



Un autre monde
est possible

flamme d'Afrique

PAUVRETE
La croisade
mondiale
est lancée

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P. 4



DEBUT DU FORUM SOCIAL AFRICAIN Sous le signe des résistances populaires et des alternatives

Le Forum social africain démarre ses programmes ce vendredi. Pendant trois, différents thèmes seront en discussion pour situer les attentes, mais aussi les engagements des Africains dans la mouvance altermondialistes (voir page 3). Dans différentes manifestations, comme hier au niveau du Camp intercontinental des jeunes (photo ci-dessus), les représentants ont cependant commencé à donner le ton (voir page 5).

CHICO WHITAKER

«FSM em África será
uma construção
dos Africanos»

P. 2



CAMP DES JEUNES

La jeunesse
est dans
la place

P. 5

CHICO WHITAKER, UM DOS IDEALIZADORES DO FSM

“FSM em África será uma construção dos africanos”

Fazer o Fórum Social Mundial em África é um desafio e terá de ser uma construção dos africanos. Este é o entendimento de um dos idealizadores desse espaço aberto de debate e membro da Comissão pela Justiça e Paz e da Comissão Internacional do FSM. Chico Whitaker fala ainda neste exclusivo dos problemas do continente negro que, a seu ver, resultam da divisão da sua pelos colonizadores, destaca as contribuições que o FSM pode proporcionar a África e lembra que o fórum é um espaço aberto à sociedade civil.

O que significa para si a realização do VI Fórum Social Mundial em África?

Tivemos uma longa discussão, a nível do Conselho Internacional, antes de decidir pela realização do FSM 2007 em África. Para o próximo ano, 2006 foi debatido, também a nível do CI, as hipóteses consensuais de fazer um fórum, em simultâneo, em cada região do mundo, usando a mesma metodologia do FSM, isto é, criando espaços abertos, de forma a reunir as pessoas, atrair cada continente e fazer, inclusive, uma inteconexão através da internet ou da Web em geral. Será um fórum único, mundial. Agora, 2007 em África será toda uma construção africana, do FSM. Realizou-se já uma primeira reunião em Lusaka e, nos dois dias que antecederam a abertura deste FSM, estivemos aqui também reunidos e os africanos estão agora decidindo como isso vai se desenvolver. É um grande desafio pelas características desse continente, que foi mal dividido pelo colonizador. Os países africanos são criações dos colonizadores e, por causa disso, existem dificuldades estruturais que terão de ser ultrapassados. Por exemplo, na África, existe um problema de transporte interno em que muitos países cujas fronteiras quase que se tocam, não possuem linhas directas. É preciso fazer passagens pela Europa ou o Sul do Continente, ou outras loucuras desse tipo, para ir para o país do lado.

Que contribuições o FSM pode levar para África, em termos práticos?

De forma geral um fórum é a abertura de um espaço. Não é uma organização ou um movimento. Um fórum se insere num grande movimento para um outro mundo, mas ele em si não é uma entidade. É um espaço que se abre para que as pessoas e organizações se encontram e se intercambiam propostas e experiências, se reconheçam mutuamente, superem barreiras artificiais criadas entre elas. Existem muitas diferenças entre, por exemplo, os movimentos sindicais, mulheres, entre esses e os ecológicos, etc. Esse espaço deve fazer com que essas

barreiras sejam superadas e, juntos, encontrarmos algumas banderas comuns que devem ser trabalhadas. Este é o processo desse forma: criar espaços para avançarmos de maneira mais articulada para mudar. Na medida em que não aceitamos as imposições que vêm de cima, das organizações internacionais tipo FMI, OMC e BM, e nos países temos de acordar e articular melhor, respeitando a diversidade. O FSM é um espaço e uma escola porque cria ocasião para que esses passos sejam dados pelas organizações dos países onde ocorre

Sente da parte das organizações africanas essa vontade de mudança? Estão a lutar, de facto, para que a África faça parte desse novo mundo que se apregoa nos FSM ?

Olha, penso que as organizações que estão participando do processo fórum, isto é, que fazem parte do Conselho Africano do FSM pertencem a sociedade civil. Agora, se elas conseguem ou já conseguiram aglutinar toda essa sociedade, isso já é um processo. O nosso primeiro FSM teve 20 mil pessoas, o segundo já teve 50 mil e as expectativas é que cheguemos agora aos 150 mil. Quer dizer, as pessoas estão descobrindo o FSM. É um processo em que essas pessoas vão reacreditando numa utopia, vão se juntando e redescobrimo. Essa é a principal e a mais importante característica do fórum. Vindo para cá, elas não têm de obedecer a uma direcção, não vão ter nenhum documento final dizendo o que devem fazer. Essas pessoas vêm aqui para se reencontrar, reconhecer.

Pode-se dizer hoje que, cinco edições após o primeiro FSM, este evento mantém ainda a sua essência, a filosofia que norteou o seu surgimento?

Essas ideais evoluirão, situações novas e concretas foram criadas e outras propostas apareceram, mas o FSM manteve, de facto, a sua essência. Algumas companhias mundiais actualmente em curso nasceram ou cresceram nos fóras – eliminação da dívida dos países pobres, direitos das mulheres, entre outras - porque abriu-se um espaços próprio



para isso reconhecer, sendo que todas mantem a sua autonomia.

O facto do fórum ser um encontro que não apresenta recomendações não contribui para a sua desvirtualização?

Não, muito pelo contrário. As pessoas não vêm para cá para ouvir propostas. Os alternativos são pessoas que já estão trabalhando em várias áreas, como por exemplo, na eliminação da dívida, mudanças no comercio, protecção ecológica, direito das mulheres, das crianças, etc. Esses pessoas vêm pela troca de experiências, enriquecimento mútuo e uma melhor articulação de ideias. E não pode ser de outra forma porque se quissémos fazer um documento único do FSM, para atender as aspirações de todas as organizações, seria ‘flu’ e levaríamos, no mínimo, cinco

documentos. Além disso, fazer um documento para agradar a todos seria impossível e ninguém iria segui-lo. Aqui temos um moral de propostas de acção e cada proposta refleta e trabalho e as aspirações dos seus autores, que se engajam para ela se realize. O que faz a força do FSM é o respeito pela adversidade e vamos matá-lo se tivermos de fazer um documento final.

Como um dos idealizadores do FSM, como é que se sente, neste momento, em que está e, andamento a quinta edição do evento, a quarta em Porto Alegre?

Estou satisfeittissimo com a sua dimensão e fico emocionado por ver que o FSM mantém os seus propósitos, os mesmos que nortearam o seu surgimento.

Constância de Pina

CHANCE – Deux Africaines qui avaient laissé 60 000 R\$ (22 000 Us \$ environ) dans un taxi, ont eu la bonne d’être tombées sur un chauffeur tout ce qu’il y a de plus honnête. Après avoir passé une annonce dans un journal local, ce dernier a pu entrer en contact avec ces femmes pour leur porter l’argent. Entre cette fortune et le salaire du taximan, il n’y a pas photo. Ce dernier perçoit R\$ 600 par mois. (source Diario Gaúcho).

