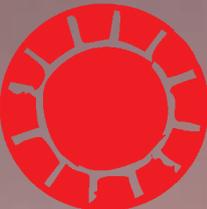


THE
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N. 10 N.E. – MARCH APRIL 2009

THE MAGAZINE OF AFRICA - CARIBBEAN - PACIFIC & EUROPEAN UNION COOPERATION AND RELATIONS

REPORT

Angola rush

DOSSIER

**Making peace with
water and land**

DISCOVERING EUROPE

A Czech Bohemia

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Advancing desert near Tombwa, Namibe province.
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Sophiatown 1955

Jürgen Schadeberg

Africa. Too much fascination.



Africa seems to have been better known in the distant past. Herodotus, a true reporter and researcher, approached it with the impartiality required of the journalist or the scientist. In the 5th century BC he even referred to pygmies. Yet it is one of his contemporaries, Socrates, who, while only having visited Egypt, would remain the most famous for the transfer of knowledge from Africa to Europe by way of Greece. That thanks to the *Apology, Crito and Phaedo of Socrates* by his disciple Plato.

Herodotus defended and illustrated the notion, among others, that the Greek gods came from Egypt and the territory of the Ethiopians, that covered the whole of East Africa that he had explored. He then tried to highlight an unfounded arrogance on the part of the Greeks, one transmitted to Europe, in regard to other civilisations. He explains this in his sole work, 'Herodotus: The Histories'. *"Herodotus of Halicarnassus here displays his enquiry, so that human achievements may not become forgotten in time, and great and marvellous deeds – some displayed by Greeks, some by barbarians (Asia, editor's note) – may not be without their glory; and especially to show why the two peoples fought with each other"*... In each conflict he sought to trace the thread back to *"who was first to commit an injustice"* and to its initial causes.

It was another reporter, the Pole Ryszard Kapuściński*, who was responsible for the rediscovery of Herodotus's vision; although it was not until after the fall of the Berlin Wall that his strongest works (including those inspired by the African continent, such as *Negus* or *Ebony*) were published. Kapuściński believes that Africa "helped the New World to overtake the Old World by providing it with its labour... and by building its wealth and its power. Then after being

emptied... over entire generations, the depopulated continent bled dry and became easy prey for European colonialists." He notes, as if to stress a latent threat, the fascination of men for Africa's aura of mystery that "supposedly concealed... a reddening point lost in its shadows..." A politician or expert when questioned as to his actions in regard to Africa can start by replying uncritically: "I like Africa..." when such a comment would seem superfluous were the subject to be Israel or the United States.

It is interesting, this dual regard on the part of Herodotus and Kapuściński. Many people today consider that the new EU Member States of Eastern Europe feel less involved in Africa because they do not know it! *The Courier's* reports from Transylvania, Slovenia or Prague as published in this issue show, on the contrary, a deep and intelligent insight into the African continent.

Now for another direction. African cinema as highlighted by the recent Fespaco festival, is increasingly looking at the world without trying to borrow another's vision, or being just folkloric. Elsewhere, the progress achieved by Angola and its cooperation policy is less affected by the past. Finally, as our Dossier shows, the fact that Africa has escaped the spectre of the landless farmer thanks – even in part – to its own traditional principles of land ownership in the post-colonial period. The fascination these issues generate in one direction or another are sometimes too much.

* Ryszard Kapuściński "Travels with Herodotus", Random House, New York, 2007.

Hegel Goutier
Editor-in-chief

Marie-Martine Buckens

Asha Hagi, a **WOMAN** to transcend clan divisions

Meeting with the laureate of the 2008 Alternative Nobel Prize, awarded for a woman's struggle in a country dominated by 'warlords'.

It is six in the evening on 9 December 2008 at the Place du Luxembourg in Brussels. In a restaurant opposite the glass facades of the European Parliament building, Asha Hagi is struggling to finish her salad. The day before she was in Stockholm to receive the 'Right Livelihood Award', better known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize', from Swedish Members of Parliament. It was awarded in recognition of "her actions that enabled women to participate in the peace and reconstruction process in her country". Actions that, despite the fatigue and the emotion, she will be presenting to MEPs in just an hour's time.

Asha Hagi's country is Somalia. A country plunged into chaos, abandoned by the international community and forsaken by the NGOs. Since 2000 it has been a country struggling to find an end to the civil war. Asha Hagi's com-

bat to restore peace and democracy to her country date back to 1992, the year when she founded the 'Save Somali Women and Children' (SSWC) fund. "It was the first Somali organisation to transcend the barriers of the clans", she tells us. "In doing so we were very much ahead of the times, because like most of the population women are brought up to be loyal to the clan and the first years were very tough and dangerous." Still president of the SSWC today, she adds that: "One of the first things we had to do, if we wanted women to be ambassadors for peace, was to dissuade them from supporting the war! That is a reality. Women have played a major part in the war by taking care of all the logistics. But they were not aware that they were its first victims. They lost their husbands, their brothers and their children. Women were killed, raped and tortured."

> The Sixth Clan

After over a decade of civil war, hope was reborn. In 2000 a conference for peace and reconciliation in Somalia was held in Djibouti. "I had been invited to participate in the symposium that prepared this conference. One of just three women to be invited to do so, three women among 60 men." A symposium that decided that the conference for peace would be convened on the basis of clan organisation. "That meant the *de facto* exclusion of women." Asha Hagi resisted, finally obtaining from the Djibouti president 100 places for her delegation. "As participation in the conference was based on the clan organisation (there are five principal clans in Somalia: Editor) we therefore decided to create our own clan so as to be on an equal footing

with the others.” The Sixth Clan was born. In 2004, the Mbagathi Conference on National Reconciliation (Kenya) initiated a new round of negotiations that culminated in the signing of a peace agreement. “Eight people signed it. I was one of them.” The Mbagathi conference also permitted progress such as the introduction of quotas for women and the creation of a minister for women’s issues and family matters. But towards the end of 2006 things took a turn for the worse.

> Don't give up

Asha Hagi was a member of the Transitional Federal Parliament at the time. But she was excluded by the warlords who had invaded Mogadishu, the Somali capital, with the support of Ethiopian troops. Feeling threatened, she fled the country. “I have lived in Nairobi since the end of 2006. I am a mother, a woman, with a family I must protect.” An economist with a master’s degree, Asha Hagi is also the mother of three children, aged 15, 11 and 8. “They were all with me in Stockholm yesterday. That was important. For them to be proud and to see that everything their mother has done over these past years, days and hours was worth it.”

Asha Hagi makes no secret of her weariness, her fear even. “In 2002 a Somali activist was assassinated in Nairobi. In 2005, another peace activist was killed in Mogadishu. My son said to me: these people were doing the same thing as you. Who will be the third? I replied: only God knows that.” She continues: “One night I called my husband and children, telling them that it was too much, that I was giving up the struggle. My daughter came out of the bedroom and brought all the different prizes I had received, saying to me: you see these prizes, they were not given to you for nothing. They symbolise important things that you have done. My advice is not to give up.”

It is now nearly seven o’clock. They are waiting for her at the European Parliament. What will she say to the MEPs and other European officials she must meet tomorrow? “That the EU should continue and reinforce its support for the Djibouti negotiations for peace and reconciliation in Somali as that is our only hope for the moment. I also appeal for the implementation of a genuine partnership with Somali civil society. Our achievements are fragile.” ■

Keywords

Asha Hagi; Right Livelihood Award; Alternative Nobel Prize; Somalia; Sixth Clan; SSWC.



© The Right Livelihood

ENCOURAGING LOCAL AND CONCRETE INITIATIVES

In 1980, Jakob von Uexküll, a journalist and professional philatelist, contacted officials at the prestigious Nobel Prize Foundation. His idea was to widen the prize to include two new categories, one for ecology, the other related to living conditions among poor populations. He offered to contribute financially. He felt that the Nobel Prize categories (physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and peace) were too narrow in scope and too concentrated on the interests of the industrialised countries to be able to respond to the challenges now facing humanity. Jakob von Uexküll met with a refusal on the part of the Nobel Foundation. That same year he decided to launch his independent prize, known as the Right Livelihood Award. Every year since then he has rewarded persons or associations that “offer practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today”. A new jury is appointed each year and is made up of prominent personalities from the world of the associations, politics, science and private enterprise. Since 1985 the award has been presented at the Swedish Parliament the day before the awarding of the Nobel Prizes. The prize money of €250,000 is shared between the laureates, of which there are usually four. This year the award went to four women.

JUGGLING DIVERSITY

and democracy, a difficult balancing act

Ethnic, religious and cultural minorities are a fact of life shared by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) and European Union (EU) countries. They sometimes lead to conflict and some observers claim they are an obstacle to the democratic process. This claim is denied by MPs in the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, who have now adopted a resolution calling for the rights of minorities to take centre stage in all development programmes.

CHALLENGES

The report pinpoints five challenges that have to be met to allow the democratic accommodation of diversity:

Exclusion and inequality: An estimated 900 million people belong to groups that are subject to some kind of living mode or participation exclusion.

Migration: With climate change, rising food prices and restrictive immigration policies in industrialised countries, migration between developing countries is likely to rise further.

Nation-building: European history shows that nation-states need a lot of time and often targeted policies to ensure the development of a collective identity and sense of solidarity, say MPs. This is particularly true of countries whose borders were artificially created by colonialism. Hence the importance of regional or even continental integration.

Natural resources. The report stresses the risk of a clash between two opposing concepts of access to the land: that granted to indigenous people and that of the state accommodating these people.

Cultural freedom. The report stresses the challenge of promoting cultural freedom focused on individual choices rather than the preservation of traditional standards (such as denial of economic and political rights for woman and female gender mutilation).

One true lesson to be drawn from the gruelling experience of recent decades in terms of governance is that a national standardisation-led construction process is clearly doomed to failure. These thoughts by Crawford Young, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, are echoed in a report drawn up by the South African MP Ruth Magau and the Polish parliamentarian Filip Kaczmarek. Adopted by the Committee on Political Affairs, on 12 February 2009 in Brussels, the report was unveiled to the Joint Assembly during its 9 April session in Prague. Diversity itself is not a prob-

lem for democracy, stresses the report, adding that “conflict may arise when political leaders instrumentalise diversity and make minorities political scapegoats. The challenge remains to find options which enhance and facilitate peaceful interaction between state and society”. Some of the options outlined in the resolution that was adopted include granting priority to projects targeting exclusion. The resolution also stresses the part regional organisations can play

in promoting the principles of non-discrimination. On the education front, the MPs are quite explicit, talking about the need to guarantee multicultural education within a harmonised system, rather than allowing separate community-based institutions.

M.M.B. ■

An internally displaced man at the Tigoni police station fastens his goods on a bus as he readies to leave for his homeland, Kenya, following the post-elections conflict, February 2008.
© Allan Gichigi/IRIN



Hegel Goutier

HOME THOUGHTS from a Zimbabwean at FESPACO

Charity Maruta is a Zimbabwean film maker who set up International Video Fair to distribute films about African citizens within the continent. We interviewed her at the beginning of March as a first-timer at the Pan-African Cinema and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO), where she was invited by the Belgian cultural and art organisation, 'Africalia'. She spoke about problems of raising capital to make films in Africa and views of her own country.

