

# TERRAVIVA

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The independent newspaper of the Polycentric World Social Forum Bamako, Jan 19-23, 2006

Des jeunes africains mettant en scène, devant le Centre international de conférence de Bamako, le drame de l'immigration personnellement vécu à Ceuta et Mellila



## Viva Bamako!

### Afrocentric Forum is a Success

### Vive Bamako! Le Forum Afrocentrique est un succès

By Zarina Geloo

The Bamako World Social Forum (WSF) which ends tomorrow and moves to Caracas in Venezuela, created a focus on "Afrocentric" issues that used to be swallowed up in other forums, forum coordinator Mamadou Goita said.

Goita told *Terra Viva* that issues which were specifically African had a bigger space at the Bamako forum because more Africans were able to participate in the discussions and raise their specific issues.

"Africanising the issues was not deliberate, it just so happened that this is the first time we have had a majority of Africans attending a WSF. Usually there have been less

than 100 African NGOs at any of the other WSFs.... It was too expensive for most Africans to travel to Porto Alegre or Mumbai."

He gave the example of the sessions on women, which focused on female genital mutilation, early marriage and illiteracy among girls. Similarly the issue of Western Sahara was given prominence at the forum, as were those of other African conflict areas like the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan.

While issues were not exclusively African,

the forum benefited from the strong inputs made by a plethora of specialist African NGOs and civil society.

"We had over 300 people from the rural areas of Mali alone, while another 8,000 came from neighbouring countries. All of them participated in the forum and enriched the discussions. This has never happened before."

Another first was the creation of a separate space to discuss children's issues such as alternative tools for educating children in rural set-

tings. A youth forum, set up at the Modibo Keita Stadium, gave young men and women the rare opportunity to interact with village elders and other 'older citizens' on issues that affect their lives, including unemployment, immigration and education.

"This was unique because usually the youth forum is left to its own devices and they discuss and debate among themselves."

Adding a little innovative touch in putting across a new agenda, the Mali Social Forum organised a 15-km solidarity-run to focus on the commercialisation of sport, with sportsmen and women, particularly from Africa, being traded on the international market.

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# A qui la faute du chômage des jeunes africains ?

Par **Almahady Cissé**

Au cours d'un débat houleux et passionné, dimanche, au stade Modibo Kéïta, la lancinante question s'est posée : à qui la faute du chômage des jeunes ?

"Tout le monde a sa part de responsabilité", a répondu Mohamed Touré, un jeune malien.

Le débat a été principalement animé par Mahamane Mariko, ancien leader étudiant du Mali, autour du thème, "Emploi des jeunes : Problèmes et perspectives".

Aujourd'hui, dit-il, il y a une inadéquation entre formation et emploi en Afrique. "Les formations que nous recevons en Afrique ne répondent pas au besoin de l'emploi", souligne-t-il.

Les jeunes africains doivent avoir la mentalité de la reconversion. "Il y a du travail chez nous. Il faut avoir la volonté de travailler partout où besoin est", estime-t-il.

"Les jeunes africains ne veulent pas travailler en milieu rural quand bien même il y a de l'emploi pour eux", renchérit Mory Samaké, un jeune participant malien.

Il cite en exemple la zone "office du Niger" où il y a des milliers d'hectares de superficies irrigables dans le delta du fleuve Niger, mais

que personne ne veut exploiter.

"Il faut que les jeunes africains se départissent du complexe de diplômés qui ne rêvent que d'emploi bureaucratique", a fustigé Dieudonné Ndayishi du Burundi.

"Non", rétorque vigoureusement, Bakary Berthé, un jeune compressé malien. "La seule garantie en matière d'emploi en Afrique demeure la fonction publique".

Puis il raconte à l'assistance son histoire personnelle qui a ému tout le monde.

"Je travaillais dans une société publique malienne, HUICOMA, qui a été privatisée en juin 2005. Le nouvel acquéreur a mis à la porte 291 personnes. Si c'était la fonction publique, cela n'arriverait jamais", estime-t-il, la voix nouée par l'émotion.

Il faut que la jeunesse africaine cesse de pleurnicher pour devenir actrice du développement et du progrès, a souligné Ndayishi.

Cela ne suffit pas, il faut des moyens pour mettre en œuvre les projets, a rappelé le conférencier, Mariko.

"Ne soyez pas pessimiste, camarades jeunes, à cœur vaillant rien n'est impossible", a lancé du haut de la tribune un jeune guinéen, Hamidou Camara.



Beaucoup de jeunes, peu d'emplois

## World Court of Women Convenes in Bamako

By **Joyce Mulama**

Women from around the world denounced the social ills affecting them at a women's court at the World Social Forum yesterday.

The World Court of Women sat to hear women talk about how they had been affected by numerous aspects of globalisation, an issue that has dominated this year's WSF in Bamako.

Set up in 1992, the court is a symbolic process that holds public hearings on crimes against women, including the violation of their rights. The court's theme for this year's WSF is: Resistance to Wars – Wars of Globalisation, Wars Against Women."

At yesterday's sitting, women from Africa spoke fiercely about the challenges of globalisation.

"We know that we have paid a hard price for globalisation. It is critical to understand the process and what it has done to poor countries, particularly women and children," Aminata Traore, a social activist and former Malian minister for tourism said.

"Globalisation is a paradigm whose theme is destruction masked as competition and survival for the fittest. Life values are left to the dictates of the market," Wahu Kaara, a civil rights activist from Kenya said.

The so-called invisible hand of the market, Kaara said, had ensured that "we have been left with only a small percentage of our wealth, with the bulk of it at the hands of the few. This to me is the obscenity and scandal of neo-liberalism."

She was speaking in reference to issues such as the unfair rules governing international trade that affect third world countries.