Factures – Les soixante-huit hôtels de Porto Alegre affichent complet, pour un total de 14 000 lits. De quoi rapporter à ce secteur une recette de 20 millions R\$. Entre l’hébergement et la restauration, la moyenne tourne autour de de 215 R\$ par hôte.

Déploiement – Pour veiller sur la sécurité du Forum, les autorités n’ont pas lésiné avec les moyens. Entre la police fédérale et la police municipale, ce quatre cents éléments des forces de l’ordre qui sont mobilisés.

Em margem

Africanas sortudas -

Duas africanas, que se encontram hospedadas num dos hotéis do Centro de Porto Alegre para Fórum Social Mundial, esqueceram a sua bolsa com cerca de R\$ 60 mil (pouco mais de mil dólares) dentro de um taxi. Felizmente para elas, o taxista, cujo salário mensal não ultrapassa os R\$ 600 mensais, foi ao hotel devolver a bolsa, segundo ele, para poder colocar a sua cabeça no travesseiro e dormir o seu sono tranquilamente.

Segurança com 400

agentes - Apesar do território FSM não ter cercas, grades, muros, portas ou janelas, os organizadores do evento acreditam que não haverá problemas de segurança. Isso porque, frisa, o fórum foi apresentado a Brigada Militar da Polícia Federal e a Guarda Municipal e, com base no modelo proposto, estes formularam as suas estratégias de segurança da qual fazem parte 400 agentes. O trabalho destes agentes deverão ser facilitados pelas Ongs, que dispõe de pessoas orientadas para mediar conflitos.

Facturamento dos

hotéis - Os 14 mil leitos disponibilizados pelos 68 hotéis de Porto Alegre estão ocupados. Uma proeza que se conseguem somente por ocasião da realização dos FSM nesta cidade. Além de Porto Alegre e cidades próximas, há participantes alojadas na Serra Gaúcha. Um movimento que deverá render ao sector um facturamento em torno de R\$ 20 milhões em diárias e gastronomia. Estima-se ainda que cada hospede gaste diariamente R\$ 215.

Saúde -

As equipas de saúde do Rio Grande do Sul e da Capital Gaúcha estão no terreno para tentar identificar, durante todo o evento, a ocorrência de doenças como a dengue, cólera, malária e inflúenza aviária. Foram produzidas 100 mil folhetos informativos sobre os principais sintomas dessas doenças e há ambulatórios que prestam atendimento de urgência dentro do Território Social Mundial.

(Fonte : Diario Gaúcho, Jornal de comercio

O mundo da cultura em Porto Alegre

Uma centena de shows de música, 41 espectáculos teatrais, 13 apresentações de dança, sete oficinas de teatro, 85 exposições de artes plásticas, fotografias e vídeo-instalações, 150 filmes, além de dezenas de manifestações espontâneas fazem a programação cultural do FSM. Um programa que permite a cultura fomentar o diálogo através da arte e mostrar a diversidade criativa do mundo presente do Território Social Mundial.

Todos os onze eixos temáticos do FSM terão a sua correspondente actividade cultura para dar mais visibilidade aos seus conteúdos naquilo que se convencionou chamar a transversalidade da cultura no fórum.

Para organizar esta amálgama de actividades artísticas, a coordenação Cultural do Fórum elaborou quatro grandes projetos: Museu Vivo da Diversidade, Diálogos de Rua, Mostra Intercontinental de Cinema e Memória Instantânea (Armazém A7 do Cais do Porto), que foi realizado durante o III FSM e se apresenta ampliado nesta quinta edição do encontro.

O objetivo do projeto é contribuir para a construção da memória coletiva do Fórum Social Mundial. O material produzido está a ser exibido no Museu Vivo da Diversidade (Anexo do Armazém A, ao lado do Pórtico Central do Cais do Porto), outro espaço de manifestação cultural. Ali, entre outras actividades, acontece uma amostra dos resultados da oficina com os bonequeiros australianos Snuff Puppets, iniciada no dia 14 deste mês, além de diversas exposições, oficinas, actividades de grafite e performances.

O Diálogos de Rua busca a descentralização do Fórum, permitindo outras formas de diálogo entre o evento e a comunidade local. Vários palcos móveis favorecem a construção desse diálogos através do contacto com diferentes linguagens (música, teatro e manifestações), que levam as propostas do FSM aos diversos bairros de Porto Alegre. Enquanto que a sétima arte, reunida na Mostra Intercontinental de Cinema e Vídeo, apresentará filmes do Brasil, Argentina, Canadá, Índia, Espanha, África e China. A amostra ocupa duas salas da casa de Cultura Mario Quintana, além dos cinema PF Gastal, na Usina do Gasômetro, e Multimeios do Santander Cultural e o Auditório Dante Barone, da Assembléia Legislativa.

Já o teatro ocupará as salas Álvaro Moreira, Renas-

cença e Arena Oduvaldo Vianna Filho, este último instalado próximo ao Museu do Trabalho. Haverá ainda espectáculos por todo "Território Social Mundial", com teatro de rua, danças, estórias e declamações, sobretudo à noite por forma a não interferir ou perturbar o desenrolar dos debates que acontecem nas tendas temáticas.

FSM e os povos indígenas

Os povos indígenas participam pela primeira vez no Fórum Social Mundial (FSM) com uma programação específica e organizada pelas entidades que os representam, protagonizando um Puxirum de Artes e Saberes Indígenas. Cerca de 150 povos estão representados neste evento que decorre numa tenda do Parque Marinha do Brasil.

A agenda dos povos indígenas é intensa: ritual de protecção do fogo sagrado – Puxirum de Artes e Saberes Indígenas: Nós Somos o Outro Mundo, entrega simbólica do Bastão Mando dos organizadores aos coordenadores do Puxirum, feira de artes e culturas indígenas, cerimónia dos oito mil tambores, de entre outros. Ontem, 27, aconteceu o "Diálogo da diversidade indígena" com os temas território e recursos naturais-panorama da realidade actual e sustentabilidade humana e sociedades sustentáveis.

De hoje, 28 a 31, prosseguem os debates com "A lei, o mercado e a propriedade intelectual", "Direitos Constitucionais, Sistemas Jurídicos e Justiça Indígena", "Socialização da Cúpula dos povos indígenas", "Estado, Democracia e Diversidade" e "Movimentos indígenas e a participação no panorama internacional". Antes do encerramento dos trabalhos haverá um desfile intitulado 'Estrelas na terra', que mostrará a variedade de trajes indígenas em tecidos e pinturas e a apresentação de acordos e resoluções.

Constância de Pina

PARTICIPATION AFRICAINE

Sous le signe des résistances populaires et alternatives



La marche organisée lors du Forum social africain de Lusaka. Mobilisation sur l'air des résistances.