What do you do in Zimbabwe?

I originally worked in film making but 12 years ago I decided to set up International Video Fair Trust (IVFT) to get films about people on low incomes to the people. In Africa, you have to do everything: you are founder of the organisation, creator, producer, director and driver.

Are you an NGO or a private business?

It's a trust funded by international governments. Our main donors are Swedish cooperation who – supported us to the tune of US\$1M over three years – enabling films about HIV to be taken to southern African countries. The Norwegian Embassy has been incredible; Canadian aid too. 'Africalia' too have cooperated for the distribution and promotion of African cinema. The UK and Americans have also given us money. There is a board of trustees now of five members, each with a specific skill: a development consultant; journalist; good governance advisor; lawyer and myself. The main problem is the promotion and distribution of films: we make them but who sees them? The distribution network is now set up and I can go back to making films.

About what?

I have a background in making documentaries. I would eventually like to do feature films. I have a proposal but the money is hard to find. I did raise €150,000 from the EC from the ACP film fund for a feature film, but was unable to accept it because I couldn't to raise the remaining money. The film script, 'Echoing Silences' is about the liberation struggle (in Africa). It focuses on the trauma when a country goes to war. It is never a good idea to go to war but of course, when we do go to war, we try to justify killing other people. It's about trauma that has not been dealt with in a conscious way. Are people suffering more now because they live in cities whereas before they managed to find support from the community? It's about a young man who in the late 1970s [a major time for African liberation movements] is at University in Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe). He's 23 and goes home to find a Rhodesian family moving his family out of the place they've lived for years. He decides to go and join the struggle in Mozambique. The other freedom fighters are from a peasant background and he is dou-



Women and children at the St. Albert's hospital (200 km north of Harare, Zimbabwe), where they are undergoing pharmacological therapy thanks to the support of the Italian NGO Cesvi (www.cesvi.org). © Cesvi

ZIMBABWE RED CROSS ST. ALBERTS HOSPITAL KIOSK



Main entrance to St. Albert's hospital where Cesvi launched its 'Fermiamo l'Aids sul nascere' programme in 2001 – a programme to prevent the transmission of HIV/Aids from pregnant women to unborn children. © Cesvi

bly tortured because he is also educated, has books, and wants to teach others to read and write. But the military camp commander is threatened by him because he himself does not have an education. So the two become natural enemies. I think whether at war, or not, African peoples are traumatised because they live in extreme conditions. There's no water or housing or good education. You find people who are not aware of their place in the world of the job. I need to find an international producer who loves the story to raise funds (\$US1.5M) The script is there in French and English but I've put it on the backburner until the funds can be raised.

Presently, how dynamic is Zimbabwe's civil society?

It is very dynamic. I think we've become stronger and stronger. Every kind of civil society organisation is looking at every situation in the country and documenting it including 'Doctors for Human Rights', for example. Our liberation struggle is the most documented liberation struggle ever. But the network is not just in Zimbabwe. Outside, people are looking at the issues from an international legal standpoint.

The international press highlights the gulf between opposition and government supporters.

Because of what we've been through, we're not romantic about it anymore. We look at the situation with eyes wide open. My own opinion is that we are one people. In my eyes, Robert Mugabe is the father of Morgan Tsvangirai. It's a father/son issue and we need that exchange. In African culture, you do not oppose your elders: it's all about respect. They tell you what to do and you do it. With my mother, it's the same. I've had to challenge her a bit, but in a constructive way: you're my mother but there's a boundary you can't jump over. In Zimbabwe, I think it's all about the new generation challenging the older generation. We must listen a bit to the old generation and not just give an opinion. We are saying, yes, we have something to bring to the table although we are young. Things are bad at home but there is great infrastructure and because we're hardworking, we've found jobs in the region (neighbouring Zimbabwe). We run the hospitality industry in South Africa and corporations prefer us because we are highly skilled and professional. The women cross-border traders have kept the Zimbabwean economy going for the past ten

years. They may work in the streets but at home may have a beautiful three-bedroomed house on half an acre of land because of our hard work ethic.

What's your view of the Western media's image of Zimbabwe?

There's a certain amount of truth but because of the way in which way the international press compiles news hour upon hour, you never get the full context of a story – just snippets. Take the situation of cholera in Zimbabwe, for example. Yes, we do have cholera: we haven't had a government for over a year and our infrastructure is suffering. But on an international news channel, recently, there was a shot of a baby asleep on the grass but it wasn't a sick baby – the mother was working in a nearby field but because the piece as about cholera, they next moved to a shot of raw sewage. They were unrelated images. We used to have a very high standard of living with the potential of becoming the 'Switzerland of Africa'. Previously, for many, Robert Mugabe was a hero. The time has come for somebody else to take over now because he's not the only brilliant Zimbabwean. ■

For info: www.videofair.org.zw

RESHUFFLE at the European Parliament

In June, 492 million voters from the 27 Member States of the European Union will go to the ballot box to elect their representatives in the European Parliament. An opportunity to renew the parliamentary committee lists. This will apply in particular to the committee responsible for development issues from which the combative Glenys Kinnock, also co-President of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly since 2002, will step down due to retirement.

Renowned for her forthrightness and highly respected by the representatives from the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, Glenys Kinnock is not the only politician in the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) to leave the European scene owing to age. Luisa Morgantini from Italy, Jurgen Schroeder from Germany, John Bowis from the UK and Olle Schmidt

from Denmark are all set to depart. One thing is certain, we will have to wait until September, when the new European Parliament forms its committees and names the 79 European members of the JPA, to find out the make-up of the various delegations. The 79 ACP members of the Joint Assembly change depending on their national electoral calendar and therefore do not have the European Parliament's guarantee

of remaining in office for five years. ACP parliamentarians who are members of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly Bureau and the three permanent committees (political, economic and social and environmental affairs) are the exception. They change every two years. The next rotation will take place in November 2009 at the 18th session of the JPA which will be held in Angola. **M.M.B.** ■

Musambayi Katumanga*

The collapse of the civic realm in KENYA

A boy plays with mud pistols in Mathare slum, Nairobi. Mathare Valley is one of the five large slums in Nairobi, Kenya and one of the most dangerous slums.
© Manoocher Deggath/IRIN

At the end December 2007, the Kenyan presidential election is marked by bloody confrontations during which 1,500 persons will be killed and 300,000 will be displaced. Brandishing the spectre of the Rwandese genocide, some media did not hesitate to speak of ethnic hatred, while others concentrated on the political and economic causes of the crisis. Let us come back to the underlying reasons that shook up the African country and traumatised an international community long satisfied with Kenya's political stability.

Kenya has been engulfed in chaos that has seen societies collapse with violence and the internal state security institutions stretched to their limits since the declaration of the “winner” of the elections held on the 27 December 2007. To understand the decapitation of the state that engendered this drama, we need to recapitulate on what Leonard Binder describes as the nation state crisis that many African states, Kenya included, have failed to respond to and instead animated since independence. Five forms of these can be discerned; the first is the crisis of institutions. In Kenya’s case, it is manifested by limited levels of penetrative social and economic infrastructure within the state. The implication of this is seen in the inability of the state to liberate dead capital while engendering the sustainability of what scholars like Thandika Mkandawire call the “termite economies”. The net effect is that many communities are frozen in their ethnic spaces. The

crisis of institutions is also manifested in the diminished capacity of the state to dominate instruments of violence to effect the respect of law and order. Notably, large swathes of the Kenyan state have been left to fall under the control of organised vigilante groups.

Second is the crisis of resource distribution and allocation among various social groups. One of the most critical resources in a predominantly agrarian society like Kenya is land. This has remained at the core of conflicts in Kenya. The land crisis is rooted in the violent land alienation that created the landlessness that prevails to date. Third is the crisis of participation manifested by the state’s inability to put into place necessary democratic capital to facilitate enjoyment of socio-economic and political rights critical to citizen’s participation. In Kenya, this situation has been acute with political elite’s inability to evolve consensus and high levels of de-institutionalisation tendencies. Notably, by December 2007,

there were a total of more than 250 “formations” calling themselves political parties. Fourth is the crisis of identity. This is manifested by the inability of the state to evolve a strong sense of nationhood given the felt sense of marginalization. This factor has continued to animate a certain form of political schizophrenia. While the state elite have consistently sought to mount the support for nationhood, at a practical level, they have not hesitated to use their positions of power to distribute largesse on the basis of ethnic considerations. This has been facilitated by the use of structures such as national identity cards that emphasize ethnicity and district of origin. In the end, they have reinforced a situation where both state and ethnic identity contest access and control of the citizen’s loyalty. Fifth is the inability of the state to evolve alternative forms of conflict management and resolution. ■

* Political scientist at the University of Nairobi.

Joshua Massarenti

KENYA

“The GRAND COALITION has failed”

To end the violence that bathed Kenya in blood during the presidential election of 27 December 2007, outgoing and contested winner Mwai Kibaki and his opponent Raila Odinga signed, on 28 February 2009, a power-sharing agreement granting the right to the leader of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) to become Prime Minister. This is the birth certificate of the Grand Coalition. One year on, Kenyan political analyst Musambayi Katumanga paints a rather dark picture.

One year after the political violence, what is your opinion on the Grand Coalition?

The Grand Coalition has failed the test of leadership. Attempts at state building have apparently halted due to leadership paralysis characterised by the lax political will, courage before responsibility and instrumental competence. It has failed to navigate through the core tasks of the Kofi Annan mediated post election agendas; a new constitutional dispensation, the agrarian question, facilitating national reconciliation, dealing with impunity and corruption.

What are the main challenges for Raila Odinga and Mwai Kibaki for the future?

The main challenges for Kibaki and Odinga revolve around the need to resolve the current crisis of the State. They must restructure the State to stem its collapse under “bandit activities” of politicians and non-state actors; undertaking a security sector reform to end impunity; evolve institutional, policy and programmatic responses to marginalisation, poverty and land conflicts. Both leaders have also to institute a new political dispensation to respond to a felt sense of exclusion, ‘patrimonialism’ through a new constitution. This must emphasize checks and balances and separation of powers, Bicameralism, and devolution of powers.

Is Kenyan democracy still under duress of ethnic clashes?

Kenyan ‘democracy’ is under the duress of the ruling elite’s subjective interest. They continue to loot the state for capital critical for instrumentalisation of ethnicity and violence in a bid to conserve their power. This in turn implies, the ethnicisation of state institutions, regime consolidation and exclusion, privatization of public violence and appropriation of private violence. ■



Dossier

Nile River Basin. © Jacques Descloitres, MODIS Land Rapid Response Team-NASA GSFC

ACP

Land ownership. Tolerable situation.

Water ownership. CATASTROPHIC.

Dossier by Hegel Goutier

The evolution of land ownership in ACP countries is not as critical as we imagine, despite some demands over land usage and ownership. For instance, Africa generally manages to avoid the ghost of the landless peasant, except for a few exceptions – migrants or displaced people in Sudan or Southern African countries that suffered the traumas of apartheid. In this report, we illustrate that the tenure of land in Sub-Saharan Africa is based on a concept of recognising tenure based on a true

work ethic. Today, on the African continent, the share of land belonging to man is the sole fruit of his hard labour. Elsewhere, the Pacific Region is beginning to heal the difficulties brought about by the appropriation of land – long considered sacred by indigenous people – under colonisation.

