Assignment #2

Report on current development issues

Presentations: Wednesday, October 8, 5:00-8:00pm

Each of you will draw two themes randomly from the following list of topics, keep the one you prefer, and return the other to the pool.

The idea of this assignment is to contribute rigorous economic analysis to current development debates. You should prepare a 4-5 pages report with:

1. Presentation of the subject (provide or suggest quantitative information that would inform the importance of the problem).
2. Formulation of a research hypothesis.
3. Depending on the nature of the subject, provide either a conceptualization of an underlying economic logic to this hypothesis or an outline of an empirical strategy to test this hypothesis.

Information gathering for the report should include the following:

1. Identify 2-3 seminal papers using search procedure, etc.
2. Use the internet to locate 2-3 relevant sources of information and identify contrasted positions.
3. Use interviews with 2 experts in the field (principally professors and graduate students on the Berkeley campus). Make sure to identify the references, web sites, and informants you used.

Reports will be presented orally with 15' total per case, including no less than 5' for discussion. Hence, you have 10' to make your case, not an unusual situation in public meetings. You should prepare overheads or a PowerPoint presentation to tighten and accelerate your delivery. Make sure that your proposal is clearly evident to all.

Selected themes

1. Why the confrontation on globalization? Focus on the outcome of the WTO negotiation at Cancun
2. The debate on foreign aid: Focus on the Collier/Dollar/Gunning–Sachs exchange about the role of policy pre-conditions?
3. New trade agreements: Should labor standards be an integral part of NAFTA and LDC?
4. Kyoto agreement: How should the pollution quotas be distributed between MDC and LDC?
5. The global water crisis: How could efficiency in water use be improved?
6. Land reform: Will the World Bank's model be effective in Latin American countries?
7. The global war crisis: How could it be prevented in war-torn countries?
8. Nuclear arms control: How should the production and spread be stopped between MDC and LDC?
9. New cold war threat: Should democracies be an integral part of NPT?
10. Intergovernmental organizations: How should they be used or improved?

11. How to access to pharmaceuticals for AIDS and malaria for the LDC poor?
12. Educational subsidies programs: How can they be more effective?
13. Drug traffic and the LDC: What are the policy options for both MDC and LDC?
14. Demography and development: How can it be addressed in poor countries (e.g. Bangladesh)?
15. Devolution of management of local public services to communities: When to choose this approach (e.g., for irrigation, potable water, sewage, etc.)?
16. National interest vs. regional cooperation: Should international border movements be restricted?
17. Internalization of environmental costs: Will the WTO do this?
18. Land reform: Will the World Bank's model be effective in Latin America?
19. Informal finance: Does it work for the rural poor?
20. Public goods and privatization: Should cost recovery in health services be introduced in poor countries?

Presentation format: 15' total per case, including no less than 5' for discussion. Hence, you have 10' to make your case, not an unusual situation in public meetings. You should prepare overheads or a PowerPoint presentation to tighten and accelerate your delivery. Make sure that your proposal is clearly evident to all.