Globalisation was also blamed for the trafficking in women and girls, which in turn has fuelled the spread of HIV/AIDS in many African countries.

According to Mercy Siame of Zambia, poverty has pushed many young girls and women into sex work.

"In Zambia, women and girls have engaged in this service in exchange for money and at the expense of their health. They risk contracting HIV/AIDS; they have lost control of their bodies," she said.

According to Siame, one in every five Zambians is infected with HIV/AIDS.

## A Fishy Smell to Proposed EU-Morocco Accord

By **Jacklynne Hobbs**

Activists gathered in Bamako warned against a proposed fishing agreement between the European Union (EU) and Morocco during a fiery debate yesterday on the future of Western Sahara.

The territory, formerly under Spanish control, was occupied by Morocco and Mauritania in 1975, but Mauritania later renounced its claim. The pro-independence Polisario Front has long fought for self-determination in the region. However, efforts by the United Nations to organise a referendum for the people of Western Sahara to determine their own future have foundered.

"This agreement, if it goes ahead, would give Morocco rights over Western Sahara fishing waters – so, basically, it reinforces the illegal occupation. It is also contrary to international law," said Louise Richards, executive director of War on Want, a London-based non-governmental organisation.

"International law says that where there is such an occupation, that there shouldn't be this kind of agreement," she told TerraViva.

Richards believes the fishing agreement has failed to attract international attention because of its complexity and the fact that Western Sahara is not high on the global agenda.

"It was easy to slip it through... And, it's up to civil society (to highlight the matter): we now are aware of the problems with this fishing agreement, and we've drawn it to public attention."

Mohamed Sidati – the Polisario Front's representative in Europe – said the movement will continue to oppose fishing in Western Sahara's waters, even if the accord is finalised.

"We will continue to say that the European Union has again committed an injustice against the Saharawi people. And, we will continue to fight this accord, so that it can be made to conform to international law," he told TerraViva.

"And, I think that we will not be alone in this fight."

# What Women Want: Solidarity, Training, Communication



By **Almahady Cissé**

African women are expecting a lot from the Bamako World Social Forum – and they specifically made their voices heard in a ‘Feminist Dialogue’ workshop on Friday.

“I came to Bamako with several hopes. One of them, to meet women from all over Africa gather and exchange views on the hardships we encounter, is being met,” said Ivette Ngwevilo Rekangaly, president of the Gabonese Movement for Family Well-Being.

“We are here to brainstorm the current problems and propose solutions to governance issues,” Eso Ama of the Action and Research Group on the Environment of Togo said.

According to her, the stakes are

high because women’s rights are violated everywhere in Africa – two burning problems she mentioned were access to land and the violence suffered by women.

Many women also expressed concern over globalisation.

“In reality, globalisation is not a bad thing in itself. Our problem is that we are not ready for it yet,” said Eso.

According to Traoré Oumou Touré, executive secretary of the Coalition of Feminine Associations and NGOs of Mali, this concern is justified by the fact that in all countries women are the poorest members of the population.

“Globalisation may be a new word for some of us but it is necessary to know that within our families, we are the pillars. Within the

nation, we are most numerous. All responsibilities should not be left only to men,” said Ngwevilo Rekangaly.

For Nientao Kadiatou Traoré, president of Solidarity, Help and Action for Mali Youth, the challenge for African women is to involve themselves in development and in resolving conflicts.

Rural women from Mali have other priorities.

“We need health and education for our children and employment for our husbands,” said Gonsogo Fatoumata Sanogo, president of the Rural Women of the Sikasso Group, located in southern Mali.

According to Traore, the alternatives for women are articulated around three strategic aims: solidarity, training, and communication.

# L’Afrique doit rompre le cordon ombilical avec l’Occident

Par **Abdoulaye Barry**

Il faut rompre définitivement le cordon ombilical monétaire entre les Africains et l’ancienne puissance colonisatrice, a suggéré, dimanche, le professeur Nicolas Agbohhou, de l’université de Paris Versailles.

Au cours d’une conférence qui a porté sur le thème “Indépendance monétaire et développement endogène de l’Afrique : le franc CFA et l’euro contre l’Afrique”, Agbohhou a décrypté la situation actuelle du continent et fait des propositions de sortie de crise.

Selon lui, la France, pour ce qui concerne les pays francophones et le franc CFA, dicte son modèle de développement à l’Afrique à travers les banques centrales africaines sous le contrôle de la banque centrale de France.

Le CFA, dit-il, est une monnaie coloniale et les banques centrales africaines, telle que la Banque centrale des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (BCEAO), sont soumises aux banques occidentales.

L’Afrique ne peut se développer dans ces conditions et doit nécessairement se détacher de l’occident si elle veut voir sa situation changée.

Il faut qu’elle crée une banque centrale avec une monnaie unique afin de s’assurer une certaine indépendance monétaire et un début d’industrialisation.

L’Afrique est riche, mais les Africains sont pauvres, dit-il. “Il ne faudrait plus qu’aujourd’hui, les grandes nations dictent à l’Afrique son modèle de développement”, martèle-t-il.

A la question de savoir s’il existe une volonté politique de changement en Afrique, Agbohhou répond par la négative et demande à ce que soient donné à la nouvelle génération des armes scientifiques pour qu’elle bouscule l’ordre établi.

# Governments Need to Follow Up Rhetoric to End Poverty



By **Thomas Deve**

The story of the World Social Forum in Bamako would be incomplete if one does not reflect on the 2005 white armband movement that has seen many citizens in Africa embracing the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP).

GCAP, a worldwide alliance of organisations committed to holding world leaders to their promises and make a breakthrough on poverty, was launched at the Porto Alegre 2005 World Social Forum in Brazil.