La participation africaine à ce 5^e Forum social africain entre dans sa phase active ce 28 janvier. Au-delà des interventions de certains participants dans les différents panels qui se déroulent depuis le 25 janvier, la «touche africaine» va devenir plus marquante avec l'entrée en lice du Forum social africain.

Les différentes manifestations qui s'échelonnent à partir de ce vendredi vont s'articuler autour d'une restitution de la dynamique du Forum Social Africain. Ceci à travers différentes activités mettant en relief les thèmes prioritaires. Parmi ceux-ci, les «résistances populaires et les alternatives démocratiques au néo-libéralisme». Au dernier Forum social africain de Lusaka, en décembre dernier, la question avait fait l'objet de discussions pour identifier les pistes d'affirmation de «la souveraineté des peuples».

L'économiste égyptien Samir Amin, coordinateur du Forum du Tiers-monde, soulignait alors que «l'ordre international ne peut être fondé sur autre chose que sur la reconnaissance de la souveraineté des nations et le droit international». Et d'ajouter que «la souveraineté des nations a été trop souvent comprise, malheureusement, comme la souveraineté des Etats représentés par leurs gouvernements qui sont censés, à leur tour, représenter leurs peuples». Le débat continue donc pour les Africains, à Porto Alegre, au contact d'autres expériences qui n'ont pas

manqué d'être fécondes ailleurs dans le monde, dans des contextes guère différents de ceux vécus par les Africains. A ce propos, M Amin s'était montré catégorique et provocateur : «Le peuple vietnamien n'était pas riche quand il a mené sa guerre pour la souveraineté. On essaye d'abêtir les pauvres, mais ils ne sont pas nécessairement bêtes».

Autre temps de cette participation africaine. Le Tribunal des femmes qui se tient demain 29 janvier est aussi une continuation d'un débat lancé à Lusaka. Le Conseil du Forum social africain tenu l'année dernière au Caire avait demandé de l'inscrire parmi les priorités du Secrétariat. Dans la capitale zambienne, les témoignages, tout comme le réquisitoire devant les «juges» avaient été lourds pour traduire le vécu des Africaines. Et pour changer l'ordre politique, économique et social qui les asservit, Corinne Kumar, une participante au Forum appelait à «écouter les voix du rejet du silence qui a pérennisé les pouvoirs hégémoniques». En somme les voix des femmes.

Les jugements avaient été sévères contre le fardeau de la dette et ses implications dans le déficit de politiques sociales (santé, assainissement, accès à l'eau, accès à l'éducation, etc.), dont souffrent les femmes. Mais aussi du commerce mondial inégal. Paysanne éthiopienne, Shallo Skaba s'était adressée au tribunal pour parler de l'impact de la chute des prix du café

sur sa communauté. «C'est comme si quelqu'un d'autre profite du café à notre place, disait-elle. Et ce sont les femmes qui souffrent beaucoup de cette situation parce que nous portons le fardeau de la famille», confia-t-elle. **Membre du Forum social africain**, Rabia Abdelkrim posait alors, in fine, l'exigence de «créer une autre économie de la vie pour la vie».

Au-delà de ces questions, Ce Fsm est aussi l'occasion pour les Africains de se mettre dans la dynamique de préparation du rendez-vous de 2007. La candidature africaine étant confirmée par le Conseil international, le processus démarre. Et sans doute que la rencontre dite «Dialogue sur le Forum social mondial 2007 en Afrique» peut aider à mieux baliser le chemin. Et surtout à tisser les solidarités dont le Fsa aura besoin pour relever les défis qui l'attendent. Dans ce Dialogue qui se tient le 30 janvier, il est justement question d'«interactions avec les mouvements afro-brésiliens». A Mumbai, au moment où la candidature africaine pour 2007 commençait à se dessiner, il était déjà question de solidarité sud-sud, entre les mouvements sociaux indiens, brésiliens et africains.

A noter que l'Afrique, dans ce Fsm 2005, c'est aussi des représentants d'organisations africaines de jeunes qui participent au **Campement des jeunes, alors que la dimension culturelle est assurée par** la participation d'une dizaine de musiciens.

Programme d'activité du Forum social africain

22-23 janvier : Reunion du Conseil du Forum social africain

24-25 janvier : Participation africaine au Conseil international du Fsm

28 janvier: Séminaire de restitution du Forum social africain de Lusaka: "Résistances populaires et alternatives démocratiques au néo-libéralisme"
12h-18h, Salle F 20

28 janvier : Tribunal des Femmes Africaines
15h-21h, Salle J 609

30 janvier : Dialogue sur le Forum Social Mondial 2007 en Afrique
12h-15h, Salle B 202

Interactions avec les mouvements afro-brésiliens

Activités culturelles : Les Sakala Brothers (Zombie) et les Gnawa (Maroc)

Stand du Fsa : Numéro 04, Espace thématique 01, Amphithéâtre Por do Sol - Avenue Edvaldo Pereira Paiva

Contact : Hôtel Novotel - Tel: 51 33 27 92 92 - Cell 81 57 66 19



Animation musicale au forum de Mumbai. L'Afrique remet ça.

LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETE

Lancement d'une croisade mondiale

L'Appel global pour l'action contre la pauvreté a été lancé hier, au Stadium Gigantinho de Porto Alegre, en présence du président du Brésil Luiz Lula Da Silva. C'est dans une ambiance électrique et sous les huées de militants déçus du Parti des travailleurs (au pouvoir) et de Brésiliens mécontents de leur gouvernement que Mme Coumba Touré, responsable de l'Ong malienne Ancefa (Réseau africain pour la campagne pour l'éducation pour tous), a donné le coup d'envoi de l'opération.

Dans cette atmosphère parfois survoltée, la Kenyane Wahu Kaara, membre du Secrétariat du Forum social africain qui intervenait aussi à cette occasion, a dû profiter d'un des rares moments de répit des contempteurs du président Lula pour lancer son plaidoyer. Suffisant cependant pour forcer le respect des quelque 20 000 personnes présentes, en majorité des Brésiliens. Mme Kaara a mis l'accent sur «l'expérience africaine de la misère depuis l'esclavage», et particulièrement la misère des femmes. Dès lors, la question de la responsabilité de cette situation se pose.

La réponse de la déléguée africaine est sans ambiguïté : «Ce sont les leaders et en particulier nos leaders africains qui se défont sur la traite négrière et continuent ainsi de refuser de porter leurs responsabilités et d'être comptables vis-à-vis de leurs peuples». Parlant des peuples, elle dira que les Africains sont désormais déterminés à choisir eux-mêmes leur destinée. En particulier, «les Africaines qui portent, au premier chef, le fardeau de la misère et des souffrances» et qui ont décidé «de



Le président Lula parodié lors de la cérémonie d'hier. Devant la crise économique et sociale que connaît le Brésil, le charme est rompu avec les populations.

ne plus mourir pour l'Afrique mais de vivre pour l'Afrique». Et pour elle, où qu'ils puissent aller, les leaders du monde se verront rappeler leurs responsabilités et leur devoir de répondre de leurs décisions et de leurs actes.

