

Jomo Kwame Sundaram *Curriculum Vitae Résumé*

Since January 2005, Jomo has been Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Department's main role is to enable the UN to provide leadership on economic, social and environmental sustainability affairs, focusing on issues of development and social inclusion. He holds broad managerial responsibilities, ensuring oversight and transparency in a wide range of budgetary, staffing and coordination issues, significantly enhancing performance, impact and accountability. Especially in recent years, he has led in all three areas of the Department's work, namely policy analysis, substantive support for the intergovernmental processes – for normative consensus building – as well as technical cooperation for capacity development.

Management innovation, managing innovation

In 2007, Jomo was responsible for coordinating a successful major budget reform proposal to enhance human and other financial resources for the UN Secretariat's development work, including UNCTAD, the Regional Commissions and other specialized offices. In 2011, he successfully oversaw a different and more difficult major budget reform process to 'do more with less' as part of the 4.8% UN budget cut for 2012-2013. He oversees recruitment of senior management in the Department, ensuring merit and efficacy as well as other institutional priorities such as geographic and gender diversity.

He has increasingly taken on tasks in intergovernmental processes as well as in implementation and follow-up to institutional mandates and intergovernmental decisions. He led the UN system response to the 2005 Summit call to support the efforts of Member States to implement National Development Strategies to achieve the internationally agreed development goals while promoting their greater coherence as the United Nations Development Agenda.

In response to the global financial crisis, Jomo initiated the UN system-wide supplementary Macroeconomic Advisory Capacity – which included the ILO among its many participating agencies – to offer 'second opinions' on appropriate policy responses emphasizing rapid economic recovery and employment generation. He also served on the [Stiglitz] Commission of Experts of the President of the UN General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System during 2008-2009 in his personal capacity – the only UN official invited to do so. On the Commission, he worked closely with eminent economists and finance

officials, including several central bankers, to design reform proposals for the international financial system.

Selected by the UN Secretary-General as his G20 ‘sherpa’, and also appointed G20 ‘Finance Deputy’ for the UN, Jomo has worked to forge international consensus for an inclusive, sustained and job-rich economic recovery. This has included ensuring UN support for the ILO as well as the G20 Labour and Social Ministers’ initiatives. He also represented the UN Secretary-General at the IMF’s International Monetary and Financial Committee and the World Bank-IMF’s Development Committee in the past four years.

Enhancing advocacy

Jomo is the first incumbent in his senior UN position, especially created to enhance the quality of the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is responsible for four-fifths of the New York Secretariat’s publications. He also oversees the annual preparation of nearly three hundred Reports of the Secretary-General and other Departmental publications on economic, social and sustainable development matters, especially the annual *World Economic and Social Survey*, *MDG Report*, *MDG Gap Report*, and *World Economic Situation and Prospects*. He has worked to ensure greater UN system-wide collaboration in report preparation, including the ILO’s *World of Work* and the UN’s *Report on the World Social Situation* (e.g. on ‘The Employment Imperative’ in 2007). Additionally, he started the Department’s working papers as well as policy briefs series and other publications of greater use to Member States, while rationalizing the Department’s research and publications, and reducing the costs of print publications.

Since joining the UN, he has collaborated closely with the ILO to include employment targets in the Millennium Development Goals in 2005, arguing that ‘decent work’ promotion is necessary for lasting poverty reduction. He has led efforts in the Department to promote labour and social policy issues, including the ‘social protection floor’, ‘fair globalization’, human resource development and youth employment. For example, he is overseeing work on the theme of ‘promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work in the context of inclusive sustainable and equitable economic growth’ in connection with the 2012 Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC as well as the preparations for the ‘Rio +20’ summit on sustainable development. Similarly, he has been supervising the enhanced initiative on youth unemployment for the 2012 Commission for Social Development. He has also led efforts to better meet the needs of UN Member States through capacity building and other technical cooperation including support for creating and improving national economic and social councils.