In keeping with the forum’s culture, its activists committed themselves to pressing world leaders to take concrete actions to eliminate poverty by radically overhauling the dominant thinking and current injus-

tics in trade, aid and debt.

Key proposals include an immediate end to dumping and rich country agricultural subsidies that keep Africans in poverty, and increased accountability and transparency of governments and international organisations in the formulation of international trade rules and national trade policies.

GCAP activists will reiterate calls for rich countries to ensure that aid is directed towards achieving development objectives and for rich countries, the World Bank and IMF to cancel all the debt of the poorest countries in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Given the complexity of the world social forum methodology,

GCAP will remain a relevant campaign at Bamako – especially when one considers its argument that: “Today, the gap between the world’s rich and poor is wider than ever. Global injustices such as poverty, AIDS, malnutrition, conflict and illiteracy remain rife.”

GCAP’s popular appeal will be enhanced if Bamako echoes its message that world poverty is sustained not by chance or nature, but by a combination of factors: injustice in global trade, the huge burden of debt, and insufficient and ineffective aid.

Further, each of these is exacerbated by inappropriate economic policies imposed by rich countries. GCAP has resolutely stated that

it doesn’t have to be this way and that all these factors are determined by human decisions that can be changed by global mobilisation.

The Bamako Forum takes place against the backdrop of GCAP activists having been closely associated with progressive anti-globalisation movements that challenged the processes and outcomes of last month’s WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong.

In Bamako, GCAP will therefore be seen as highlighting a sentiment running through every country in the world: that governments need to follow up rhetoric displayed at international meetings to end poverty.

# L'impératif créateur

Nous entrons dans une nouvelle ère, pas seulement pour les affaires mais aussi pour le monde entier. Une ère dans laquelle cette "création impérative" viendra pour dominer nos vies, tant à la maison, au travail, que dans nos loisirs et dans laquelle les prétentions, les outils, et les cadres que les gens d'affaires, du gouvernement et de la société civile ont utilisés durant la dernière décennie pour faire adopter des décisions ne sont plus valides.

Une économie gérée en réseau global, des déséquilibres économiques, de nouvelles mentalités, des décalages démographiques et la gravitation exercée par l'apparition de l'Inde et de la Chine sont seulement quelques-uns des facteurs qui remodelent radicalement l'environnement global.

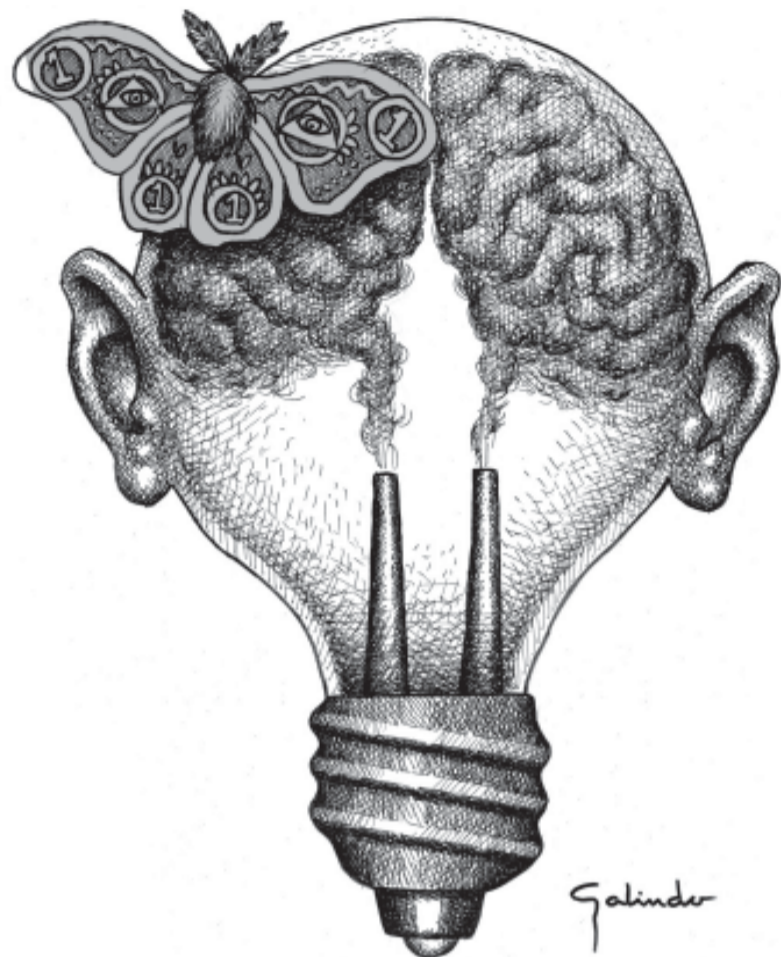
"L'économie créative" qui émerge est dans un sens la prolongation logique du processus de la mondialisation qui balaye maintenant le monde depuis les cinquante dernières années mais qui a accéléré presque de façon exponentielle dans la dernière décennie.

Mais ce n'est pas seulement les affaires qui doivent s'ajuster sur ce nouvel environnement naissant. Les gouvernements, les établissements multinationaux et les organisations de la société civile doivent également adopter de nouvelles conceptions de politique et des approches innovatrices s'ils veulent rester efficaces et crédibles.

D'ailleurs, pour plusieurs des problèmes les plus urgents du monde, il apparaît de plus en plus clair qu'aucun gouvernement, aucune compagnie ou institution multilatérale ne peuvent travailler seuls efficacement. Les chefs et leurs établissements doivent apprendre à adopter des approches de collaboration pour aborder ces questions et de telles approches multidirectionnelles sont créatives.