Solidarité brésilienne avec l'Afrique

La campagne qui commence à Porto Alegre se fixe comme objectifs d'organiser cette année une mobilisation globale contre la pauvreté et pour l'atteinte des Objectifs du millénaire pour le développement (Omd). Deux événements ont été ciblés : le Sommet du G 8 prévu le 1^{er} juillet et le sommet des Nations unies sur les cinq ans de la Déclaration du millénaire, le 10 septembre à New-York. Pour ces deux occasions et pour d'autres qui seront confirmées ultérieurement, chaque citoyen du monde est invité à soutenir la campagne

pour l'éradication de la pauvreté et pour la réalisation des Omd.

Le signe de ralliement est un ruban de couleur blanche. Le symbole a été officiellement remis au président Lula par Mme Coumba Touré. Malienne d'origine, vivant à Dakar, c'est dans son pays natal et dans la capitale sénégalaise que cette dernière est allée chercher le symbole de sa colère. «Je ne suis pas là uniquement pour le lancement officiel de l'Appel global pour l'action contre la pauvreté, je suis là parce que je suis malade de voir les enfants mendier dans les rues de Dakar», dit-elle.

Dans cette croisade, le Brésil se dit aux côtés de l'Afrique. Le président Lula s'y est engagé en rappelant que le visage de la pauvreté se présente de la même manière de part et d'autre de l'Atlantique. Selon lui, il est heureux que le Forum social mondial 2007 se tienne en Afrique. Le chef de l'Etat brésilien aime à rappeler qu'il a

déjà visité l'Afrique du Sud et qu'un axe fort est en train de s'établir entre ces deux pays et avec l'Inde. Il se promet aussi de visiter désormais au moins trois pays africains par an.

Dans le brouhaha des contestataires qui a enveloppé son discours, cet engagement est passé inaperçu. L'intérêt de la grande masse du public était ailleurs, devant un président Lula qui doit faire face à une opinion publique divisée par son programme économique et social. Sa réforme agraire et ses efforts pour rendre l'accès à l'université plus facile aux couches démunies sont sujets à caution. Certains parmi ses propres partisans l'accusent d'avoir trahi la cause pour laquelle il a été élu en 2003. Et son discours enflammé aux accents castristes ne suscite plus que désillusion et circonspection. Parmi les slogans lancés hier, un mot figurait en bonne place : «Demagogo !».

Souleymane NIANG

ANNULATION DE LA DETTE AFRICAINE

Pessimisme devant les propositions européennes

Attendons voir ! C'est en ces termes que le Béninois Achille Tapa, de l'Association interafricaine pour le développement solidaire (Kibaré) réagit à la récente proposition britannique d'effacement de la dette africaine. «Les discours des gouvernants, à quelques nuances près, qu'ils soient du Sud ou du Nord, c'est du pareil au même. Alors attendons voir comment les choses vont évoluer», indique-t-il.

L'Ong française Attac est bien plus pessimiste. «C'est une illusion. L'expression Plan Marshall est bien sympathique, mais je pense que la démarche est une forme de s'arrêter la sympathie de l'opinion», lance Jacques Nikonoff, le présidente d'Attac France, rappelant que

la Grande Bretagne est l'un des pays les moins généreux au monde. «La dette et les taxes globales ne sont pas prises en compte dans le pseudo-plan Marshall. De plus, l'aide publique au développement devrait atteindre 0,7% du Pib ou même 1% s'il l'on tient compte de la Charte d'Alger», souligne le leader d'Attac

Pour sa part, le Béninois Achille Tapa, en appelle à la bonne gouvernance pour pouvoir résoudre le problème de la dette. «Il y a très peu de personnes qui ont accès à l'information réelle en dehors de ce que les gouvernants nous livrent», constate-t-il. Il se montre également très critique à l'égard de la société civile : «En Afrique, les actions sont limitées. Ce sont les autres

qui se battent pour nous et nous ne sommes pas conscients de notre propre situation». Pour Tapa, les urgences actuelles doivent pousser la société civile à se rendre compte de l'importance de ses responsabilités et emboîter le pas à ses homologues d'Europe et Lationo-américaines du point de vue de la réflexion par rapport à ce thème.

João Baptista Nzatzola, de l'Ong Jubileu, partage l'opinion de son collègue béninois. Cet Angolais appelle à la transparence sur la question de la dette, en même temps qu'elle invite la société civile à la réflexion pour mieux appréhender l'importance de la question.

Vladimir MONTEIRO

FSM 2007
EN AFRIQUE

L'agence
de presse
Carta Maior
déjà en ligne

Le Fsm 2007 qui aura lieu en Afrique est assuré de la couverture d'un des plus importants organes de presse alternatifs brésiliens. Son directeur, Joaquim Palhares, s'est confié à *Flamme d'Afrique*.

Dès la confirmation de la réalisation du Fsm 2007 en Afrique, Carta Maior a appelé à travailler ensemble avec les organisateurs africains. Pourquoi ?

Vous savez que l'internationalisme politique reste l'un des principes fondateurs de notre agence de presse. La solidarité et l'humanisme doivent être plus que des termes. Nous pensons que nous devons multiplier nos efforts et soutenir dans tous les sens le forum qui se réalise en Afrique, quel que soit le pays qui accueillera l'événement, et faire en sorte qu'il connaisse un succès identique à celui de Mumbai, par exemple. L'agence Carta Maior sera présente avec une équipe capable de donner la meilleure couverture et diffuser le travail extraordinaire que, j'en suis sûr, les Africains vont réaliser.

Votre agence est également préoccupée par la dette du continent...

La dette est une question importante comme le sida, la santé de manière générale, l'éducation ou même la politique vu le nombre de pays encore sous dictature en Afrique. La dette occupera sans doute un espace important dans les discussions du forum en Afrique. Evidemment, notre participation est importante dans cette lutte car à bien y regarder, cette dette n'existe plus depuis longtemps. L'Afrique, comme le Brésil et d'autres pays, ont payé tellement d'intérêts... Les colonisateurs ont épuisé vos ressources comme ils l'ont fait au Brésil avec le bois et les diamants. Ces gens-là nous doivent de l'argent. Il est l'heure de s'asseoir autour d'une table et faire les comptes.

Propos recueillis
par V. MONTEIRO

CAMP INTERCONTINENTAL DES JEUNES

La jeunesse est dans la place

Une tente énorme, quelques graffitis sur les panneaux qui servent de mur et à l'intérieur une centaine de jeunes écoutant d'autres jeunes. L'espace s'appelle Cidade Hip-Hop, abrité par l'une des neuf tentes spécialement créées à l'intérieur du Camp de jeunes pour permettre aux jeunes de discuter. «En 2003, il n'y avait pas autant d'infrastructures pour accueillir les débats dans le camp. D'une manière générale, il n'y avait pas autant d'infrastructures», explique Caroline, qui était déjà du rendez-vous d'alors.