But, in the Caribbean, issues are entirely different. Sons and daughters of African slaves only began to own land post-independence. However, in the region, the situation is more likely to evolve in a positive way with access

to land ownership by an ever greater share of the population.

On the other hand, on the issue of the appropriation and ownership of water – something that is even more fundamental for life – optimism has no real place. Paradoxically, water is not really in short supply in Africa. Rather, it is severe poverty, legal injunctions from the outside and a lack of regional dialogue that prevents the population from getting their rightful share.

H.G. ■

WATER IN AFRICA.

Squandering a vital resource

Interview with Riccardo Petrella

His 'Water Manifesto' was the basis for the foundation of the International Committee for a World Water Contract, in 1997. He is also the brains behind the University of the Common Good, with its 'Faculty of Water' in Italy and 'Faculty of Alterity' in Belgium. Professor Emeritus at the University of Louvain, Belgium, Doctor Honoris Causa at several universities, former Director of the European Coordination Centre for Research and the Social Sciences (Vienna, Austria), and former President of the Puglia Aqueduct (Italy), Professor Petrella is founder of the Lisbon Group.

You once said, Professor Petrella, that we must make our peace with water, playing on both meanings. What exactly is this war waged against water, or with water in poor countries such as those of the ACP?

The water that exists must be freed up and made accessible to the population. There are more than 400 million people in Africa with no access to water. And sub-Saharan Africa isn't short of water, far from it. It is very rich in water. But, along with India, it has the greatest number of people living below the poverty line.

We must wage war on the exploitation of Africa's water resources just for the sole interest of those in power. Lake Victoria, for example, was a gem of nature, creating an extraordinary patrimony that has generated a lot of money with perch farming on the Nile.

But the Africans who needed the lake's money have been impoverished and are dying of hunger. Meanwhile all the wealth goes elsewhere, to the stakeholders who exploit the lake that is now being murdered biologically. That is the second dimension of the war or peace of water.

Is it not the responsibility of the local authorities more than the stakeholders?

Indeed, but in any rigorous scientific analysis one must first look at the primary causes and then realise too that there are the many other secondary causes. The primary cause of the water problem, and the way in which the water has been used, is to do with the actions of the former colonial powers. Then there is the responsibility of the local ruling class who

Nile River in Sudan.
© Jacques Desclotres, MODIS
Land Rapid Response Team-NASA
GSFC

are often in a relationship of subordination, submission and dependency in regard to the former colonial powers. The African ruling class are sometimes also responsible for the fact that Africa is still in a deep crisis of access to natural resources when it has the wealth not to have to live in a situation of exclusion.

There is also another question. What purpose has been served by all these thousands of non-governmental organisations with their good intentions and their principles? Each little organisation digs its little well, its little channel, its little irrigation system. There are tens of thousands of projects from which Africa is supposedly benefitting. Yet its situation has worsened. What is going to happen in the future? In 30 or 50 years the Niger River will disappear and there are eight countries around it. The Nile will always be a source of conflict. The Congo, who speaks of that as a source of well-being? There is the European Union's Water Initiative but the IPCC [International Panel on Climate Change] has just indicated that Africa's aquatic systems are now vulnerable and set to become increasingly so. If you look at the forecasts for 2050, the two biggest extreme events that will influence water developments in the world and in Africa in particular are drought on one hand and floods on the other. Over the past 20 years, London has invested nearly a billion dollars to protect itself against floods when there are no floods in London. Where are the billions we have spent to protect Africa and African towns from floods?

In 2007, before the present economic crisis, the wealth of the world, thus the global GDP, was almost US\$72,000bn. The Netherlands had US\$777bn with a population of 12 million. South Africa, Africa's richest country, was at US\$283bn, a third of that of the Netherlands.

So what do we need then, a world government?

The fundamental issue in the solution to the crisis is that we had invented a predatory lifestyle, a lifestyle that preyed on life itself, that killed it. The hope for change was strong, three or four months ago with the financial crisis, but it is beginning to weaken considerably. We will see what happens in Copenhagen in December this year when we should have the post-Kyoto agreement. Not one African country will resolve the food problem without a review of the agriculture issue.

The African countries are among those dependent on neighbouring countries to gain access to water. They therefore have to cooperate with

one another. The United States is also dependent on water that is found elsewhere, but it clearly obtains water by desalinating the ocean waters. An interesting fact: Over the past 100 years the United States and Canada have signed almost 38 cooperation treaties on their common water basins. In Africa, where 53 basins are regional, there are 19 transnational treaties. It is time international law, cooperative law, transnational law, international institutions and joint development programmes emerged. Having an agreement on resources means having an agreement on objectives, that is, on the joint exploitation of a resource that will benefit everybody rather than using military, economic and human resources to engage in local wars.

In the past, in Africa, there was the context of the village – but one must not idealise, there were privileges too. But it is also true that it was a collective act to share water resources. Today, we have imposed the principle of conditionality on Africa, saying to Kenya, Senegal and all the other African countries that when they take out a World Bank loan they must abandon corrupt bureaucracy and open up the management of water services to international competition. It is we who have imposed this, the big French and British companies, the two principal powers in Africa along with Portugal and Spain. Are the Africans more corrupt than others? We know very well that when you have the corrupt you also have the corrupters. And it is us who are the corrupters, not them. If we want to see the conditions for Africa to take its own destiny in hand, then it is time Europe adopted a lower profile. The second way to help Africa is to change our development, our agriculture, our water policy our transport policy, our energy policy.

So the state is important. It is fundamentally important to see the "remunicipalisation" of water, of water services. And here I am advo-



Riccardo Petrella
2009. © Hegel Goutier

cating – to make peace with water and along with others, with Mr Gorbachev – a world water protocol. One must not think solely in terms of the responsibility of the African as it is the world community that is at stake. That is why we are also indebted to the European Parliament thanks to which Europe realises that we are not faced with just a passing crisis. Water is gradually coming to feature on the global political agenda. Life must be organised through water and *in solido*. In a spirit of solidarity not of charity. *In solido*, I am responsible: it is a legal concept. I am not necessarily optimistic, even if I am not excessively voluntarist. I am a member of that category of people who try to act to ensure that the future is not already written, so that it can remain free. I believe strongly in the capacity of politics, in political nobility. It must write the major lines of water policy in accordance with what it represents as a common resource and for life. **H.G. ■**

Keywords

Riccardo Petrella; Water Manifesto; University of Louvain; Africa; Nile; Congo; IPCC; United States; post-Kyoto; Hegel Goutier.

Alain Guy Moukolo Monny, alias Almo The Best, Camerun. This cartoon has been realised to illustrate the didactic kit "Schizzi d'acqua" (www.amref.it).
Courtesy of AMREF



AFRICA

A man draws water from a shallow hand-dug well to irrigate his crop of beetroot growing on a patch of fertile alluvial soil squeezed between buildings and the River Niger in the centre of Bamako, Mali. February 2008.

© Tugela Ridley/IRIN

Below:
A farmer waters his crops, Senegal,
August 2006. © Pierre Holtz/IRIN

Despite **EVERYTHING** no **LANDLESS** farmers



In sub-Saharan Africa land ownership evolved under colonisation from collective to private ownership, with formal legislation being superimposed onto traditional practices in a way that remained after independence. From the 1980s, there were then structural adjustments that required the privatisation of land. The end result of this was tension and even local or regional conflicts, several of which remain not quite dormant to this day. Now, the food crisis coupled with the present economic crisis are forces that favour the reconciliation of traditional practices tied to modern legislation.

Land use in Africa has shifted from a model where farmers moved from one field to the next, to one of permanence on a piece of land. At the same time the possession of land, with some variations from one region to another, has evolved from collective to private ownership. But it was in Africa, south of the Sahara, that the collective ownership model prevailed – a region where Muslim influences were not very strong.

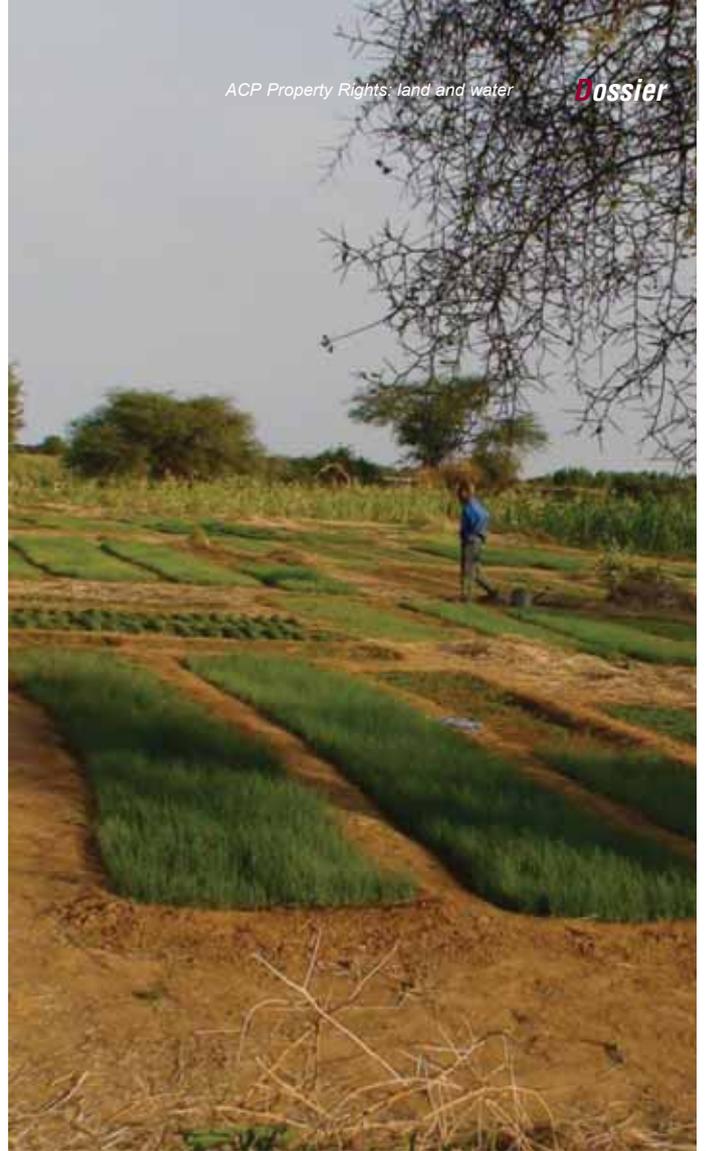
Land tenure in sub-Saharan Africa is based on a philosophical and practically ‘cosmic’ philosophy. Here, land cannot belong to anyone for, as the Ivorian proverb stresses, “It is not the earth that belongs to man, but man who belongs to the earth”. Nevertheless, in practice, a number of systems have existed and continue to exist. And the African model does not reject the concept of the full and complete ownership of the tree the farmer has planted. It is – after all – the fruit of his work and of that of his ancestors.

In the African world, land acquisition could be made on the basis of residence in a community. For example, an individual could be granted land from the tribal Chief, but it was for his “use” – not outright ownership. This was the most common method.