Since December 2006, he has also been (Honorary) Research Coordinator for the G24 Intergovernmental Group on International Monetary Affairs and Development. This G24 role has enabled him to work with Finance Ministers to advocate inclusive growth, and robust economic, especially job recovery, since the crisis. He initiated a series of G24 policy briefs and has reorganized G24 technical meetings to better serve the needs of member governments. Following the 2008 crisis, he coordinated a research effort for the G24 to articulate international financial system reform proposals. Besides the Bank of International Settlements, the UN and the G24 have been acknowledged as the only other international organizations that warned of the impending 2008-2009 crisis.

Building consensus for progress

In his different capacities, he has worked to build and broaden international consensus to enhance the impact of collective action by the international community. To strengthen the impact of UN initiatives on economic, social and sustainable development issues, he has sought to ensure greater UN system-wide collaboration and coherence. In this connection, he has worked closely with UN agencies and through the UN's Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs to improve policy coherence, especially around the UN Development Agenda. He has focused efforts on complementary policies for inclusive, balanced and sustainable development, employment generation and, more recently, a strong and sustained economic recovery. Recently, he has been tasked with leading efforts to articulate a post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

To advocate for and advance such cooperation, he has addressed the International Labour Conference, ministerial meetings of UNCTAD, most UN Regional Commissions, and most UN Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, the UN General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, as well as the World Economic Forum (Davos), Global Policy Forum (Yaroslavl), World Public Forum (Rhodes), World Social Forum (Porto Alegre, Mumbai) as well as many academic, business and civil society conferences.

In his home country, Malaysia, Jomo was a member of the National Economic Consultative Council during 1989-1991, when he brought together the Malaysian Employers Federation and the Malaysian Trade Unions Congress around a series of post-1990 (post-New Economic Policy) reform proposals. This unprecedented collaboration resulted in innovative proposals for a new Malaysian social contract as the basis for accelerated economic, social and political

modernization and nation-building based on Malaysia's unique multicultural heritage.

Consulting with government ministries, business organizations, trade unions as well as other civil society organizations from the late 1970s, Jomo long strived for tripartite consultations to achieve consensus and collaboration in policymaking. This approach was also reflected in Malaysia's unique response to the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis. This subsequently became an important international reference for counter-cyclical macroeconomic policy responses to the recent financial crisis, especially during 2009, and for the recent turn to better sovereign capital account management.

Essays in persuasion

Jomo has authored or edited over a hundred books and translated a dozen volumes besides writing many academic papers and media articles. His extensive writings have covered development economics, political economy, macroeconomic policy, international economics, industrial policy, labour economics, rent-seeking, corruption, economic liberalization, economic distribution, affirmative action, ethnic relations, economic ethics, religion and history.

Some of his better known books include *Flat World, Big Gaps* (on global income inequalities); *Reforming The International Financial System For Development*; *Poor Poverty* (on the impoverishment of poverty policies); *Good Governance and Development*; *A Question of Class*; *Privatizing Malaysia*; *Southeast Asia's Misunderstood Miracle*; *Tigers in Trouble*; *Malaysia's Political Economy*; *Rents, Rent-Seeking and Economic Development*; *Malaysian Eclipse* (on the 1997-1998 crisis) and *The New Development Economics*. In 2007, he was awarded the Wassily Leontief Prize for Advancing the Frontiers of Economic Thought.

Some of his other ILO related books include *Towards Full and Decent Employment*; *Labour Market Segmentation in Malaysian Services*; *Trade Unions and the State in Peninsular Malaysia*; *Malay Peasant Women and the Land* [for the ILO]; *Child Labour in Malaysia* and *Early Labour: Children at Work on Malaysian Plantations*. He also conceived and prepared texts for two comic books for children on child labour (*Meena, A Plantation Child Worker*) and industrial accidents involving child workers (*Shamsul and the Ice Crushing Machine*), as well as film scripts for three documentaries on women's work, plantation labour and fishing work.