Le camp est une création de la jeunesse qui s'était sentie exclue du processus de création du Forum de Porto Alegre. La réalisation des activités dans l'enceinte d'une université privée (Puc - Pontifícia Universidade Católica) rendait encore plus difficile leur participation. «Alors ils ont suivi l'exemple de Mumbai et fait du forum un événement réellement populaire», renchérit Caroline. Une décision qui a plu aux jeunes. «Le jeune veut vraiment participer à la construction de cet autre monde. Il ne veut pas être un simple spectateur mais un des acteurs. Ce camp permet



Camp intercontinental des jeunes. Une liberté qu'on ne veut pas synonyme d'insouciance, mais d'engagement pour l'édification d'un autre monde.

un échange entre jeunes, un échange d'informations qui doit se poursuivre après Porto Alegre», lance Max, jeune rappeur de Brasília. Un milliers de jeunes qui habitent cette «île de tentes» qui s'étend sur quelque 2 kilomètres dans l'espace où a lieu ce 5^e Fsm, au bord du fleuve Guáiba.

Les Brésiliens sont majoritaires mais on trouve des Uruguayens comme Andrea ou des Suisses comme Julien. «Le

camp est la chose la plus importante du Fsm. Je vais faire du jonglage avec ces copains de la Bolivie, du Pérou et de l'Argentine», explique le jeune barbu de Fribourg. C'est sûr, celui-là ne passera pas par les ateliers. Au contraire, ce sont les débats sur l'environnement et les relations humaines qui ont amené Daniel et Diana au camp. «Moi, ce qui m'intéresse, c'est ce qui se passe dans les espaces D et F (ndlr : Commu-

nication : pratiques anti-hégémoniques, droits et alternatives et Luites sociales et alternatives démocratiques)», indique pour sa part, Gabriel, étudiant en Géographie, pendant qu'il consulte le programme du Fsm.

Il est presque midi. Une bonne partie de jeunes en profite pour se baigner. Des douches ont été installées dans certaines zones du camp. Garçons et filles sont en maillot de bain. D'autres, comme l'Uruguayen Frederico, en profite pour jouer de la flûte à l'ombre d'un arbre. Amanda, elle, n'a pas le temps de lire. «Le gaz est fini alors j'ai dû allumer un feu pour faire la cuisine pour notre groupe. On est cinq et je pense que je ferai la cuisine pendant tout le forum», indique la jeune fille.

Cette heure de la journée est utilisée de différentes manières. Chapolim, jeune punk de Rio de Janeiro essaie de vendre quelques cartes postales qu'il a fabriquées. Le Fsm, c'est pas son affaire : «Ce mouvement ressemble à une grande fête or il n'y a rien à fêter. La situation est grave. De plus, tu trouves toujours une personnalité au centre de chaque atelier. Un mec qui ne représente rien et moi je veux pas qu'il me représente». Pablo et d'autres jeunes du groupe Circo Voador en profitent pour

discuter de la programmation des activités qui ont lieu à l'intérieur du centre d'action. Ici, les actions tournent autour de la sexualité. «Nous pensons que l'Onu devrait adopter une résolution sur l'orientation sexuelle. La diversité sexuelle est le point central dans la construction de ce nouveau monde», explique Pablo.

Pablo, Amanda, Julien et les milliers de jeunes habitants du camp sont reconnaissables à leur badge marron autour du cou et à un morceau de tissu au poignet. «Au moment de l'inscription, le jeune reçoit un kit contenant un bracelet, un petit sac, une tasse et un manuel. Il doit payer 12 reais (environ trois dollars)», explique Viviane, une des responsables du centre d'inscription. La baraque ne désemplit pas. Sur les murs, un énorme plan pour pouvoir se situer et des informations pratiques sur la localisation des sept centres d'action, des neufs tentes communes, des espaces d'occupation, des cuisines, des points de ventes d'artisanat, etc. «Les choses fonctionnent comme dans une ville sauf qu'ici on mise sur l'auto-gestion. Chacun est responsable. Chacun s'organise pour que les choses fonctionnent. Par exemple, comme il n'y a de service de collecte de poubelles, chacun doit chercher les points indiqués pour jeter les ordures», ajoute Viviane. «La camp est désormais partie intégrante du Fsm», indique Ana Paula, autre membre de l'organisation du camp.

Vladimir MONTEIRO

MUDANÇAS SOCIAIS

Experiência dos movimentos dos jovens africanos é exemplo no FSM

Os jovens trabalhadores da África estiveram ontem, 27, em evidência no Fórum Social Mundial de Porto Alegre através da Enda Tiers Monde e do Movimento Africano das Crianças e Jovens Trabalhadores (MAEJT), no âmbito do debate "Organizações juvenis: Quais os nossos desafios e possibilidades na luta por Mudanças Sociais". Esta foi, de acordo com Baday Aimé, uma oportunidade para os jovens pertencentes a grupos e organizações do mundo partilhar experiências e reforçar a sua posição na luta por mudanças sociais.

A diferença entre os grupos e as organizações de jovens que se associam por forma a beneficiar de suporte político do Estado e ter uma voz na luta pelas mudanças sociais que se almeja foi um dos aspectos mais importante do debate de decorreu, no espaço B do Território Social Mundial. Mas para Baday, mais importante do que as diferenças entre os grupos e organizações de jovens é que eles constituem hoje "duas entidades que tentam encontrar soluções comuns para os seus problemas e que actuam de forma espontânea e rápida. E mesmo quando os problemas diferem, as soluções podem ser comuns".

Em relação as organizações, os problemas são mais complexos por causa da parte administrativa que exige mais de tempo, como é o caso do Enda Tiers Monde e do Movimento Trabalhadores. Aqui, frisa Baday,

é interessante conhecer as suas histórias, preocupações em encontrar soluções para os problemas das crianças e jovens e seus projectos. Os contextos se modificam entre os países, mas a dinâmica dos movimentos africanos é interessante", observa o entrevistado, lembrando que foram os jovens trabalhadores de alguns bairros – empregados das casas comerciais, guardadores de carros, que começaram a se associar em grupos e associações.

"São esses jovens trabalhadores que fizeram o movimento africano e que defendem os seus direitos, a todos os níveis. Eles têm propostas concretas e lutam para os concretizar", assegura este Baday, para quem, ao contrário da África, ficou patente no debate que países grandes como Brasil enfrentam muitas dificuldades para criar um movimento similar ao que existe hoje na África. "Nesse aspecto, a nossa experiência muito importante. O que lhes dizemos é que devem convidar as autoridades e Ongs para assistir as suas actividades.

Entendemos que, só assim, essas autoridades ficam a conhecer quais as suas obrigações", arremata, não sem antes afirmar que todas as organizações de jovens devem unir, partilhar e compreender quais os desafios que têm em comum, ainda que tenham diferenças entre si porque vêm de países com outras histórias e realidades.