Ce changement fondamental de l'environnement global vient à un moment où le monde est confronté à un leadership faible, aux populations insécures, et à la fragilité institutionnelle. Dans les affaires, la technologie et l'information deviennent mondialisées et "commoditisées" et avec cette *commoditisation*, des connaissances-clés immigrent, et ce, non seulement au niveau des produits mais de plus en plus dans les travaux de service de niveau élevé.

Toutefois, dans cette nouvelle ère, la pression n'est pas seulement sur le vieux monde; faire les choses plus rapidement et à meilleur marché ne vaut plus. De plus en plus, la créativité



et la conception deviennent les éléments conducteurs et différentiels.

Mais ce nouvel âge créateur n'en est pas simplement un que le monde des affaires doit noter. La stratégie de conception relie (ou rebranche) l'organisation au client ou fournisseur. Dans le cas du gouvernement et des

établissements non gouvernementaux, elle permet à des leaders de gagner (ou re-gagner) de la légitimité en devenant plus appropriée et en adressant les dilemmes grâce à des approches innovatrices. La créativité devient impérative afin de débattre les questions mondiales. Les vieilles méthodes

pour aborder les problèmes du monde ne fonctionneront plus.

En septembre 2005 à New York, lors du récent sommet de l'ONU sur les Objectifs de Développement du Millénaire (ODM), je crois qu'il y eut finalement une reconnaissance que les problèmes du monde - entre autre le HIV/Sida et désastres naturels - ne peuvent pas être laissés à un groupe de leaders ou à des institutions, qu'ils soient politiciens ou issus des ONG.

Le monde des affaires, par exemple, peut offrir des innovations et avantages significatifs et une richesse de ressources qui ne peuvent plus être ignorés par la prétendue société civile.

Prenons l'exemple de l'ouragan Katrina. Là, encore une fois, nous avons vu la lacune des institutions et des gouvernement locaux à fournir des solutions par elles-mêmes. Nous avons également vu beaucoup de groupes d'affaires prêter leur expertise dans les secteurs principaux. Et ce sont ces alliances créatrices qui fourniront de plus en plus des solutions à nos problèmes. Les alliances plus ou moins lâches se formeront, se dissoudront et s'ajusteront pour traiter les différents problèmes.

Il y a eu un changement fondamental de l'économie mondiale - et



By/Par Klaus Schwab

dans notre société mondialisée. On ne peut s'étonner que les leaders et la population en général aient du mal à suivre ces changements. Mais quelques leaders commencent à s'apercevoir qu'ils doivent changer leurs manières de faire - qu'ils doivent prendre des initiatives créatives pour se garder à jour.

Ces chefs se rendent compte que nous ne pouvons pas dépendre du cadre existant, qui, il y a quelques années, était accepté. Nous devons aller de l'avant dans un environnement d'incertitude où seulement les solutions créatrices fonctionneront.

Nous entamons un nouveau paradigme et nous ne percevons pas toujours entièrement sa forme - c'est dans ce nouveau monde que les citoyens, les gens d'affaires et les politiciens devront saisir l'impératif créateur et le faire prospérer.

**Klaus Schwab est fondateur et Président directeur du forum économique mondial (WEF).**

## The Creative Imperative

We are entering a new era, not just for business but for the whole world. It is one in which a "creative imperative" will come to dominate our lives, at home, at work, and at leisure, and in which the assumptions, tools and frameworks which leaders from business, government and civil society have employed to make decisions over the past decade are no longer valid.

A global networked economy, economic imbalances, new mindsets, demographic shifts, and the gravitational pull exercised by the emergence of India and China are just a few of the factors that are radically reshaping the global environment.

The "Creative Economy" which is emerging is in one sense the logical extension of the process of globalisation that has been sweeping the world for the last fifty years, but which has accelerated almost exponentially in the past decade.

But is not just business that must adjust to this new emerging environment. Governments, multinational institutions and civil society organisations must also adopt new policy designs and innovative approaches if they are to remain effective and credible.

Moreover, for many of the world's most pressing problems it is becoming increasingly clear that no single government, company, or multilateral institution working alone can be effective. Leaders and their institutions must learn to adopt collaborative approaches to address issues, and such multi-stakeholder approaches have creativity at their core.

This fundamental change in the global environment comes at a time when the world is faced with weak leadership, insecure populations and institutional fragility. In business, technology and information are becoming globalised and commoditised, and with this commoditisation of knowledge core advantages are being shipped abroad - not just in manufacturing but increasingly in high-level service jobs.

But the pressure is not just on the Old World in this new era; simply doing things faster and cheaper is no longer enough. More and more, creativity and design are becoming the key drivers and differentiators.

This new creative age is not simply one that business must take note of. Design Strategy connects (or reconnects) an organisation to the

customer and supplier. In the case of government and non-governmental institutions, it allows leaders to gain (or regain) legitimacy by becoming more relevant and addressing dilemmas with innovative approaches. Creativity becomes imperative to address global issues. The old single issue and single organisation methods of tackling world problems will no longer work.

At the recent Millennium Development Goals summit of the UN in New York (September 2005) there was, I believe, finally a dawning recognition that the world's problems - whether HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, or others - cannot be left to one group of leaders or institutions, whether politicians or NGOs.

Business, for example, can offer significant innovations, advantages of scale and yes, a wealth of resources too, which can no longer be ignored by so-called civil society.

Take Hurricane Katrina, for example. There yet again we saw the failure of local institutions and governments to come up with the solutions by themselves. We also saw many business groups lending their expertise in key areas. And it is these creative alliances that will in-

creasingly provide solutions to our problems. More or less loose alliances will form and dissolve and adjust themselves to deal with different problems.

There has been a fundamental change in the global economy - and concomitant changes in our globalised society and polity. It's hardly surprising that leaders, like the led, are finding it hard to keep pace with these changes. But some leaders are beginning to see that they must change the way we do things - that they must take brave, bold, and above all creative steps to match the new landscape.