In some regions, particularly in Southern Africa, the descendants of a common ancestor, who had acquired or been given land, managed it on behalf of the members of the group. This system, which goes back to distant origins, is matrilinear for northwestern Zambian populations, patrilinear on the banks of the Tanganika Lake, or still, of equality in the region of the Tigray in Ethiopia where men and women enjoy the same lineage rights. This ancient system has been thrown into chaos by the apartheid system in South Africa and similar regimes in Namibia or Zimbabwe.

Operating alongside these systems there are also those where 'land chiefs' or 'land masters', subservient to a sovereign, enjoy extensive prerogatives in land use. This is the typical, semi-feudal structure that existed before colonisation in the Mossi Empire – part of today's Burkina Faso. The peasants obtained land that could be inherited by their children (male children although it was a matrilinear system). Finally, there is the feudal system with landlords, nobles, aristocrats, generals and religious leaders receiving land from the emperor and granting leases in exchange for various taxes that often amount to half of the harvest (Uganda or the south and west of Ethiopia from the late 19th century).

At the time of colonisation, land was grabbed for the profit of individuals, i.e. the European settlers. This seizure of land was effected on the basis of dubious laws and, while the traditional rules were not eliminated, neither were they integrated into a new system. This was especially true in Southern and Western Africa (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya). But in most countries, alongside the land held by the colonialists, the land continued to be managed in general according to age-old unwritten laws. By the end of the 19th century the colonial powers realised, rather late in the day, that there was no private ownership of land in sub-Saharan



Above:
Onion nursery in Senegal.
© Lybaba

Below:
View of the Rio Cuanza in
Kissama (Angola).
Courtesy of Massimo Pronio



Africa. The colonial system consequently set about imposing almost everywhere the registration of titles to ownership. This proved unrealistic and unfeasible on a large scale despite the modifying laws passed following independence. UN Habitat considered in 1998 that just one per cent of land in sub-Saharan Africa was registered. Indeed, governments themselves often have no precise inventory of the land that constitutes their territory. But external pressure for land to become a commodity increased and in many newly independent states it has been welcomed by the autocratic powers that have created vast state-owned domains.

For many years institutions such as the World Bank urged the African states to allocate land to private individuals and companies. The registering of titles to land ownership became a condition for structural adjustment plans. However, this type of policy failed to take into account certain downsides, specifically that this appropriation of the land by government sidelined traditional authorities. The legitimate occupants of land were reluctant to pay the heavy costs of registration or get tied up in all the administrative red tape when they already had effective use of the land on the basis of being granted the freedom to use it. Their reluctance was all the greater given fears that they would be cheated of their rights in some way. One must also remember that all of this was a violation of their notion of land as being sacred.

While registration most certainly guaranteed the sometimes poorly established rights of the small occupier, it was often the start of privatisation on a much larger scale for the benefit of local despots and major corporations. The present problems in Madagascar brought about by a vast area of the country being conceded to an Asian company is a flagrant example of this.

> A scourge from which Africa has so far been spared

A number of African countries are progressively introducing changes to their legislation to achieve a mix between the African conception of land tenure and the European conception of absolute ownership with its roots in Roman times.

With the autocratic excesses of the past now over, most African countries already have a mixed system in place, where traditional land management is coupled with a number of formal registration measures that have often been introduced to comply with external injunctions. Despite their weaknesses, these

intermediary systems function relatively well and mean that Africa, with the exception of some rare cases in Southern Africa, remains the only continent in the world where there are no landless farmers. A scourge from which it has to date been spared.

H.G. ■

Keywords

Hegel Goutier; Alain Testart; Kéba Mbaye; land; tenure; ownership; Africa; 'master of the tree'; 'chief of the tree'; registration; apartheid; colonisation.

On page 17: Haiti, 2008.
© Mark Roger

A VERY MODERN NOTION IN THESE TIMES OF CRISIS

Researchers such as Alain Testart or Kéba Mbaye (*Revue Ethiopique*) have shown that the African notion that land belongs to nobody is one shared by other religions and cultures, starting with Leviticus in the Bible. The difference is that, in Africa, work is the sole value that justifies the acquisition of property. A concept advocated in these times of financial crisis by prominent economists such as Jacques Attali.

SENEGAL, A GOOD MIX OF TRADITION AND LEGISLATION

The law of 17 June 1964 can be seen as a quiet revolution, effectively nationalising 90 per cent of the land. Whereas in neighbouring countries, state acquisition of uncultivated land caused an outcry that often led to reforms being abandoned, the Senegalese Government was careful never to use the word "nationalisation". The skill of the Senegalese Government was to effect the change using traditional practices as the points of reference. While all the land managed in the past according to traditional practices was brought together under government control, it continued to be allocated as before, the government becoming a kind of super landlord, managing it according to the terms of a ministerial plan. In principle, no individual lost his traditional rights to continue to benefit from the land they occupied.

WOMEN DEPRIVED OF LAND

Men seize land for themselves. Women, who represent more than half the world's population and produce about two-thirds of the food of poor countries, possess just 2 per cent of the world's land. That is the situation condemned by the FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization). In his report for the UNDP, "Empowering the poor through property rights", Francis Cheneval attributes the situation to the legal discrimination against women in terms of ownership, the predominance of the patriarchal system and the mixing, operated under colonisation, between the dictates of tradition and of formal law.

UN Habitat and other partners have drawn up criteria for testing the tools implemented by governments to favour the appropriation of land by women. One example is Ethiopia, where a practical system of land registration and certification has been in place since 1999. One of the positive measures is tenure held in the joint names of the man and woman that now applies in many countries.

The CARIBBEAN, a rather equitable situation

Throughout the Caribbean, a system of land tenure was applied to virgin areas after the almost total disappearance of the Amerindians just a few decades after the arrival of Christopher Columbus. Three patterns of development can be identified, leading respectively to the present situation in the English-speaking Caribbean, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

In the English-speaking countries, the British Common Law system was quickly applied. The British Crown attributed either unlimited duration (freehold) or limited duration (leasehold) concessions to the settlers. Supposedly giving the right of tenancy, these were in fact absolute property rights. Moreover, land ownership was concentrated in very few hands and vast areas remained the property of the Crown or of the country as well.

With the exception of Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica, these countries did not have large amounts of available land. After independence in the mid-20th century, two related movements took effect. There was a reparceling that allowed a greater number of people (especially poor farmers) to become – free of charge, or at a low cost – land owners, thereby bringing an increase in the number of plots, and also a grouping of land into large estates, particularly focused on the sugar industry.

In 1880 in Trinidad & Tobago, there were 300 sugar plantations. One hundred years later in 1980 a single company, the Caroni Sugar Company (that was 51 per cent state-owned), dominated the industry. In the late 19th century, there were 35,000 farms covering 130,000 hectares with an average size of 6 hectares, while the 40 largest estates covered an average of 400 hectares. This country has always had a fair system of land ownership. In Jamaica, vast estates were allocated to bauxite companies after the Second World War. In 1966, major agricultural reforms were carried out to promote agriculture, with 14 per cent of arable land being redistributed. At the end of the 1980s, 90 per cent of the farms covered no more than four hectares and were owned by 155,000 farmers while the small number

of large estates covered an average of 784 hectares.

The Dominican Republic is the country with the greatest disparity in land ownership and the only one in the region to face the problem of landless farmers. The land tenure system is characterised by the *minifundio* (small properties) on one hand and the *latifundio* (large estates) on the other. *Latifundisation* operated principally after 1948 under the dictator Trujillo* and created two sugar empires. In 1980, 2 per cent of the farmers occupied 55 per cent of the cultivable land. Land redistribution in the 1980s benefited 75,000 families and made it possible to reduce somewhat the gap between the large and small properties.

Haiti is an exception. After the war of independence that ended in 1803, the lands of the former colonialists came under government

control and in most cases was made available to the successors on the basis of rights of tenancy. The government regularly transforms this tenancy into full ownership. About 60 per cent of farmers own their own land, while 20 per cent lease it from the government or absent landowners. Others are sharecroppers paying half of their harvests to the landowners. Farming cooperatives also own a small proportion of the land.

H.G. ■

* Rafael Trujillo, dictator from 1930 until his assassination in 1961.

Keywords

Hegel Goutier; Caribbean; tenure; ownership; land; Haiti; Dominican Republic; Jamaica; latifundio; minifundio.



PACIFIC. Adaptation at last

The traditional conception of land tenure on the Pacific Islands is as age-old and steeped in tradition as in Africa: the land and the tribe constitute a single entity, forming a triangle with Man and God as the other poles. The upset caused by the appropriation of land at the time of colonisation (1850-1914) with its mass population displacements was a traumatic experience. Moreover, most of these countries were late in gaining independence, at the end of the last century, and so it is only now that the region is trying to put into place mechanisms to help limit the damage.

Among the ACP countries in the Asia-Pacific region, those currently most active in land reform are Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and East Timor. However, recent changes, such as population migration, demographic growth and concessions granted to foreign companies (such as logging companies in the Solomon Islands with little respect for traditional law) have led to the emergence of a new evil-land insecurity.

The solution adopted has been to reconcile the unwritten rules of traditional law with the

written provisions of official bodies while, at the same time, formally recognising the traditional systems of land tenure. Of course, until recent times everyone in a community was aware of his rights and obligations and this had not been necessary. Measures have also been taken to facilitate transactions like the leasing of land by a community to foreigners, either directly (in Vanuatu) or indirectly via the State (in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands).

Assistance is also given to tribal groups to protect their interests and guard against any duplicity or sharp trading on the part of those gaining access to land and any deficiencies in the control devices. The adaptation mechanisms in the region also provide security of access to land for women.

On the other hand, in some countries, especially Melanesia, governments find it hard to access land for development because it is communally owned by tribes. The reforms allowing registration of lands by communities is making it easier for governments to negotiate with them.

Case study. Fiji provides a textbook example

of the way forward, where today there is a land tenure system (the 'Taukei'), which is a form of communal ownership on the part of Fiji's original inhabitants. Until recently this system was penalised by the banks that blocked its access to development funds, considering that a loan can only be granted to an individual or legal entity, but not to a community of people. Because of this, it was people of Indian or other origin, whose immigrant parents had received property rights on an individual basis, who had access to such funds. In 1995 experts at the University of Melbourne realised that as long as this disparity remained uncorrected the country's social, economic and political stability would continue to be threatened. Recent events have proved them right and this change is currently being put into force.

H.G. ■

See also: Michel Leplat "Le fait colonial dans l'Océanie insulaire (1850-1914)", June 2007.

Keywords

Hegel Goutier; ownership; land; Taukei; Fiji; Papua New Guinea; Solomon Islands; Vanuatu; East Timor.

The wide of the main
Tuvalu Island in the atoll of
Funafuti 2007.
© Hegel Goutier

A boat on Cuanza River in Angola, southern African border country whose civil war has made the management of land ownership very difficult.
© Massimo Pronio

SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA, ZIMBABWE.