C. de PINA

Un an plus tard

C'est au Forum social mondial de Mumbai, en janvier 2004, que ce journal avait été lancé. L'objectif de *Flamme d'Afrique* était alors de donner plus de visibilité à la participation africaine à ce rendez-vous, de favoriser l'expression et le partage des idées développées par les Africains et de mettre en valeur les attentes africaines dans «un autre monde possible».

Ce quotidien qui n'existe que le temps d'un Forum social en est à sa quatrième expérience. Après Mumbai, *Flamme d'Afrique* a accompagné le 1^{er} Forum social ouest-africain, organisé à Conakry (Guinée) du 28 au 30 novembre 2004. A Lusaka, pour le 3^e Forum social africain tenu du 10 au 14 décembre 2004, le journal a aussi été de la partie. Ce 5^e Fsm constitue donc la quatrième étape d'une expérience qui boucle sa première année.

L'initiative d'animer ce journal découle d'un partenariat entre Enda Tiers-monde, l'Institut Panos Afrique de l'Ouest et Women for Change. Au-delà d'un accompagnement à la participation africaine dans le cadre du Fsm, *Flamme d'Afrique* traduit aussi une volonté d'impliquer davantage le secteur des médias et de la communication pour renforcer le mouvement social africain en assurant une plus large diffusion des idées, des enjeux et des perspectives qui se dessinent autour. Les journalistes qui composent la rédaction de *Flamme d'Afrique* viennent de différents pays africains. En plus de la réalisation du journal, ils couvrent aussi le Fsm pour mieux informer le public africain à travers d'autres canaux (liste de diffusion et journal en ligne).

Dans une version trilingue (français, anglais, portugais) *Flamme d'Afrique* va paraître du jeudi 27 janvier au mardi 1^{er} février 2005.

Rédaction française, lusophone et anglaise

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Social Forum returns to Brazil much stronger

By Salma Mlidi

BEATING drums, whistles and cheers welcomed another edition of the World Social Forum (WSF) in the streets of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

WSF 2005 brings together at least 200,000 participants from all corners of the world, of all ages and denominations. The World Social Forum is a gathering for social actors. It is a space for civil society organizations to come together to resist all forms of domination and global oppression.

The deliberations of the WSF reflect this preoccupation.

This year, over 2000 activities will be taking place in the form of exhibitions, workshops, rallies, screenings and campaigns.

Prominent in the programme is the Global Call for Action for Education for Inclusion launched at the opening of the WSF.

Equally prominent is the Campaign Against Debt.

Also, there is a strong showing against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan and the plight of Palestinians.

Worker's and farmer's groups are also well represented bearing testament on how these groups have been



Participants showing off some of their traditional dances at the forum

able to use the forum as an effective advocacy platform.

The WSF returns to Brazil, with a much bigger representation of people and social movements, after a one-year break. In 2004 the WSF was held in Mumbai.

This was the first time it was held outside its birthplace, Porto Alegre. The decision to hold the

WSF at another location was instrumental in reinforcing the

notion that it is a global event, to be hosted and felt in different parts of the world.

Africa will host the WSF in 2007. According to Taoufik Ben Abdallah from the Africa Social Forum Secretariat, the WSF Council endorsed the WSF coming to Africa in 2007.

To acknowledge the honour of being the new site of the WSF, participants from Africa graced the WSF parade adorned in purple "bubus" with

inscription reading "African People United- Another

Africa is Possible!" in all the continent's diverse languages.

They were cheered by many locals and congratulated by other citizens of the world, expectant of the homecoming that Africa 2007 will be very significant not only for those in the Diaspora, but for global people's struggles and humanity.

**WSF is a
money-
spinner**

By Glory Mushinge and Diana Mulilo

PARTICIPANTS at this year's World Social Forum (WSF) have complained over what they termed, 'commercial exploitation' by business organisations from the aviation, hospitality, transport and communication industries, among others.

In an interview with the *African Flame* some African participants expressed their anger at the manner in which business organisations have been operating since the participants started flocking in from their various countries.

Those interviewed said that these companies were using the forum to 'milk' more money than usual out of the participants travelling to and from Porto Alegre and commuting within as well as those lodging in various hotels, guest houses and lodges.

One participant, John Kinuthia from Kenya, related how these practices manifest themselves. "They are taking advantage of such fora to exploit people through commercialising the forum by hiking fees for various facilities such as accommodation, airfare and transport," he said.

Among the tricks that were exposed was the situation in which hotel owners have deliberately been holding on to empty rooms claiming that the hotels are fully booked after which they offer to make one of the 'reserved' rooms available when they notice one's desperation for accommodation, on condition that they pay a double amount.

Also expressed were suspicions that these organisations had entered into an agreement with one another to create some sense of panic amongst the participants so that they could take up whatever opportunity that came up, regardless of the condition, with the fear of loosing the little space that could be available.

For instance, most airlines claim that their flights are fully booked after the forum. This is done in order to compel participants to stay longer in hotels and pay more. Also, airlines are demanding huge amounts of money, in some cases even up to US\$200 as penalty, for rescheduling the flight.

Taxi drivers do not want to be left behind in this syndicate. They are also using the ignorance of the foreign participants to hike their charges.

Most other participants also talked to observed that some of the taxi drivers have been using their metre systems to generate more money out of their clients by going round the same roads or taking longer routes, so that the amounts on their metres go up, thereby earning more cash.

No wonder the governor of Rio Grande du Sul, himself a right-winger, emphasised that the WSF should remain in Porto Alegre. He surely dislikes the politics of the Forum, but likes its commerce.

Language as a tool for social struggle and liberation

By Kimani Ndungu

IF COMMUNICATION is the key to human progress, then language is the tool that makes such human achievement possible. And that certainly is one of the reasons why over 100 000 activists of all shades and backgrounds have gathered to participate in and celebrate the fifth edition of the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Thinking of language, there is both a serious and lighter side to it in Porto Alegre. Firstly, language, in all its forms and manifestations including its use as a tool for social struggle and liberation is conspicuous by its absence from the key discussion of the Forum. There is just one short seminar on language titled "Save the diversities of the languages of the world". With the possible exception of an oversight on the part of the international organising committee of the WSF, there is no obvious explanation why language has been so spectacularly left out of the many debates and deliberations at the Forum. Otherwise, it means activists still do not consider language as a critical item for engagement.

It must be remembered that for many of the countries of the South, colonialism brought with it the introduction of different languages based on the specific colonial regimes and this still defines the contours of language usage in the continents of Africa, Asia and South America.

The extent to which the different language usages in the South hinder or promote cooperation, understanding, development, the harmonisation of struggles and sharing or experiences among others, or even the lack of them, is without doubt an important area to explore at the WSF. We ought to see more organisations

and individuals begin to take the language issue a bit more seriously and future Forums should have it as one of the key themes for discussion.