These leaders realise that we can not depend upon existing frameworks and assumptions that only years ago were taken as a given, and must move forward in an environment of uncertainty where only creative solutions will work.

We are entering into a new paradigm and still do not fully perceive its shape - it is in this new world that citizens, business people and politicians will all have to grasp the creative imperative to thrive.

**Klaus Schwab is Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF).**

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# “Child Trafficking: a Product of Neoliberalism”

Paulino Menezes

**Raffaele K. Salinari, President of the International Federation Terre des Hommes speaks about the organisation's efforts to fight child trafficking.**

**TV – The International Federation Terre des Hommes wants to raise public awareness on child trafficking – what message did you bring to Bamako?**

RS – Child trafficking is a worldwide issue directly linked with neoliberalism. To combat child trafficking we must set up another model of development.

**TV – How was this message received?**

RS – In a very positive way, our local partners are more and more aware of this linkage.

**TV – Trafficking flows in Africa are complex and constantly changing. How do you combat this?**

RS – First of all through prevention by raising public and political aware-

ness on the size of the phenomenon. Then, to combat poverty which is the first cause of child trafficking. And then, we need to establish international protocols to combat the international crime organisations linked to trafficking.

**TV – What roles can other organisations at the World Social Forum play in helping protect children at risk?**

RS – The women's organisations are the most important; women are always aware of the reasons why their children can be trafficked and they insist on the need to give children their basic rights like education and health.

**TV – Have you built any partnerships at this session of the WSF? Can you tell us about some of your projects and/or plans after Bamako?**

RS – We have a wide number of African partners like the network Aoudaghost involved in prevention and public awareness. They also work on setting up international protocols to combat child trafficking.



Children: women demand an international protocol against trafficking

## “Le trafic d'enfants: un produit du néolibéralisme”

**Raffaele K. Salinari, président de la fédération internationale Terres des Hommes parle des efforts de l'organisation pour combattre le trafic d'enfants.**

**TV – La fédération internationale Terre des Hommes veut sensibiliser l'opinion publique au sujet du trafic des enfants - quel message avez-vous à apporter à Bamako?**

RS – Le trafic d'enfant est un sujet mondial directement lié au néolibéralisme. Pour combattre ce trafic, nous devons installer un autre modèle de développement.

**TV – Comment ce message a-t-il été reçu?**

RS – D'une manière très positive, nos associés locaux se rendent de plus en plus compte de cette association.

**TV – La circulation en Afrique est complexe et constamment changeante. Comment combattez-vous ceci ?**

RS – D'abord, à travers la sensibilisation du public et des gouvernements sur la taille du phénomène. Puis, en combattant la pauvreté qui est la première cause du trafic d'en-



Raffaele K. Salinari, président de la fédération internationale Terre des Hommes

fant. Et puis, nous devons établir des protocoles internationaux pour combattre les organismes internationaux de crime liés au trafic.

**TV – Quels rôles peuvent jouer d'autres organisations du FSM pour protéger les enfants en danger ?**

RS – Les organisations de femmes sont les plus importantes ; les femmes se rendent toujours compte des raisons pour lesquelles leurs enfants peuvent être trafiqués et elles insistent sur la nécessité de donner aux en-

fants leurs droits fondamentaux comme l'éducation et la santé.

**TV – Avez-vous établi de nouvelles associations à cette session du FSM ? Pouvez-vous nous informer de certains de vos projets et/ou plans après Bamako ?**

RS – Nous avons de nombreux associés africains comme le réseau Aoudaghost qui est impliqué dans la prévention et la conscience publique. Ils travaillent également sur des protocoles internationaux pour combattre le trafic d'enfants.

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### Viva Bamako! Afrocentric Forum is a Success

“Another sport is possible, not one where people are bought and sold like commodities. We should have sports where people are treated with dignity and the joy of the game remains intact. It must not become just another business transaction,” said Goita.

While he could not give an exact figure for how many people attended the forum, he said from police reports and registration figures it was around 11,000. There were between 300 and 700 activities daily – more than the number originally envisaged.

All this took a lot of organising, helped in no small measure by a contribution of 150 million CFA by the Malian government – one of the poorest in the world – and its offer to open up some of its facilities such as conference halls, the national museum and libraries for the events.

However, there were still some things that fell through the cracks – accommodation and sanitation were in short supply and some times inadequate.

Participants had their own challenges. Chele Degruccio

from the Lutheran World Federation in Kenya said she found it difficult to participate in the sessions because either people did not turn up for the meetings or showed up late when she had to leave for other sessions.

Miodrag Shrestha from Serbia and Montenegro said he had better luck with the sessions but the translation was inadequate. Sessions were supposed to have been translated into French, English, Portuguese and the local language, Bambara.

But Margaret Da Costa from a human rights group in Angola was upbeat. Though her accommodation fell short of expectations (the lodge had no water) and though she could not follow most of the sessions because there was very little Portuguese translation, and got lost trying to find buildings, she said it was “fantastic” that a poor country like Mali could host a global event successfully.

“People are talking and networking, that is what is important – not our own little problems caused by attending a conference in a country with serious constraints.”



Sunday: WSF delegates registering in Caracas

# From Bamako to Caracas

## The Great Debate in a Land of Change

**Humberto Márquez**

Some 100,000 social activists from across the Americas and the world are expected to attend next week's World Social Forum in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas, where they will condemn war and imperialism, and lend their support – although not unconditionally – to the changes introduced in this country by President Hugo Chávez.

The sixth annual WSF is being held at three different sites this year, instead of one centralised forum as in the first five editions. In addition to the Americas forum in Caracas on Jan. 24-29, and the ongoing African forum in Bamako, the Asian meet will be held in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi in March.