Differences in land conflicts

Although there are no really landless peasants in Africa, the threat of conflict due to desertification, shortages of well-irrigated areas and many other causes constantly hovers over the continent: Darfur; friction between Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso; combat between settled tribes and nomads in Mali and Mauritania; tensions in Madagascar following the cession of a large area of land to a foreign company. And then there is Southern Africa...

In recent years, the Zimbabwean government has launched an expropriation process of the lands of former colonists, with the goal of correcting the appropriation of lands during the colonial era. However, elsewhere its Southern Africa neighbours have proceeded in a completely different way. By utilising a tactful approach, by differentiating social justice and economic safety, Namibia and South Africa, both of which have experienced similar monopolising in the past, have so far managed to avoid such clashes.

Between 1960 and 1980 the apartheid regime in South Africa dispossessed three and a half million blacks from their land. Indeed, 80 per cent of cultivatable land belonged to just 60,000 whites by the end of apartheid in 1994. Nelson Mandela's government had undertaken to distribute 30 per cent of this land to black farmers within four years, but had also committed not to expropriate white farmers' land.

Moreover, the latter were encouraged to sell a part of their land to the State at a reasonable price. Even though a number of white farmers graciously gave some of their lands to their black fellow citizens and provided them with some technical assistance, and the government bought back large tracts of land from others, the overall objective has not yet been reached – not by a long way. After the first gestures of generosity from some white landowners, their fellow farmers had no intention of selling their land below market price. And so, the deadline for the 30 per cent ownership was regularly pushed back and is now set at 20 years (2015). In 2007, only 4 per cent of cultivatable lands had gone into the hands of blacks.

Therefore, it isn't at all surprising that the situation becomes tense from time to time in the province of Limpopo, where black peasants sometimes indulge in so-called 'Zimbabwean' occupation of farming lands.

In 1990, when Namibia became independent, 5,000 white farmers owned 74 per cent of arable land. Here the government used the same methods as South Africa to buy land. In a move aimed at reassuring white farmers, the constitution of the new republic prohibited expropriation except for the public good. The new Namibian government resisted pressures from its trade unions, despite the fact that many white farmers were intent on selling land at 'inflated and unrealistic' prices, according to one of the country's ministers, John Mbango (Ministry of Land in a 1997 declaration). However, to this day, there have been very few outbursts of dissent against the policy. **H.G. ■**

Keywords

Hegel Goutier; South Africa; Namibia; Zimbabwe; Darfur; Sudan; Ivory Coast; Burkina; Mali; Mauritania; land.

The big scheme of the AFRICAN UNION

At the instigation of the African Development Bank and the Commission of the African Union, a series of regional consultations were launched to validate a land policy that could be applicable to the whole continent. The first conclusions are a long way from pleasing everyone.



The Saheal Twareg and Pleu herdsmen extract water from a rare well for their cattle, Niger.
© Edward Parsons/IRIN

The African Union has until July 2009 to decide on an extremely sensitive issue highlighted by the Daewoo case in Madagascar, but that is only the tip of the iceberg (read box opposite). The charter, which is currently being prepared, would foresee – amongst other issues – that any agrarian reform should recognise the right of a State to own lands in the name of citizens. This subject is not to everyone's taste. Interviewed by Radio France International, Tidiane Ngaido, Researcher at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), feels that "it is not normal that the State should assume the right of ownership and should distribute lands to companies from abroad. Securing land is essential [to protect] the populations". For its part, the powerful Peasant organizations and Producers in West Africa (ROPPA) is worried by "land policies elaborated with pressure from the outside in the name of liberalisation and that leave a greater place to the agro business and to multinationals at the expense of community space, our agricultural markets and family farms". In the communiqué adopted in April 2008, ROPPA continues: "the current tendency to question the collective and community property of the land and the various rights of use over the natural resources of that land greatly concerns us. The argument would be that this type of exploitation cannot engender a productive and competitive agriculture. This is blatantly ignoring the economic and social reality of our countries for which family farms provide a significant share of the export revenues and most of the employment." **M.M.B.** ■

MONOPOLISING AFRICAN LANDS

The attempts of many countries to acquire rights on African lands for the production of foodstuffs – and of bio fuels in particular – is constantly increasing. Amongst these endeavours, apart from Daewoo's Madagascar project, the following are taking place:

The one-year "lease" of 110,000 square kilometres (11 million hectares or an eighth of the country's total surface area) in Mozambique;

The "lease" of 850,000 hectares in Uganda by Egypt (2.2% of the total Ugandan surface area) to cultivate wheat;

The acquisition of lands in Tanzania, Ethiopia and Mozambique by British firm Sun Bio fuels for the cultivation of bio fuels;

Bioenergy International (Switzerland) is considering the planting of jatropha (to manufacture bio diesel) on some 90,000 hectares in Kenya;

MagIndustries (Canada) has acquired a 68,000 hectares eucalyptus plantation and is currently building a wood chipping plant with a capacity of 50,000 tons per year near the harbour town of Pointe-Noire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Keywords

African Union; ADB; land; Tidiane Ngaido; ROPPA; Marie-Martine Buckens.

Debra Percival

Access to inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others.
© CBM Siegfried Herrman

EU POLICY SHIFT for DISABLED needed to meet ANTI-POVERTY targets

From policy-makers to the public, many are unaware that one in five of the world's poorest have a disability. The leading international umbrella body for disabilities, the Brussels-based Non Governmental Organisation, International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), wants European Parliamentarians and prospective candidates in the 2009 elections to the European Parliament (EP) to sign a petition calling for a shift in EC development policy so it focuses more on rights of the disabled. Unless these are incorporated in poverty alleviation targets will not be met.

Stand up for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Europe and Overseas' is an IDDC campaign for internationally agreed rights to be applied at EU level. It reads: "Persons with disabilities constitute one of the largest single groups of excluded and chronically poor people in the world. Without including disability in action to tackle poverty, they will continue to live in poverty and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will not be met." More mainstreaming of disability in EC cooperation programmes and scrutiny of policies by

the EP and civil society groups, are both vital, says Johannes Trimmel, Chairman of IDDC and Director of the Austrian NGO Licht-Fuer-die-Welt (Light for the World). Moves in this direction by EU institutions have so far been random, says Trimmel. IDDC groups 20 NGOs working in development and disability, some of which, such as World Vision UK, run their own projects in developing nations.

EU states are signatories to the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which came into force in 2008. Article 32 states that people with disabilities

need to be included in international cooperation whereas Article 11 says that people with disabilities need to be protected in humanitarian and emergency situations. Catherine Naughton, Brussels Director of the NGO, Christian Blind Mission (CBM) points out that the Convention is only as good as the capacity of civil society to monitor it and advocate new policy but many disability NGOs do not have the resources nor the personnel to do this. In 2004, the EU published a Guidance Note on Disability and Development for European Union Delegations and Services but progress

has been disappointing in practice, says Johannes Trimmel.

> Monitoring targets

As more EC funds go to general and sectoral budget aid in ACP states, the greater the requirement for targets on how the disabled are included in policies and subsequent monitoring by groups representing the disabled. Take the education sector, says Catherine Naughton, where progress to achieving the MDG's is lagging: "We are not really able to pay attention in a detailed way to what extent children with disabilities are included in education", she says, adding: "It is left up to the civil society and the Parliament in any given country to scrutinise how this money is spent. In the global monitoring report of 2007, it was estimated that one third of children out of school are children with a disability." She suggests targets to be drawn up on the inclusion of children with disabilities in the respective Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) for ACP states on how EU funding is to be spent; also as specific projects are planned. "Are we training special needs teachers, capable at teaching in Braille and sign language?" she asks, adding: "Where sector support has been given for some time, to what extent has this improved equity of access for girls, tribal communities and disabilities." And her views on whether this infringes the ACP country's autonomy to disburse funds as it chooses? "Do we want to run an education system which is only meeting the needs of a small number of people in society then should we support it?" asks Naughton. She says that the EC already asks for stringent financial reporting accounting, so why not its impact on beneficiary groups? "Every government, apart from the United States and Somalia have signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child, saying that every child regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability should be allowed to go to school. It is not an unreasonable demand that every child has access to primary education", she says.

> Accessible infrastructure

And she asks: "Is there any purpose to building schools that are not accessible?" It costs just 1.4 per cent more to equip a building for use by the disabled. Johannes Trimmel wants the EU to support the disability contact person in each EC Delegation, a proposal already supported, says Trimmel, by the EU Commissioner Louis Michel at the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly level.

Some EC Delegations are already consulting disability groups at the planning stage. This happened in Ghana when the local NGO, Action on Disability and Development, was consulted in drawing up the country's strategy paper for 10th European Development Fund (EDF) spending (2008-2013). Ute Möhring, policy officer at the EC Delegation to Ghana, says the EC is to support the pool fund of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, the Rights and Voices Initiative (RAVI) under the 10th EDF. RAVI sponsors small community-based organisations to enable them to dialogue with the Government. But the Ghana example, says Trimmel, is an exception.

Some ACP governments are more proactive over disability issues. Uganda has five seats in Parliament for persons with disabilities and its anti-HIV/AIDs policies on awareness, testing and treatment incorporate people with dis-

abilities, says Catherine Naughton. And a project supported by CBM, Callan Services, has had a long-term effect on Papua New Guinea's education system. In 1990, there was no special education for disabled pupils. Late 1990s, the Christian Brothers piloted 'Callan Services' – a three-year Diploma in Primary Teaching for St. Benedict's Teachers College, Wewak, PNG teaching all training courses for all student-teachers how to teach students with disabilities in regular schools. It was supported by the Churches' Education Council and the National Board for Disabled Persons funded by CBM including EC funding and was eventually rolled out to all Teachers' Colleges. ■

Keywords

Disability; IDDC; CBM; Licht-Fuer-die-Welt; Ghana; Papua New Guinea; Debra Percival.



Right to mobility.
© CBM Phil Lam



'Grand Sud de Madagascar'
2008. © Marie-Martine Buckens

INTERCONNECTING Europe and Africa

A Euro-African transport network tomorrow? This is the idea that Antonio Tajani, European Transport Commissioner, supported on the occasion of the African Union (AU) summit focusing on infrastructure, held from 1 to 4 February in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

In the eyes of the European Commissioner, this new 'bridge' linking the continents would prove a logical continuation to the great works of transport infrastructure that have been conducted throughout Africa. However, recognised the Commissioner, it is only an idea at this stage. "In the first instance, it would be a planning exercise aiming at identifying the connecting points of our networks based on a model of what already exists within the framework of the Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network." The idea finds its origins in an encounter last October with AU Commissioner Doctor El Ibrahim during the meeting of the European Union and African Union Commissions.

In the meantime, referring to the 2008-2012 Action Plan adopted in April 2008 by the African Union Ministers for Transport,

Antonio Tajani expressed his 'ideas' on trans-African main roads. For him, there is one priority: road transportation. He recalled the big main roads that are now subject to a consolidated pan-African programme and that have the support of both the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB). There are eight such main roads: Dakar-N'djamena; Nouakchott-Lagos; Khartoum-Djibouti; Lagos-Mombasa; Cairo-Gaborone; N'djamena-Windhoek; Beira-Lobito; Dar Es Salam-Kigali.