On the second and lighter side of the language debate in Porto Alegre lies the question of its usage. Here, language should be understood in the two senses that

Sociologist Julia Scherba de Valenzu speaks about in her essay: "Defining Language Socialisation". Julia presents language as a duality, i.e. as a tool for "socialization" and as a value to be "socialised."

As many activists from non-Portuguese speaking countries and those who do not understand Portuguese have come to discover, language as a means of communication and socialisation is essential. Away from the multi-lingual personnel at the various information points, there have been difficult but hilarious moments when activists have attempted to either find their way around or get service at local establishments.

Not that the residents are unfriendly, far from it. They will go to any length to assist and many of us can certainly attest to that. But be that as it may, one still has to find the right words, appropriate gestures, facial expressions and head movements to have their message across. Just taking a simple example for illustration, what hand gestures does a non-Portuguese speaker use to explain to the very friendly and patient waitrons that all they want is coffee with milk and a beef sandwich?

Think it's easy? Just try for yourself and see.

It is neither their fault nor ours. We are victims of history and this is arguably the right time for change. Rather than a multiplicity of language we ought perhaps to talk about its harmonisation.

Feminist seeking to influence global governance

By Salma Mlidi

THE second series of the Feminist Dialogues kicked off on January 23, 2005 at the Hotel Ambassador in Porto Alegre, the site of the fifth edition of the World Social Forum. This year's Feminist dialogue brings together over 150 women from all regions of the world, from different ethnicities, religious and non-religious groupings, ages and professional affiliations for three days to reflect and envision new and alternative ways of organizing. At the heart of the FD deliberations is conceptualizing how feminist analysis can influence global governance.

According to Susan George, a member of the organizing committee, the Feminist Dialogue was first conceived as an intervention within the World Social Forum where the concern was to influence a feminist agenda in the WSF. Increasingly, however, there is an appreciation within the feminist movement for the need to come together and collectively take stock of the challenges posed by emerging challenges influencing women's lives including militarism, fundamentalism and neo-liberalization, the latter commonly understood in the phenomena of globalization.

Setting the tone of the dialogue, Maxine Molyneux challenged participants to move towards a more rigorous feminist analysis of women's realities since women are differently situated and hence their particular contexts influence their realities. Nevertheless, the threat to women's bodies is real.

In the last few year's, women's movements have witnessed a vicious attack, threatening the gains made during the decade for women and post Beijing. The ascendancy of a new economic order has upset global governance structures and led to serious threats on key commitments safeguarding women's rights.

Globalization has raised the levels of insecurity. Changing labour practices have increased job insecurity.

Many governments have compromised human rights and development priorities in favour of bigger spending on arms. When war breaks out, civilians are affected in direct and indirect ways. Women and their children, in particular, are disproportionately affected forming the biggest segment of refugees in different parts of the world. Yet most peace processes and post conflict reconstruction initiatives fail to include them.

In the presence of a global political crisis, religious doctrine is politicised, giving rise to fundamentalist ideology and structures. These forces converge and limit women's autonomy in public and private spheres.

Globalization has facilitated fundamentalist ideology, as it has militarism and economic exploitation via technology, the market and mobility. Politics is often the platform through which

“Unity is key to ending problems of the poor”, says Brazilian President

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in more than five million acres of land being handed over to the poor for settlement and farming.

Women's economic emancipation has also been a key objective of the PT government and Lula observed that since his government took power in 2003, land title deeds are issued in the names of both spouses rather than in the name of the husband alone as used to be the case in the past. This, Lula said, gives women more and better security of tenure which in turn contributes to the better development and improvement of the land.

Lula who was cheered widely throughout his speech by the more than 20 000 people present said that in the last two years, there has been a political revolution taking place in Latin

America. He cited changes that have occurred in countries like Argentina, Venezuela, Uruguay, Paraguay and Panama as evidence of the kind of direction that the region as a whole should take.

He attributed the progressive political developments being experienced in the region as partly owing to Brazil's change of foreign policy. He said that Brazil would no longer remain passive about regional and international matters, but it would assist wherever necessary if this would lead to an improvement of the lives of the poor.

Lula ended his speech on a note that should become a rallying cry for social activists everywhere. As he emphasised, “no country in the world needs to ask any other country for a favour. What we need is respect!”



African women making a lead into the social forums

globalization and fundamentalism assumes legitimacy, sometimes by co-opting the very forces challenging its hegemony.

How can the feminist movement respond to such complex challenges not only at a theoretical level but also in praxis?

The feminist movement has posed the greatest challenge against the global hegemony of big capital and skewed identity based ideologies. There is however recognition that such activism is becoming more difficult as the feminist movement finds itself isolated from global and local structures.

Will its resilience and legacy of small yet strategic interventions allow the movement withstand the assault of the “isms”?

Africa amplifies calls for debt cancellation

By Glory Mushingie

AFRICANS this week joined other global movements across the world in calling for total cancellation of debt for all Southern peoples.

This call was further enhanced by the Tsunami disaster that has inspired dialogue on how the debt burden crippled developing countries' capacity to deal with other issues beyond debt.

During the past several weeks, some governments and creditors have proposed a moratorium on some debt payments for Tsunami affected areas

In a workshop organised by the Jubilee South, a global network of organisations, movements and campaigns in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and the Caribbean, designed to fight against the payment of illegitimate debts imposed to most Southern people's and countries, the participants noted that many countries are living in critical situations where imposed external debts are worsening the crisis of poverty and exclusion.

Prominent in the discussion which also included representatives from countries such as the

Philippines, Indonesia, India and Haiti, was Nobel Peace Prizewinner Adolfo Perez Esquivel who expressed his support for the call.

Also present at the conference were Jubilee South International Coordinator, Lidy Napcil and Anti-debt Coalition Indonesia Coordinator, Kusfiardi, Jubilee South America's Coordinator Camille Chalmers and Vonod Raina from All India popular Science Network.

The participants responded to some of the moratorium proposals and explained the real situations that their countries were facing, as well as the needs of the affected countries.

“There is a big problem and I don't think most Africans are aware of this. If we tell governments to adjust national policies, there is reluctance on the part of donors. People don't see that the problem is with donors like The IMF and World Bank. Most governments tend to rush to develop policies without consulting,” says Chris Kgadima of South Africa.

Kgadima adds that countries in Africa must go back and initiate local strategies and not spend time holding personal grudges and stoning each other, which he said was one of Africa's biggest problems in attaining goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Says Kgadima, “If you look at MDGs, for us to meet some of the goals, we must go back and initiate local strategies. Governments don't understand what MDGs are. What are we doing about this? Are we just building political frames?”

Women want their voices heard

By Diana Mulilo and Glory Mushingie

THE FEMINIST Dialogue (FD) was again held prior to the World Social Forum (WSF) as a way of strategising around ensuring that women's voices are raised throughout the Forum.