In Venezuela the WSF “will find a process of transformation that has incorporated some of the policies of mass movements in this continent and in other regions. People come to the forum to speak and debate, but also to see and learn,” Carlos Torres, of the Canadian non-governmental organisation Alternatives, told IPS.

The Venezuelan government is carrying out agrarian reform, redistributing government land and large private estates. It has launched mass literacy and adult education programmes, and set up basic health centres across the country – many staffed by Cuban doctors. Outlets for subsidised food have also been put

in place nationwide.

Chávez speaks out strongly against the US government and President George W. Bush, and is critical of the US-led invasion of Iraq. He defends high crude oil prices and works to strengthen the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). And, under Chávez's policies, Venezuela supplies fuel to Caribbean and Latin American countries on preferential terms as a form of cooperation.

“Of course the forum is neither apolitical nor anti-political. It is political, it is a meeting of social organisations that have their own world view,” Edgardo Lander of the Latin American Social Sciences Council, co-organiser of the WSF, said.

When Venezuela was proposed last year as the next venue, there was some worry about the potential ‘Chávezation’ of the event, because of the host president's outsized personality, but particularly his activism, as he seeks reelection in December. His confrontational attitude towards Washington and his forging of Latin American alliances using Venezuelan oil were also listed as points of concern.

The WSF Hemispheric Council met with Chávez a year ago, Lander said, “and we explained the nature of the forum to him, as self-managing and non-paternalist, which is not Bolivarian (as the president defines himself after the South American hero) or Chavist, and he acquiesced”.

Chávez will participate outside of the

official WSF programme, attending a rally on the night of Jan. 25, to which Brazil's Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST) and the international peasant movement Via Campesina are also invited. On the last day of the forum there will also be a meeting between Chávez and leaders of the World Assembly of Social Organisations, an initiative of the WSF as an alternative to the annual World Economic Forum, a meeting of the business and economic elite at Davos.

The Forum itself will deal with six themes: Power, politics and the fight for social emancipation; Imperial strategies and peoples' resistance; Resources and rights for life: alternatives to the predatory model of civilisation; Diversity, identities and worldviews in motion; Work, exploitation and reproduction of life; and, Communication, culture and education: alternative and democratising dynamics.

In addition to Chávez, another president expected to make a showing at the Caracas WSF is Brazil's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Brazil was the birthplace of the WSF, with Porto Alegre hosting the event four of the five first years.

Nearly 2,000 activities registered for the Americas WSF will take place in about 250 meeting rooms, tents and open spaces in the ‘forum territory,’ which is actually made up of four public spaces in Caracas. The central area of the city is home to three million people.

## What they said ...

### Ce qu'ils ont dit ...

“What we have continued to see is a new form of colonisation, in which developing countries have continued to suffer dictatorship from developed countries.”  
– **Samir Amin, Third World Forum director**

“Il s'agit réellement de lutter contre la barbarie économique militarisée des Etats-Unis et de leurs alliés, une barbarie menaçant physiquement l'humanité”. – **Remy Herrera, Forum mondial des alternatives, Paris, France**

“Before, it was politicians putting us to sleep with their words – now it's those who question globalisation who are doing so.” – **Bamako teacher Aliou Traoré**

“Un autre monde n'est pas possible sans une formation citoyenne des enfants”. – **Cheick Oumar Coulibaly, Institut malien pour l'éducation populaire (IEP)**

“It's going much better than I expected. Mali is one of the poorest countries on earth, and a lot of us didn't expect them to put up even the little resources that they have.” – **Louis Marselle, a delegate from Canada**

“Le G8 n'est pas sérieux. Les institutions financières internationales mentent et ne respectent pas leurs engagements vis-à-vis des pays pauvres”.  
– **Barry Aminata, présidente de la Coalition des alternatives dette et développement – CAD – Mali**

“Bamako is the first step in the process to root the World Social Forum in Africa and mobilise more people on this continent, which has been the hardest hit by globalisation.” – **Dr Aminata Dramane Traoré, Malian author and social activist**

“La mondialisation, avec l'hégémonie des Etats-Unis, n'est autre qu'un apartheid mondial”. – **Samir Amin, président du Forum mondial des alternatives**

“Given that one of the driving motivations of the World Social Forum was to serve as a counterpoint to the World Economic Forum, it becomes critically important that in the battle of ideas, vision, and perspectives on what world we want to create for future generations, the WSF serves as an enabling space which can present alternatives that reach the hearts and minds of people who are not yet actively involved in the commendable efforts to ensure global justice.”  
– **Kumi Naidoo, Secretary-General of Civicus: World Alliance For Citizen Participation**

“Le Forum social mondial marque l'une des dates les plus importantes de l'histoire des pays du sud. Il rappelle le combat que les peuples ont mené pour se sortir du joug de la colonisation et de l'esclavage”. – **Taoufik Ben Abdallah, secrétaire du Forum social africain**

“Meetings such as this year's World Social Forum in Bamako provide an important and sanctified venue for the exchange of ideas, where all people passionate about all causes have the opportunity to share their thoughts, hone their strategies and renew their efforts to show that another world is possible.” – **Oxfam**

“Nous sommes venus défendre notre coton et lutter contre les subventions payées aux cotonculteurs en Occident, notamment aux Etats-Unis. Le coton est toute notre vie et nous allons le défendre, même s'il faut y perdre la vie. Nous sommes venus démontrer aux grands du monde, notamment aux Américains, que leur politique est injuste et que leurs décisions mettent en péril la vie de millions de personnes”. – **Aly Coulibaly, Paysan producteur de coton**

“We let it all hang out and enjoy ourselves before we begin the serious business,” – **Patrick Sianne, Cameroonian youth**

“I came to Bamako with several hopes. One of them, to meet women from all over Africa and gather and exchange views on the hardships we encounter, is being met,” – **Ivette Ngwevilo Rekangaly, president of the Gabonese Movement for Family Well-Being**



# Voices for another world

## *Des voix pour un autre monde*

### **Raffaella Bolini, human rights activist, Italy**

"Another world for me would be a vibrant civil society that stands up to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and holds governments to account."