➤ Eight main roads

"The European Development Fund (EDF) has already allocated €3bn to these eight main roads", underlined the European commissioner, "and €3bn more are programmed for the

10th EDF". "Considerable means", he added, that "catalyse the financing of great European financial institutions under the aegis of the EIB". These are record figures for the African Development Bank (ADB) too. Indeed, over the last three years, the institution has invested more than US\$3.6bn in transportation. "I am pleased to announce that we should double our pledges in the next three years", declared the governor of the ADB, Donald Kabureka, in Addis Ababa. The pledges of donors, added the governor of the ADB, have nearly doubled in a year, going from US\$7.7bn in 2006 to US\$12.4bn in 2007. This increase partly results from the contribution of emerging countries, such as Brazil, India, and China, which pledged almost US\$7.8bn since 2007, particularly in the areas of rail and hydraulics.

> Financing crisis

The question was raised: in these troubled times, will donors respect their commitment? Antonio Tajani was relatively serene: “The current economic crisis may have consequences on the necessary resources but at the same time, the reflationary measures elaborated at every level prioritise infrastructure. Indeed, the latter favour trade and the competitiveness of our economies, hence representing the most adequate solution to a crisis.” Donald Kabureka adopted a more pessimistic tone: “In Africa, a certain number of infrastructure projects risk being cancelled or minimised”, while adding: “the challenges facing our infrastructure are not only financial, but also political and regulatory.”

On this last point, the European commissioner brought forth the model implemented within the European Union to make the trans-frontier sections of transportation networks easier, in particular the emergence of private and public projects. “The tools deployed”, he added, “could be applied to the processes undertaken by the AU Commission in support of the economic States and Communities”.

> An air agreement in the near future?

Antonio Tajani took the opportunity of the Summit to ‘sketch’ the new strategic framework between the European Union and Africa in the air sector. This is a sector in which Member States play a predominant role. He

recognised that the European Union is relatively new to the sector although its role has grown rapidly, as testified by the agreements signed with the United States, Canada and India. What would be the outline of a future air agreement between the European Union and Africa? “I do not have a preconceived idea as to its form, we must build it together”, assured the European Commissioner, as he stressed two preliminaries: the recognition of the community nature of European airlines and respect for air safety.

M.M.B. ■

Keywords

AU; EU; ADB; EIB; Antonio Tajani; infrastructures; air; Donald Kabureka; Marie-Martine Buckens.

Muammar Gaddafi's UNITED STATES OF AFRICA

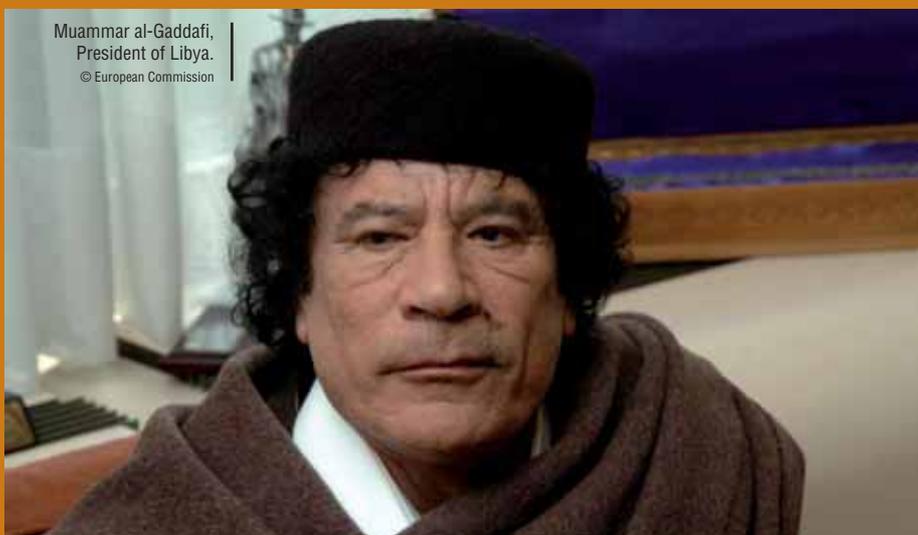
Meeting in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), the heads of state and government of the 55 African Union (AU) countries elected, on 2 February, the Libyan Muammar Gaddafi to the head of their organisation for a term of one year. It is an appointment that enabled the Libyan leader to return to an issue that is very close to his heart: the creation of a United States of Africa.

The election of the Libyan leader as Chair of the AU was not by consensus, as is customary, but behind closed doors. In reality, the organisation’s rotating chair fell automatically this

year to a North African state and Mr. Gaddafi was the region’s only representative present at the summit. Outgoing AU Chairman Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania ignored his successor, calling on his peers to devote more time to

developing their economies rather than resolving conflicts “on the sharing of powers between our politicians”. For his part, the Libyan colonel is reported by Radio France International (RFI) to have declared: “I know that some of you are disappointed and I am going to provoke you. But it is in Africa’s interests.”

The Libyan leader succeeded in Addis Ababa in having a compromise adopted with a view to transforming the AU Commission into a new authority. With a reinforced mandate it will be the distant precursor of a “government of the African Union”. Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade told the press on 17 February that he was ready to support such a government. He said it should be set up in January 2010 while the United States of Africa should be proclaimed in 2017. **M.M.B. ■**



Muammar al-Gaddafi,
President of Libya.
© European Commission

Keywords

AU summit; Muammar Gaddafi; Jakaya Kikwete; Marie-Martine Buckens.



ZAMBIA, first beneficiary of the EU's new BUDGETARY tool – the MDG contract

The European Commission has committed €225bn to the Government of Zambia to support the country's efforts to improve the efficiency of its poverty-focused public programmes and to accelerate progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Zambia is the first country to sign this form of enhanced general budget support called 'MDG Contract' – that the Commission has decided to grant the 'good pupils' amongst the beneficiaries of the European Development Fund (EDF). Financing agreements should soon follow with six other African countries: Mali, Mozambique, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Rwanda. "In the present financial and economic crisis it is even more important for developing countries to receive predictable,

long-term aid that is aligned with their own procedures and policy priorities", declared Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, upon signing the contract in the Zambian capital city, Lusaka, on 5 March 2009.

The MDG Contract is part of the EU's response to fulfilling its political commitment to improving the effectiveness and predictability of aid and accelerating progress towards the MDGs. It will be more predictable due to a commitment horizon of six years that is twice

as long as the common budget support agreements. It will provide a minimum, virtually guaranteed level of support each year as well as reliable yearly disbursements following a pre-defined timeline. **M.M.B.** ■

| Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, during his visit in Zambia in March 2009. © ec

Keywords

Zambia; MDG Contract; efficiency; EDF; Louis Michel; Marie-Martine Buckens.

SOLOMON ISLANDS is in the saddle of the ACP group

Joseph Ma'ahanua, Ambassador of Solomon Islands to the European Union and the United Kingdom, has taken over the leadership of the ACP Group on 6 February 2009, succeeding Burkina Faso. The Presidency of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States is a rotating position, which is taken on by one of the six ACP regions every six months. After Western Africa, the Presidency fell to a country of the Pacific region.

"I rely on every one of us, because the task ahead of us is huge", declared the ambassador upon his nomination. Negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) between the ACP and the European Union is the most urgent issue that the Presidency of Solomon Islands will have to face over the next six months. Another great matter is the revision of the Cotonou Agreement that links the ACP and the EU. The agreement, adopted in 2000, is revised every five years. Thus,

Joseph Ma'ahanua must assure the Presidency of the ACP-EC Committee of Ambassadors of the 79 member countries of the ACP Group. This committee makes the ad-hoc decisions between every ministerial session of the group. **M.M.B.** ■

Keywords

Solomon Islands; Joseph Ma'ahanua; ACP group; Marie-Martine Buckens.

Andrea Marchesini Reggiani

PHILANTHROPY and poverty

The 2009 European Foundation Centre (EFC) Annual Conference (Rome, 14-16 May 2009) will discuss how foundations can fight poverty by creating opportunities through education and capacity-building. We asked Rui Vilar, EFC President, about the European foundations' action regarding development aid, also taking into account the difficult economic situation.



Foundations are emerging among donors in the fight to poverty. What activities is EFC involved in?

As a membership association, our role is to underpin the work of our members active in their fields of interest, which for many, includes poverty.

A core area of the Centre's work is to enable foundations' contribution and involvement in EU policy making and implementation as well

as raising the profile of foundation research and practices that help advance European issues, in areas such as socio-economic integration, freedom of the media, intercultural dialogue and global health.

Are foundations interested in dialogue with public donors, or do you feel that dialogue with public donors limits your freedom of use of foundations' funds?

The EFC believes that it is very important for foundations to establish an open dialogue with public authorities (local, regional, national and supranational), all the while retaining their independence. This co-operation has a long tradition in history: some of the old medieval foundations were set up or administered by what we would in today's terms qualify as local authorities or executive bodies.

Today, financial independence and flexibility allow foundations to play a catalytic role and pool resources and know-how to tackle critical needs.

Let me just highlight a few examples of recent initiatives involving the EFC:

- European HIV/AIDS Funders Group cooperation with the UNAIDS;
- Global Fund for Community Foundations, designed jointly with the World Bank and of the Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support (WINGS);
- European Forum on Philanthropy and

Research Funding, supported by the European Commission;

- European Consortium of Foundations on Human Rights and Disability for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008).

Individually, EFC members are also developing important partnerships:

- The Structural Genomics Consortium – an international collaboration supported by the Wellcome Trust (UK), public funders in Canada and Sweden and pharmaceutical companies – which is undertaking the large-scale characterisation of protein structures;
- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal) is establishing a research centre in Angola on Health and Tropical Diseases;
- Fundación Luis Vives (Spain) in 2007 developed national awareness campaigns on social inclusion in partnership with the EU, the Spanish Government, non profit sector, Caixa Galicia and 15 regional governments;
- King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium) works with government bodies, NGOs, research centres, business on areas such as migration, poverty and social justice.

Can you tell us about the Rome meeting?

In a matter of months, the effects of the global economic downturn have been felt by all levels of society, not least by the most vulnerable groups who have arguably been the hardest

hit. It is therefore an opportune time for foundations – that have a proven track record of championing the causes of the most disadvantaged – to discuss their role in addressing the challenges at hand. The conference will return to the basics of philanthropy by examining the theme of poverty; considering the creation of opportunities through education, empowerment and the building of skills.

What is the foundations' annual aid to the developing countries?

An EFC survey of members' funding for global development, based on 2004 and 2005 data, reveals a positive trend: development expenditure has increased from approximately €163M in 2004 to almost €332M. This amount represents 15.67 per cent of these foundations' total expenditure for 2004 and 2005. The survey also looked at members' positions on the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Although the majority of the respondents have activities falling under the areas covered by the MDGs, they do not identify with this global agenda. Reasons include: strong scepticism about the MDGs as a framework and difficulty of aligning foundations' mission and approaches to the MDGs agenda. Nevertheless, some foundations indicated that while it is critical to look beyond 2015, it is important to take the MDGs into account as they influence donor agencies and NGOs.

Will expenditure and activities decrease in light of the financial crisis?

