



*This event is open to all with UN passes and NGO representatives registered for the CSocD NGO Forum*

**“Transition in the Arab World:  
Poor-People Power for Peace, Democracy and Progress”**

**Wednesday, February 1, 2012, 1:00 pm—2:45 pm  
UNHQ, New York, Conference Room 4**

In the three+ years since Lehman Brothers’ collapse precipitated a global financial and economic crisis, pro-poor Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from throughout the North and South have responded to the policies of national governments and international institutions to provide huge and socially-costly bail-outs for the financial institutions while neglecting the needs of the deprived, by reiterating that the global agenda as defined by the Millennium Declaration prioritizes poverty reduction, peace and democracy.

In the course of this economic crisis, CSOs from Africa, South East Asia and the Middle East have been engaged in a regionally-based dialogue on how a community-based participatory approach emphasizing innovative community-driven partnerships with local and national government institutions can advance pro-poor policies that take into account the strong interrelationships of poverty with injustice, lack of basic human freedoms, restricted opportunities, exclusion, disasters, conflict and other violence and economic upheaval.

With the help of civil society and community leaders, the world now has the knowledge, experience and models of good practice to bring about inclusive and democratic change from the community level upwards. This panel discussion will attempt to bridge the gap between policy and practice by examining possibilities for a new era of multi-stakeholder collaboration around community-defined priority interventions, new pro-poor funding mechanisms, a strengthening of grassroots democracy, the promotion of south/south and north/south CSO collaboration with a focus on the Middle East region, and strategies for holding governments and international institutions accountable to their poverty-reduction and -eradication commitments.

**Moderator:**

**Mr. Werner Puschra**, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, New York Office

**Panelists:**

**Mr. Jomo Kwame Sundaram**, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

**Ms. Laila Iskander Kamel**, Chairperson, Community and Institutional Development Consulting, Egypt

**Mr. Baquer Namazi**, Independent CSO Activist Coordinating the Pro-Poor CSO Initiative; Founding Member of Iran Local Development NGO Resource Center

**Ms. Marwa Sharafeldine**, Board Member, Musawah International Movement for the Reform of Muslim Family Law