### **Yvette Amougou, programme manager, Caritas, Cameroun**

"Il faut lutter contre les injustices qui entravent le développement des pays pauvres. Le problème de l'Afrique ne se situe pas au niveau des populations, mais au niveau des dirigeants."

### **Michelle B Capron, French Peace Movement, France**

"A world without armaments; a world where peace reigns in every society."

### **Katihaba Pie, Caritas, Cameroun**

"Dans l'ordre actuel des choses,

il faut mettre en cause les pays développés qui nous ont exploités pendant longtemps et qui ont mis en place des mécanismes de domination. Le Développement de l'Afrique passe par une décolonisation mentale."

### **Solange Coulibaly, Mali Business-women's Forum, Mali**

"Where every woman is offered micro-credit when she needs it – so every woman has an income generating project and has an independent means of income."

### **Claude Queman, CADTM, France**

"Il faut que dans la répartition des richesses, on vise la satisfaction des besoins de toutes les populations."

### **Bruna Brambilla, Forum Mondiale Delle Alternative /Contratto Per L'Aqua, Italy**

"Another world would be where

water is a truly public facility; where no-one has to pay huge amounts for it. It will be accessible to all – in the amounts they want."

### **Alex Wilks, coordonateur de European Network on Debt and Development**

"L'autre monde, c'est un monde de solidarité. Il faut changer les politiques de financement international."

### **Njoki Njehu, Africa Jubilee South, Kenya**

"Another world is where there is no more poverty, and there is justice for all."

### **Solenze Koné, Forum national dette et pauvreté, Côte d'Ivoire**

"L'autre monde, c'est un monde de justice où tous les citoyens ont de quoi vivre et s'expriment librement. C'est un monde où il n'y

a pas de hiérarchisation entre les pauvres et les riches."

### **Seydou Ndiaye, education consultant, Senegal**

"A world with justice, solidarity, democracy, accountability and freedom. This world is possible because civil society organisations are involved in activities to promote these values."

### **Fofana Mohamed Ibrahim, Centre d'études et de recherches pour l'intégration et le développement de l'Afrique, Guinée**

"L'autre monde, c'est le monde des oubliés et des opprimés. Les pays riches nous ont trompés durant des siècles. Il faut maintenant une équité entre les nations."

### **Jean Christophe Vinieu, international agency worker, France**

"A world with fair regulations

that will rule world markets, a world with proper working conditions and a world without liberalisation."

### **Ruiz Marta, Centre national de coopération au développement (CNCOD)**

"Il faut que nous nous retournons tous contre la manière dont le monde fonctionne aujourd'hui, contre les inégalités créées par les institutions internationales."

### **Tamara Herman, World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, Canada**

"Another world consists of a life without poverty and institutionalised racism. It's a world with equality and justice. I think it is possible to achieve this world but I do not think it can be achieved through forums like this. Here we have ideas and can learn from other people's experiences, but do not have the power to implement. While the WSF is important in building large global social movements, the capitalist governments are the ones with the power to change things. They have the power that has seen them marginalise people, drive people to poverty. If we have to root out poverty, then it has to be through distributing power from these capitalist elites. I do not know how this can be done."

### **Jeanne Zoundjiekpon, Coalition pour la protection du patrimoine génétique africain, Bénin**

"Mon souhait est que le forum de Bamako soit celui de la rupture et qu'il ait des actions et alternatives concrètes et non de grands discours."

### **Kone Assetou, economist, Burkina Faso**

"Another world is a world where African women can afford proper health care; where there is no violence against women; where our children can go to school and have proper shelter. Ultimately, it is a world in which everybody can afford the desires of their heart. This world is possible if all African governments and people engage in these efforts and believe in them."

### **Fatna Afid, membre de la Confédération démocratique du travail, Maroc**

"La mondialisation n'est pas un destin. Pour nous syndicalistes, ce sont des ouvriers qui travaillent, qui bâtissent l'économie. Alors, il faut des dispositions pour protéger la classe ouvrière."

# African marginalised communities make their case

By Joyce Mulama

Although the Bamako WSF has been dominated by global issues of fair trade and debt relief, marginalised communities from across Africa are also finding their space at the event.

From the west and to the east, members of these groups are at the forum to articulate their grievances and concerns at how they have been mistreated in their own countries.

One such case is that of the Ogoni people of Nigeria. Occupying the oil-rich Niger delta, the Ogonis decry the underdevelopment of their homeland. Nigeria is the world's 6th largest oil producer, producing just over two million barrels per day.

Oil is said to account for an estimated 90% of the country's foreign exchange and about 80% of the government's revenues. But the Ogonis – reportedly numbering less than a million out of a total population of nearly 130 million – say they have nothing to show for it.

"We have no running water, we drink from the rivers which are full of petroleum, and we get sick because of drinking contaminated water. We have no electricity and cannot even afford kerosene to light our homes because the price is too high for the Ogoni, who are farmers and fishermen," Bridget Yorgure of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni people



Bridget Yorgure makes the Ogoni case

(MOSOP) told Terraviva.

According to her, a 50 ml bottle of kerosene costs about 50 naira (38 cents).

"We can't on the one hand produce energy for 40 percent of the world and yet not know what electricity is; this is unfair," she said angrily.

Concerns surrounding environmental degradation have also emerged. Figures from MOSOP indicate that five percent of pregnant women in the area give birth to malformed babies due to the environmental degradation. Apart from oil spillage, the digging of channels has also contaminated fresh water, killing fish.