In October 2008, the EFC launched a survey among its members to better understand the impact of the unstable economy. Just over half the respondents reported that the financial crisis was not affecting their organisation. In fact, the majority said that they would still be able to meet all grant-making commitments in 2009. However, just under half of those surveyed expected their budget for grant-making and/or operating programmes to decrease in the next two years, while two-thirds said they were considering significant changes in their investment strategy. These are cautionary statistics. Nevertheless, we remain confident that foundations, with their proven track record of endurance, adeptness and creativity, will steer through these rough waters.

The Cotonou Agreement has an innovative approach that includes the negotiation, between donor and beneficiary, of the type of aid and sectors of intervention. Do you have the same criteria?

FOUNDATIONS ACTIVE IN DEVELOPMENT

Foundations active in development aid are:

Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal), Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund (UK), Fondation Mérieux (France), Nuffield Foundation (UK), Unidea Unicredit (Italy), Volkswagen Stiftung (Germany), Wellcome Trust (UK).

Many are also supporting community development, such as Bernard van Leer Foundation (The Netherlands), Cera (Belgium), King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium), a consortium of Italian Foundations – Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione Cariplo and Monte Paschi di Siena, Rabobank Foundation (The Netherlands) and Shell Foundation (UK).

Others are focusing on building the policy capacity of civil society: Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Sigrid Rausing Trust (UK), Oak Foundation (Switzerland).

The issue of dialogue and listening to the needs of the beneficiaries is at the centre of foundations' concerns. It is, however, a complex area especially when operating internationally – as this requires a deep understanding of the cultural, social and political contexts. Recognising this challenge, the EFC in cooperation with the Council of Foundations has developed the 'Principles of Accountability for International Philanthropy'. ■

Keywords

European Foundation Centre (EFC); Rui Vilar; Philanthropy.

Page 26:
Rui Vilar, EFC President. © EFC

Below:
Annabelle the Clown, Paris, winner 2008 EFC Photo. Submitted by Fondation de France. © Francesco Acerbis

Defending Minorities in South-East Europe, Berovo, Macedonia. Submitted by King Baudouin Foundation. © T. Predescu

Annabelle-the-Clown



Submitted by Fondation de France
© Francesco Acerbis

Annabelle-the-Clown comes to visit elderly patients with advanced progressive diseases, or in a terminal phase. By her face and jokes, she performs to relight a flame of life in the eyes of the patients. She relieves deep anxiety, and prompts exhilarating exchanges.

Paris, France

Defending Minorities in South-East Europe



Submitted by King Baudouin Foundation
© T. Predescu

Through its regional initiative, "Minority Rights in Practice in South-East Europe", the King Baudouin Foundation aims to take common action for policy change at local, national and international levels, to overcome discrimination and advocate for effective participation of minorities. The photo is taken of the project entitled "The Diligent Hands of the Blacksmiths."

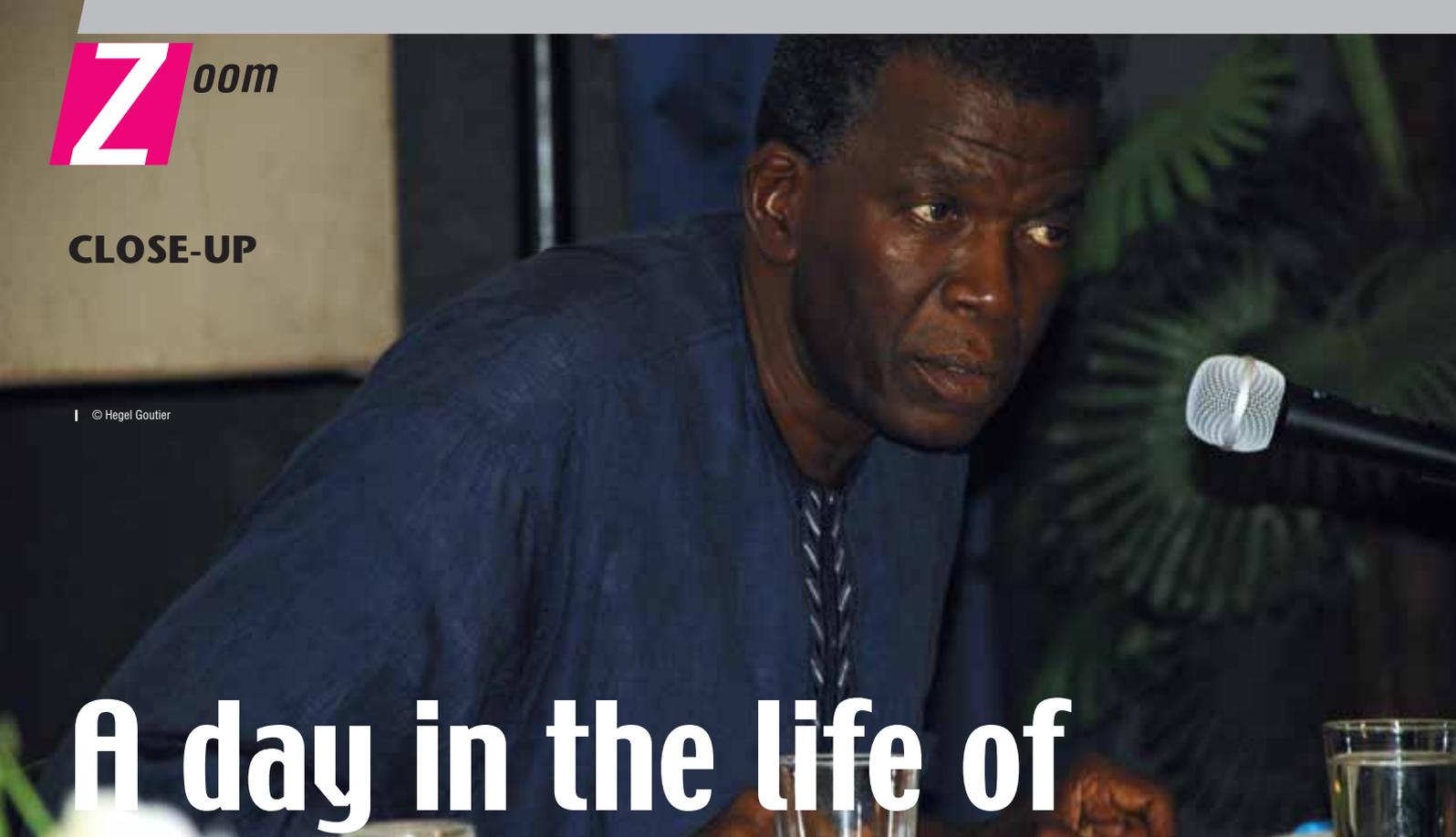
Berovo, Macedonia



2008 EFC
photo
competition
"Every picture tells a story"



2008 EFC
photo
competition
"Every picture tells a story"



A day in the life of **CHEIK OUMAR SISSOKO**

The man is as refined in his physical appearance as he is in his thinking. Calm but projecting a certain strength, he speaks constructively of his projects: strategies for the cinema, culture and Africa. He recalls carefully, without any conceit, his journeys in these two careers, as a film-maker and politician (or, rather, as film-maker politician) – as if to offset his reputation as the great Malian and African director that, beyond the borders of his region, eclipses his successes as Culture Minister.

For Sissoko, the cinema is a tool in the service of ideas and politics. But there is no sloganeering in the work of this film-maker as he uses the cinematic art with extreme finesse. Sometimes he uses it to depict the Malian Empire of the 19th century (as in *Guimba*), creating an intense Shakespearean drama that combines all the ingredients of a historical thriller within a grandiose fresco with sophisticated decors and costumes and its legions of extras. At other times he uses it to shine an African light on a part of the world heritage, as in *Genesis*, transporting his audience with a tale steeped in daring exploits, magic and sensuality. On the day of our meeting, Monday 2 March, he was himself analysing two of his works before an enthralled audience hanging onto his every word. He mainly lectures to young people, students at the renowned film school

of West Africa, ISIS in Ouagadougou. Silently they watched the film *Guimba* that began the session and then listened attentively to the words of the master from morning till late afternoon. Their questions were sharp and to the point. Sissoko expressed how touched he was by the experience. The foreign guests, professors, directors and students – of the Brussels or Dijon film schools (partners of ISIS) – were all captivated by his charm. The subject of the master class was “Cinematographic decors and cultural patrimony”. In addition to the technical aspect of the subject, Sissoko stressed on several occasions his preference for South-South coproductions. In his particular case it is often between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, but also on occasion with the countries of North Africa, Morocco in particular. He spoke above all of the way he highlights Mali’s magnificent imperial cit-

ies such as Djenné, Ségou, Timbuktu. He also paid warm homage to the set and costume designers and other creators of the region’s cinema, such as the great wardrobe artists of Burkina Faso or the master of costumes and jewels of Mali. In addition, he demonstrated the capacity for self-sufficiency of the African cinema. For example, who in the hall knew that between Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso it could be possible to develop a production like *Genesis* without recourse to foreign locations? Who knew that in 2008 Nigeria produced 1,700 feature films and that the country’s film industry is now self-sufficient? To ensure this self-sufficiency, film-makers must use the local African languages and the continent’s body of stories, legends and facts. Only then will a large African public make the African cinema viable. Otherwise, African films will continue to be relegated to Europe’s

small cinemas and will never really have a chance to be seen by a wider audience. "I do not believe in the existence of a universal cinema." For him, if an American or a Japanese film has universal success that does not mean that it is universal. It remains rooted in its culture. It is its success in its own world that enables it to conquer others. "The day when an African film draws 10 million at the box office in Africa, foreign producers will be on their knees trying to buy the distribution rights." Affable yet reserved. Warm and welcoming, but also keeping a certain distance, that is Sheik Oumar Sissoko in conversation.

The lesson of tyrants. To make the audience to see what is good, you clearly show what is bad. As in Guimba you showed evil arrive and a glimmer of hope at the end. Or am I summing it up badly?

I could not say that you are summing it up badly. What I can say with certainty is that it depends on the situations. They can lend themselves to what you said about tyrants. Including what is very bad, in the film-maker's composition, and making this into a dramatic construction by using comedy to present

things. This was very sad in *Nyamanton* and in *Guimba* where there were some beautiful colours but it was sad in the situation in which it took place. That is why I like this beautiful metaphor so much.

You addressed the young people as "dear colleagues". They were very touched by this. Is it because you consider them to be mature, or because you see yourself as a young person still in the process of learning?

It is because they are mature. Already the fact of deciding to attend a film school and not schools of economics, or management, shows a state of maturity, because film making is an extremely difficult profession. It is not yet accepted by our society and these students must overcome many difficulties and to accept this is genuinely to their credit. That is why I say "my dear colleagues", because I know they are determined to try.

Because these are tough times for culture?

Absolutely these are tough times for culture because culture is not accepted by the highest authorities in our countries. Burkina is an

exception because it has always recognised culture, and the cinema in particular. The Fespaco is testimony to this, as is the African cinematheque and Isis.

Mr Sissoko, what drives artists such as yourself, Raoul Peck, and Gilberto Gil to join the government. Is it to get a sense of danger and then withdraw?