Path less travelled

Jomo organized the first ever public celebration of International Working Women's Day in Malaysia in March 1980. He was among the earliest to undertake research on gender inequality and women in development in Malaysia three decades ago, but has also encouraged younger researchers since then. He is on the editorial board of *Feminist Economics*, oversaw the 2005 and 2010 editions of the five-yearly statistical review, *World's Women*, and continues to monitor the gender impacts of the financial crisis.

His international work began well before he joined the UN in 2005. Since the 1980s, he has worked with many international organizations, intergovernmental as well as civil society based. Much of this engagement has been invited in recognition of the normative nature and sound bases of his analytical and advocacy work. He was Founder Chair (2001-2004) of International Development Economics Associates, and has also served on the Board of the United Nations Research Institute on Social Development, Geneva, since 2002, as well as the executive committees of other international professional associations.

He has pioneered analytical research in some areas globally, e.g. on affirmative action, rent-seeking, and developmental governance, besides leading policy advocacy for a strong and sustained job-rich recovery. While still based in Malaysia, Jomo conducted research in Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Japan, and went on invited lecture tours to 11 countries in Africa, eight countries in Latin America, and the Caribbean, five countries in South Asia, and eight countries in East Asia between 1996 and 2002. He has also delivered numerous lectures in Europe, North America, Central and West Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji.

Personal formation

Born in colonial Malaya to a multicultural family, he was named after two African anti-colonial leaders. Jomo was born in Penang, Malaysia, on 11 December 1952, soon after the first Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta was incarcerated by the colonial authorities in October, and years after his father met the first Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, then Joint-Secretary of the Pan-African Congress in 1945-1946.

He studied at the Penang Free School (1964-1966) and the Royal Military College (1967-1970) in Malaysia. Thanks to various scholarships, he was financially independent as a student from age 14.

After graduating *cum laude* from Yale, majoring in economics, he went to the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and received his MPA in 1974, after

which he returned to teach in Malaysia at Science University of Malaysia (USM) in mid-1974. He also taught at Harvard during 1974-1975 in the Economics Department, the Social Studies program and the Kennedy Institute of Politics. He returned to Malaysia to research his doctoral thesis in early 1976 before joining the economics faculty of the National University of Malaysia (UKM) in early 1977. Jomo then returned to Harvard to complete his doctorate in late 1977 while teaching at Yale. In mid-1982, he moved to the University of Malaya, until he took early retirement in 2004. He was British Academy Visiting Professor and later Visiting Fellow at Cambridge (1987-1988; 1991-1992), Fulbright Visiting Professor at Cornell (1993) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (2004).

Jomo was also Founding Director of the independent Institute of Social Analysis (INSAN) (1978-2004), founding editor of the monthly bilingual magazine, *Nadi Insan* (Human Pulse) (1979-1983) and of the learned journal, *Ilmu Masyarakat* (Social Knowledge) (1983-1996), President of the Malaysian Social Science Association (1996-2000) and Convenor of the first and second International Malaysian Studies Conventions (1997, 1999). Like other public intellectuals all over the world, Jomo has led advocacy in Malaysia of human, labour and other rights as well as opposition to corruption and other abuses.

Besides Malay and English, he has learnt eight languages: Spanish, French, Russian, Tamil, Mandarin, Hokkien, Teochew, Indonesian. His cultural sensitivity has been honed growing up in a 'racially' mixed home in his cosmopolitan hometown in multicultural Malaysia, attending a military boarding school, as Malaysia's delegate to the World Youth Forum (WYF) in 1970, and travelling overland alone through Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India in mid-1972, and through Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Bolivia the following year.

Jomo is married to Felice Noelle Rodriguez; they have three children: Nadia (born 1987), Emil (born 1989) and Leal (born 1990). His father Shree Kaliaan Sundaram passed away in February 1974 after a distinguished military record in Europe, Africa and Asia during the Second World War and subsequent civic activism including the independence, cooperative and labour movements. His mother Chua Sock Liang lived with her son until she passed away in December 2010 at the age of 91. After retiring from two decades working in a home and school for blind children, she volunteered for women's support groups and supported Jomo's advocacy work.