Voices of women were heard in various heated debates and discussion groups on some of the many dilemmas and challenges faced by women such as having to fight through and against various religious fundamentalist groups.

The Feminist Dialogue marks a dynamic and symbolic way of how feminists find the issues discussed in line to women fighting for their rights. It caters for different voices from different walks of life.

The dialogue also inspires one's ambition especially young feminists who have brought in new ideas and energies to find their objectives through the expression of different contributions.

Solidarity dialogue is essentially a political in nature. Most of the feminists want to claim inspiration and hope to make a change in most women's lives.

The dialogue has called for women to grasp concepts such as intersexuality and how this relates to other broader concepts such as human rights.

The Dialogue also inspires women to take a proactive role to fighting for their rights and be ready to take up challenges on issues that come before them.

The Feminist Dialogue has made a deliberate move to help bridge gaps affecting the women's bodies and also discover strategies that have worked to bridging the gaps.

During the meeting, feminists have called on governments to develop and sustain the programmes that are aimed at empowering women, particularly those at a grassroots level. One of the practical ways to achieve this through dedicated funding for women's programme. Such funds can be diverted from ever-increasing military budgets, which cause nothing but misery.

Militarisation has created or left millions of refugees all over the world. Most of these refugees also happen to be women.

Also discussed were issues such as globalisation and militarisation itself. An attempt was made to examine the links between the effects of globalisation in general and the special issues of gender inequality, health, poverty and other related issues. Apart from its overall negative and peasants, globalisation has also kept out most women from airing their voices because of the most of the decisions are taken by men and a few by women.

The Dialogue is opposed to increasing arms and drugs proliferation, which leave teenagers afflicted with sickness or dead. It has expressed this to governments and other warring factions in different parts of the world. One area in which women are particularly excluded is in the area of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs). This denies women to know of their rights on health, education, food and shelter, etc.

The Dialogue has also called for the formation of an alliance that will resist organs such as the United Nations and European Union.

The Dialogue helps provide the space for most women to express their thoughts. The challenge faced by the Dialogue is how to make the voices of women heard and develop strategies that can be implemented in various countries.

“Unity is key to ending problems of the poor”, says Brazilian President

By Kimani Ndungu

BRAZILIAN President Luis Inancio lula da Silva has called on Brazil and its people to increase cooperation with the African continent as the two share strong historical links and the time has come to move away from the dominant dependence on the West for scientific and technological development.

Speaking at arguably one of the biggest events at this year’s Porto Alegre World Social Forum, he demonstrated that such cooperation would extend to Arabic countries as almost all previous governments in Brazil have had little if any interaction with countries of the Middle East.

Lula pointed out that the unfair and unjust policies perpetrated and maintained by the richer nations of the North have continued to ensure the impoverishment of the South. He cited the case of the current agricultural policies in which farmers in the North receive massive subsidies thereby enabling them to produce and dump cheap commodities in Southern markets. As a result, farmers in the poor countries of the South cannot be able to compete with these technologically advanced but cheaply produced agricultural products.

Lula also called for the democratisation of the United Nations and other international multi-lateral bodies so that they can serve the needs of all people in the world rather than the interests of a few rich nations.

He said the Group of 3 (G3) consisting of Brazil, India and South Africa was making an important inroad into the hegemonic practices of the powerful nations, while the Group of 20 (G20), which is made up of many of the leading nations of the South has helped to bring in critical changes in areas such as the unjust policy of agriculture subsidies practised by the West.

Speaking during the launch of a “Global Call to Action Against Poverty

(G-CAP)” at the Gigantinho Stadium Amphitheatre on the morning of January 27, Lula urged activists to shed off their fear and continue to raise their voices even higher so as to change “the social, economic, political and cultural geography of the world”.

Lula expressed his optimism that with persistent struggle, the sharing of experiences and the confluence of ideas, another just and more equitable world is indeed possible.

He cited Brazil as an example of a poor country whose regional polices and international collaboration with nations from the South is now beginning to assert its voice among the leading powers of the world.

Lula pointed out that his Partido dos Trabalhadores (“PT” Workers Party) government has been instrumental in pushing for transformation of key social and economic sectors of Brazil. He said his government has among other things implemented a scholarship scheme that is enabling poor students to pursue university studies while the land reform programme has resulted

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Participants listening to Lula



African flame

Another World
is Possible

27th Thursday, January 2005 - Number 1 - World Social Forum, Porto Alegre (Brasilia)

African women spearhead the Global Campaign Against Poverty



Lula conference draws crowds

By Salma Maoulidi

MORE than 20,000 people assembled at the Gigantinho Stadium in Porto Alegre for the launch of the Global Campaign Against Poverty that was witnessed by President of Brazil, Lula who became the first world leader to rally behind this initiative.

Sitting next to Lula were two daughters of Africa, Wahu Kaara of the African Ecumenical Council from Kenya and Coumba Ture from the African Network for Education for All, from Senegal.

Wahu Kaara, an African Social Forum activist, set the stage for President’s Lula’s message to the Forum.

Mama Wahu noted that in the 21st century, there was no reason to keep discussing poverty. “We can make poverty history by calling to action!” she challenged. This, she explained, will only be possible if leaders take responsibility and are made accountable for the misery and state of human deprivation in Africa and other parts of the world.

Mama Wahu opined that the Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals calling for the redefinition of economic relationships between rich and

poor nations, the north and the south, invigorates the call from civil society groups and social movements to make their leaders accountable to redress the historical injustices and plunder that deprived the continent of its people and wealth.

“We can no longer shy away from demanding reparations and an end to unjust debt repayments which all calculations will indicate that we have more than repaid. It is time Africa too is compensated and her leaders must demand the same in global economic fora in no uncertain terms”.

Coumba broke into a song and the killer punch line was “Can’t rest till freedom comes”.

She situated her motivation in joining the Global Campaign Against Poverty as being from her disgust at, “powerful people who choose to remain as spectators as young girls are forced into prostitution; or as children continue to die from treatable diseases like malnutrition.

She challenged existing half-baked strategies targeting poverty.

To bring real hope to the millions of people dying of hunger and condemned to misery, she called for the cage that imprisons birds that signify hope to be broken so that no

bird will ever have to be imprisoned or its freedom ransomed.

The bird that brings hope to many seeking an alternative future in the case of Brazil was signified by President Lula.

Kumba had the honour of officially inviting President Lula to join the Campaign by tying the white band of the campaign.

On his part, President Lula called for democracy and the building of a social organization aimed at transforming the plight of humankind to serve humanity.

Drawing from the political revolutions in Latin America with the new governments mainly from the left in many South American capitals, President Lula shared a vision of mutual respect and cooperation between nations.

He stressed the importance of the poor building alliances not only with each other but also with partners who are willing to work with them to bring back human dignity.

Lula stressed that “Peace is only possible if we end poverty. The transformation we see in Brazil and other parts of Latin America did not come over night. It is a mark of resistance and perseverance. We have to take small steps to get where we need. But we will get there!”