It is not only fish that have died – the Ogonis too are killed when petroleum tankers explode. MOSOP says 800 people died in such a blast two years ago, the third such accident that year.

However, attempts by the Ogonis to lodge complaints with both the multinational companies involved in oil production, as well as the Nigerian government, have led to serious consequences.

"In 1993, 3,000 Ogonis who had been employed by multinational companies were fired when they participated in a peaceful protest urging the firms to respect Ogoniland, compensate Ogonis for all the damage caused and pay royalty for using the land," remarked

Yorgure.

Companies exploiting oil in the region include Shell (UK and Dutch), Agip (Italian), Chevron (American) and Elf (France).

MOSOP is now using the Bamako WSF as a platform to call upon the international community to intervene in the matter in order to get oil firms to respect human rights.

But Ogonis are not the only marginalised community at the WSF.

The Yaaku community in Kenya is similarly marginalised. "We are not recognised at home. There are no records to show that we exist. We fear we will be phased out soon," Jennifer Koinante, coordinator of the Yaaku Peoples Association said.

Yaaku's population is less than 4,000 in a country of over 30 million people. They have been living in the Mukogodo forest in Laikipia, in the Rift Valley province, but have been threatened with eviction by their Maasai neighbours, who number over 400,000.

The fact that the forest which they are occupying has been gazetted as government land also instils fear among the Yaaku. "If the government decides to get us out of here, we would not know where else to go to because this forest is the only home we have come to know. We have lived here all our life."

Par Joyce Mulama

Bien que le Forum Social Mondial (FSM) de Bamako ait été dominé par les sujets de commerce équitable et d'allègement de la dette, les communautés marginalisées à travers l'Afrique trouvent également leur espace à l'événement.

D'Ouest en Est, les membres de ces groupes sont présents au forum pour faire connaître leurs réclamations et leurs soucis dans la façon dont ils ont été maltraités dans leurs propres pays.

C'est le cas du peuple Ogoni du Nigeria. Occupant le delta riche en pétrole du Niger, les Ogonis décrient le sous-développement de leur patrie. Avec plus de deux millions de barils par jour, le Nigeria se place au 6<sup>e</sup> rang parmi les pays producteurs de pétrole du monde.

Le pétrole représente environ 90% des revenus du Nigeria en devises étrangères et environ 80% des revenus du gouvernement. Mais les Ogonis - recensés à moins de un million sur une population totale de presque 130 millions - disent qu'ils n'en voient pas les bénéfices.

"Nous n'avons pas d'eau courante, nous buvons à même des

## Les communautés africaines marginalisées présentent leur cas

fleuves qui sont remplis de pétrole, et nous tombons malades en raison de l'eau contaminée. Nous n'avons pas d'électricité et ne pouvons même pas nous permettre le kérosène pour éclairer nos maisons parce que les prix sont trop élevés pour nous, fermiers et pêcheurs, raconte à Terra Viva, Bridget Yorgure du Mouvement pour la survie du peuple Ogoni (MSPO).

Selon elle, une bouteille de 50 ml de pétrole lampant coûte environ 50 Naira (38 cents US).

"Nous ne pouvons pas produire de l'énergie pour 40% du monde et ne pas savoir ce qu'est l'électricité; c'est injuste", dit-elle en colère.

La dégradation de l'environnement est aussi génératrice de soucis. Les chiffres avancés par MSPO indiquent qu'à cause de la pollution, cinq pour cent de femmes enceintes donnent naissance à des bébés handicapés physiquement. Indépendamment des versements de pétrole, le creusement de canaux a également souillé l'eau

douce, tuant les poissons.

Ce n'est pas seulement les poissons qui meurent - les Ogonis aussi sont tués quand les vaisseaux pétroliers explosent. MSOP indique que 800 personnes ont perdu la vie dans une telle explosion il y a deux ans, la troisième à survenir cette même année.

De plus, les tentatives par les Ogonis de déposer des plaintes auprès du gouvernement nigérian et des deux compagnies multinationales impliquées dans la production de pétrole ont généré de graves conséquences.

"En 1993, 3.000 Ogonis employés par les compagnies multinationales ont été mis à pied pour avoir participé à une protestation pacifique invitant les multinationales pétrolières à respecter les terres des Ogonis, leur donner compensation pour dommages causés et à payer une redevance pour l'usage de la terre," fait remarquer Yorgure.

Les compagnies exploitant le pétrole dans la région incluent la Shell (le Royaume-Uni et les Pays-Bas), l'Agip (Italie), Chevron (Etats-Unis) et Elf (France).

MSOP utilise maintenant le FSM

de Bamako comme plate-forme pour inviter la communauté internationale à intervenir afin d'obtenir de ces multinationales le respect des droits de l'homme.

Mais la communauté des Ogonis n'est pas la seule communauté marginalisée présente au FSM.

La communauté Yaaku du Kenya est pareillement marginalisée. "Nous ne sommes pas reconnus chez nous. Il n'y a aucun document prouvant notre existence. Nous craignons d'être éradiqués bientôt" mentionne Jennifer Koinante, coordinatrice de l'Association des Peuples Yaaku.

Ils sont moins de 4.000 dans un pays de plus de 30 millions qui vivent dans la forêt de Mukogodo dans le Laikipia, province de la vallée du Rift; ils ont été menacés d'expulsion par leurs voisins Maasai, qui sont eux plus de 400.000.

Le fait que la forêt qu'ils occupent ait été reconnue comme appartenant au gouvernement inculque également la crainte parmi les Yaaku. "Si le gouvernement décide de nous expulser, nous ne saurions pas où aller parce que cette forêt est la seule maison que nous avons. Nous avons vécu ici toute notre vie."