

## POLITICAL ECONOMY PROJECT

### Second PEP Steering Committee Meeting Meeting Minutes

8 June 2015

Present: All SC members except Wael Gamal

Internal Website: [pepimw.weebly.com](http://pepimw.weebly.com)

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#### AGENDA

1. Governance issues: a priority is forming working groups within the SC to push things forward on a variety of issues (see below) especially as very little was done since last meeting. A proposal we have on the table is to form the following working groups:
  - A) Network WG
  - B) Events WG
  - C) Pedagogy WG
  - D) Research WG
  - E) Admin/Funds WG (this already exists through ASI but perhaps others from SC want to join)
2. Statement: this is a quick item, the statement is now finalized and ready to be publicized.
3. Publications: An urgent priority is to produce some publications from the first PEP meeting. We had agreed to set a deadline of June 1<sup>st</sup> in our last meeting. We need to set a realistic deadline and assign point people responsible for this (e.g. one of the working groups once these are approved by the SC)
4. Upcoming Events: Palestine event in September (please read the document sent out today by Mandy, also attached below); SOAS; Development conference; others?
5. Other items?

1. Governance issues: a priority is forming working groups within the SC to push things forward on a variety of issues (see below) especially as very little was done since last meeting. A proposal we have on the table is to form the following working groups:
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The discussion on governance issues focused on the need for an administrative working group to handle logistical issues, be a means of communication between the different Steering Committee working groups, and generally push matters forward especially during this early period. The same admin team that launched PEP will continue to take on these tasks but the group will be open to those interested in joining.

***Important Note:*** All existing working groups before this meeting was held were listed under “Structure” on the Internal Website. The new info below will be added shortly. Also, all major correspondence, including meeting minutes, are posted on the website under the “Blog” page.

Just as importantly the other Working Groups need to pick up the pace as well to meet our deadlines of July 1<sup>st</sup> relating to both publications and pedagogy. As a result we have the following people on working groups:

All working groups will have to produce a task list or an SOP (standard operating procedures) by the next meeting and potentially invite others to join.

Network WG: Bassam (and Michael), Joel (possibly after submitting his current work), and possible Karim Rabie. The purpose of this working group is to handle all issues related to network including inviting new members as well as handling follow up and communication regarding new members. The same applies to establishing a network of other organizations/institutions as we move forward.

Events WG: Bassam, Rafeef, Mandy.

Pedagogy WG: Shana, Omar

Research WG: Mandy, Adam.

Admin WG: ASI admin team, Bassam, Rafeef, Sherene, Ziad

Translation WG: Ahmad

2. Statement:

No one responded with objections to the email Rafeef circulated with the statement and as a result we consider the statement to be finalized. But we agreed to take one more step to make sure that unless people opt out, their names will be added to the statement that

will be published at some future date. Rafeef will draft an email for that purpose to be circulated by Bassam.

We also discussed here that for now communication with the rest of the PEP group should come from one email either Bassam/Adam or an email account set up for that purpose so recipients won't miss it—given that everyone was invited by Bassam/Adam so far.

3. Publications: An urgent priority is to produce some publication from the first PEP meeting. We had agreed to set a deadline of July 1<sup>st</sup> in our last meeting. Shana and Bassam will follow up and remind folks to send their final draft by then. This is important because we need a deliverable and many of the papers already submitted are of interest to a broader audience. The idea was floated that we would ask newcomers to submit a similar paper, but the Network working group will follow up on this.
4. Upcoming Events: Palestine event in September (please read the document sent out today by Mandy); SOAS; Development conference; others?

The SOAS conference is happening next week and it is all set. More info on the conference will be posted on the website shortly. The Ramallah conference is moving along too and will be taking place in September. More info will be provided by Mandy as it is made available and will be placed on our website.

There are other research projects that have been initiated before the first workshop, including a fellowship offered to a Stanford Graduate student. These will be addressed and listed on the website before the next meeting. They include a commissioned research on Egypt, Northern Iraq, and an event in Tunisia related to its political economy.

- Planning for Development Conference – must occur in September
  - ASI can handle logistics and organization of the event; PEP members and SC are to provide the organizing theme, invitees, etc.
  - Location: Tunis, Egypt and Lebanon floated as possible venues. Lebanon is most convenient logistically but there is an interest in doing it in Tunisia or Egypt.
  - Parameters: participants must be *mostly* Arab scholars from the region (as the ASI grant targets this demographic)
    - Should *also* include local stakeholders (union leaders; CSOs working on labor issues; regional scholars)
  - Organizing theme, broadly: developmental alternatives to neoliberalism
    - specifically basic, pragmatic alternatives
    - another idea was a focus on the issue of indebtedness
  - Bassam is circulating an email to SC members to solicit input on organizing theme; invitees; and location.

5. Other items?

- Ahmad agreed to take on the task of moderating the next Steering Committee meeting around July 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Addition of Joel Benin's PhD students from Stanford to email list and PEP membership roster after sending invitations by Network wg.