in a number of ways. Definitions may consider the movement of money that has been illicitly earned or transferred, but can also be extended to consider the impact on a state's ability to realize its obligations with regard to human rights and gender equality. Different definitions carry different implications for combatting IFFs, in terms of mandate, obligations and opportunities for cooperation between different actors.

The panel will focus on the different perspectives of defining illicit financial flows, how these perspectives reflect different priorities, and the progress made towards agreement on the scope under global processes.

Moderator: *tbc*

Panelists: *tbc*

14:30 - 15:30

3. Secrecy in the Global South

Financial transparency norms are being institutionalized across the world but significant information gaps remain and there is inconsistency of the types of information available to different countries. The secrecy industry and its enablers have found new ways of offshoring unaccounted wealth. In recent years, emerging economies in the South have established international financial centers, playing their own role in the movement of illicit finance. Amidst this growing trend, sub-regions will have to confront the subsequent issues of a local race to the bottom and consider way to counter such trends.

This panel will explore the current geopolitical context, including the increasing scrutiny of traditional tax havens and will delve into the changing nature, and geography, of global secrecy.

Moderator: *tbc*

Panelists: *tbc*

16:15 - 16:30

Wrap up of day one



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- 17:00 - 18:30 Workshops (at hotel)
- 19:30 - 21:00 Networking event (at hotel)

Day 2

- 9:00 - 9:30 Review of day one

Moderators from Day 1 provide feedback

- 9:30 - 10:45 **4. Priorities and challenges for Asia-Pacific, amidst rising inequality**

The Asia-Pacific region is experiencing growing income and wealth inequality exacerbated by a regressive tax mix. The region also accounts for a large proportion of illicit financial flows globally and is exposed to high levels of perceived tax competition, leading to the risks of tax avoidance and abuse. As sovereignty over determination of taxing rights has been effectively eroded for individual jurisdictions, the region in particular faces a lack of coordination and harmonization on international tax matters.

This session will explore regional opportunities and spaces for actors to influence a progressive mandate on cooperation for tax matters and tackling illicit financial flows.

Moderator: *tbc*

Panelists: *tbc*

- 10:45 - 11:00 Break

- 11:00 - 12:30 **5. Reforming the global tax rules**

This session will look at the global process to reform the rules that govern the taxation of multinational corporations. The debate has been dominated by the G20/ BEPS process, most recently with a focus on the challenges of 'digitalization', but this is not the only fora in which reforms have been pursued. The way that the BEPS process has unfolded provides a powerful example of how a global process in reality is subject to power dynamics. This acts as an important process in terms of the problems under discussion and the assumptions that lie behind it and also as an example of how global processes work, or do not work for developing countries.



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The panel will discuss the implications of the processes focused on reform to date and the implications for a wider discussion on IFFs, including how human rights and gender inequality have been considered (if at all).

Moderator: *tbc*

Panelists: *tbc*

12:30 - 13:45

Lunch

13:45 - 15:00

6. A mandate to lead on IFFs?

A lot of focus has been rightly placed on the tensions between developing and developed countries with regarding to tackling illicit financial flows. It has been an important aspect of FTC's work to highlight the role that northern countries, institutions and companies play in facilitating and encouraging IFFs. Developed countries may take swift action against perpetrators exposed in high-profile scandals in their national contexts, whilst simultaneously blocking key efforts on the part of developing countries to advance international tax reform. Developing countries too, take contradictory positions when supporting progressive calls for democratic representation at global fora while advancing national policies that effectively harm human rights and accountability.

This session will discuss the nature of such contradictions and consider the implications for effective leadership and engagement in global and regional processes, in seeking to push a progressive agenda within those processes and in the exploration of alternatives.

Moderator: *tbc*

Panelists: *tbc*

15:00 - 15:15

Break

15:15 - 16:45

7. Leveraging the turning point

The final session of the conference will aim to build on the earlier discussions and seek to explore the opportunities and challenges in the coming few years for tackling IFFs and specifically the opportunities to enhance effective coordination amongst countries of the global south. Whilst exploring the opportunities to drive change in the Asia Pacific region, the session will also review positive examples globally and what can be done to support and replicate the success of these initiatives.



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This session will ask if and where there is consensus amongst stakeholders on specific actions and, if so, what is the role of the FTC and wider civil society in supporting them?

Moderator: tbc

Panelists: tbc

16:45 - 17:15

Wrap up and Concluding remarks