No, I think in my case it is different than for Raoul Peck and Gilberto Gil, even if they have a truly political conception of the struggles to be fought, the demands for their country's development. I am political and it is politics that brought me to cinema. I am president of a party, the 'African Solidarity for Democracy and Independence'. I worked (as a minister, editor's note) to change things positively. I believe we have genuinely achieved things that are irreversible. Yes, we did that by making people understand that culture can be a factor for economic development, a factor for peace and stability. **H.G. ■**

Camerasman at the renowned film school of West Africa, ISIS in Ouagadougou, during Cheik Oumar Sissoko's lecture 2009. The event has been promoted by Africalia (www.africalia.be) © Hegel Goutier



ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAs)

We **NEED** a **minimum** of protection

A delegation of African parliamentarians and farmers, on a tour of the major European capitals during the month of March, have condemned the approach taken by the European Union in negotiations carried out with the African nations to conclude the new Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) which risk “causing economic genocide in Africa”.

On its visit to Brussels on 5 March, the delegation warned that these agreements would destabilize “local agricultural markets by exposing them to the competition of excessive European production”. Kolyang Palebe, a representative of a farmers’ organisation in Chad, explained: “We fear that the European Union, which subsidises its farmers enormously, will flood our markets.” Kenyan Catherine Kimura, President of the East African Legislative Assembly’s (EALA) Trade Committee said

the EPAs would also lead to “a dramatic fall in customs revenues, reducing the states’ budgetary capacities even further”. The delegation also criticised the fact that the EU is now negotiating these agreements on a country by country basis, whereas negotiations were initially conducted on a regional basis. Eric Ouedraogo, a representative from the small nation of Burkina Faso, said: “This completely undermines our efforts towards regional integration which is in fact advocated by the Cotonou Agreement (editor’s note – an agree-

ment linking the EU with the 79 countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP).” He added: “Our regional solidarity is taking shape. We require a minimum of protection, otherwise we risk going back to square one.”

M.M.B. ■

Below:
More export opportunities under the EPA? Port,
Kingstown, St Vincent and Grenadines. © Debra Percival

Keywords

EPAs; African delegation; small farmers;
Marie-Martine Buckens.

CARIBBEAN EXPORT rises to the EPA challenge

The Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA) is unique. It is the only region-wide export promotion body in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states. The 2008 signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the 15 member-state CARIFORUM and the EU means new challenges.*



Set up in 1996 by CARIFORUM states, CEDA's brief is to strengthen competitiveness of firms in international markets and promote Caribbean exports at a national level with its staff of 14 in Barbados and three in a sub-regional office in the Dominican Republic, explains Executive Director, Philip Williams. Escipion Oliveira, Manager of Special Projects says "the clustering of companies is its great strength". For example, at the recent 'Fancy Food Fair' in New York, Caribbean Export's display of the products of better known companies alongside those of newcomers, meant new clients for lesser-known labels.

The EU's European Development Funds (EDF) have funded the body's activities in the past, the current 10th EDF (2008-2013) providing €7M up to 2010 but, says Williams, there's a great deal to be done to meet the EPA challenge. Recent initiatives include bringing together 15-20 designers including graphists and fashion stylists in Ochos Rios,

Jamaica, 17-18 February 2009 to look at what 'Caribbeaness' is and how to make it more of a selling point in the global market place. The body is particularly seeking to promote hand-crafts in Haiti including setting up of a "small export development council". Says Williams: "There is a lot of energy and creativity in Haiti but they cannot afford the right materials." Carlos Wharton, CEDA's Senior Trade Adviser, says that the EPA has opened up opportunities in areas such as services but the region now faces the challenge of having to give similar openings in other nations such as Canada under Most Favoured Nation (MFN) treatment. Just ten years ago, Barbados had a vibrant garment industry which is now gradually disappearing as lower wages make it cheaper to produce textiles elsewhere. Wharton stresses the opportunities in the services sector and information technology but services are a "work in progress", he says. In the sector, says Williams: "there is not a level playing field and we will need technical assistance and

development assistance indefinitely." Oliveira says that the body intends to become a catalyst for regional development in the Caribbean's Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and in the French Caribbean Outermost Region incorporating Martinique and Guadeloupe. As we went to press, a workshop was planned in Martinique – from 31 March to 2 April 2009 – to inform the private sector of the need for greater investment in the renewable energy sector in the Caribbean with the possibility of European Investment Bank (EIB) lending. **D.P. ■**

For more information: www.carib-export.com

*Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago.

Keywords

Caribbean Export Development Agency; CARIFORUM; Philip Williams; Escipion Oliveira; Carlos Wharton; EPA; OCTs; EIB; Debra Percival.

Debra Percival and Malcolm Flanagan*

Fairtrade **BLAZES BANANA** trail for Windwards' growers

"If it ever happens, it would be worse than a hurricane for us", said Cornelius Lynch. Lynch is a banana farmer from Dennery in eastern St. Lucia and representative of the 'Fairtrade' label on the island. He was speaking about the ill-effects of a reported European Union (EU) move to reduce the current tariff on bananas imported from Central America from €176 per tonne as part of a new trade agreement with that region which includes major exporters Ecuador and Colombia. With the threat of further cuts in banana tariffs and new competitors coming on the market, banana production on St. Lucia alone has already taken a tumble: an annual 38,000 tonnes now compared with 75,000 tonnes in the early 1990s.

Windward Islands' banana farmers (St. Lucia, Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) are surviving due to the success of Fairtrade. Ninety per cent of St Lucia's exports are sold under the Fairtrade label in the United Kingdom and Ireland meaning a 'social premium' for farmers. Local farmers' associations in the Windwards decide how this money is

allocated, including scholarships for siblings of banana farmers.

Fairtrade was created 16 years ago by a number of well-known development organisations. Its Director, Harriet Lamb, last year struck a landmark deal with Sainsbury's, a major super-market chain in Britain and Ireland, when the company agreed to source all its bananas from Fairtrade suppliers. Sainsbury's works closely with banana growers in the Windwards but also Costa Rica, Ecuador, Colombia and Dominican Republic. The conversion to 100 per cent fairtrade bananas will create a social premium of £4M** per annum, Lamb recently told an audience at the London School of Economics (LSE). **■**

For more information: www.fairtrade.org

* Editor, 'Agra Informa', UK

** £1 sterling = €1.075 on 26/03/2009.

Keywords

Fairtrade; banana; St. Lucia; Dominica; St. Vincent; Grenadines; Caribbean; United Kingdom; Ireland.

Bananas growing in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.
© Debra Percival



Some of the traditional medicines used to cure various diseases, Ukunda, Kenya, July 2007. Attempts to regulate the industry, including the registration of traditional healers, have been affected by bitter rivalries between conventional doctors and traditional practitioners.
© Allan Gichigi/IRIN

Below:
Professor Jean-Marie Ouamba.
Courtesy of Jean-Christian Mboussou Mantanga

TRADITIONAL MEDICINE Takes a Step Up

Interview with Professor Jean-Maurille Ouamba, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, Ngouabi University, Brazzaville



The Traditional African Pharmacopoeia and Medicine programme (PMTA, French acronym), created in 1974 by the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education, aims to provide African communities with improved traditional medicines. Following the set up of a network in seventeen French-speaking African countries, the programme was given further impetus in 1995 with the creation of university courses.

Paradox: Africa has multi-property plant resources and secular practitioners of traditional medicine, but these two assets are threatened with oblivion. The PMTA programme was set up to fill this gap. A programme, explains Professor Jean-Maurille Ouamba,

that must “help resolve the crucial problem of medicines and gradually create the conditions for establishing the future African pharmaceutical industry”. A huge challenge on a continent where access to health care and the cost of products are real public health issues.

You are, among other things, coordinator of the Groupe d'études et de recherche sur la pharmacopée et la médecine traditionnelle au Congo (Gerphametrac; Congolese study and research group for pharmacopoeia and traditional medicine). In parallel with your R&D activities, do you have close relations with traditional practitioners?

Of course, otherwise our activities would be pointless. Doctoral students, for example, (DEA (Diplôme d'études approfondies; pre-doctoral diploma) or Masters and Doctorate) work closely with traditional practitioners. Contact is frequent. All the more so since our approach requires that we use, as the starting point for our research and development, the medicines they propose and the plants used in their traditional recipes. We organise meetings and attend those that are organised. Every August, for example, an African Traditional Medicine day is held in each country and we take part in the event. We sometimes act as scientific coordinators in the Congo. I was coordinator of the August 2007 African Traditional Medicine day, and one of my members of staff, Professor Ange Antoine Abena, pharmacologist, current Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at our university and assistant coordinator of the group, was coordinator before me.

The students also take part in the event. It offers the opportunity to present the results of the research developed. There is an exhibition of traditional medicine products, a forum, discussion on intellectual property, exchanges, etc. Some of the more equipped traditional practitioners have the possibility of using the results of the work for which they provide the starting point. There is also feedback with students, etc.

Are there still many traditional practitioners?

Yes, there are still many traditional health practitioners in Africa, organised (Association des tradipraticiens de Santé au Congo; Association of traditional health practitioners in the Congo) and individual. For example, there is a Centre National de la Médecine Traditionnelle (CNMT; national centre for traditional medicine), which establishes the link between research and tradition. There are similar organisations in a few African countries. The World Health Organisation (WHO) is also involved, particularly the WHO Africa which has its headquarters in Brazzaville, along with hospitals and the Laboratoire national de santé publique (Congolese public health laboratory).

Have you noted a loss of traditional knowledge?

Of course, traditional knowledge is being lost. Through our activities we are trying to gather together useful, vital information for the community in the sector. There is knowledge available regarding very effective anti-hypertensive, analgesic, anti-pyretic, anti-inflammatory, antidiarrheal and soft aphrodisiac plant extracts. Therefore, communities, 80% of which resort to traditional medicine, must be protected from the dangers, from poisoning. We need to know the synergies between the chemical and biological effects. New molecules and the considerable molecular bioavailability in African flora need to be researched. But, while carrying out advanced research, we must improve the processes of producing traditional recipes; we must make improved traditional medicines available to communities. The socio-economic impact of traditional medicine needs to be measured. There are illnesses that are currently treated with traditional medicine, but that are currently unknown by modern medicine; an aetiology needs to be made. There is still a lot to do, a lot to say... In this respect, we have responded to the ACP-EU Science and Technology Programme invitation to tender in order to increase our capacity for action (scientific, technological, wording suggestions, training courses, awareness raising, popularisation), etc. We need, among other things, the means to reach traditional practitioners, the means to work in the field.

A patent application is being prepared in your laboratories. How have traditional practitioners reacted to this intellectual protection? Who will receive the royalties?

They have not reacted very favourably. Hence the continuous contact. We must explain, convince. We cannot protect a plant, but we can protect a process. Some have been won over and have already protected their process and hold a patent. Rules have been set out by the WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) and AIPO (African Intellectual Property Organisation).

Lastly, have products already been developed, marketed?

Yes, of course. West African countries are very advanced; for example, Mali, which has already introduced medicines, such as the malarial, on the market. In the Congo, we have worked greatly on Tetra, an improved traditional Congolese medicine for treating gastric pain, from the traditional health practitioner Charles Mbemba. We have carried out a lot of work on Tetra to improve it. The product is available in pharmacies with the approval of the Congolese Health Department.

M.M.B. ■

Keywords

PMTA; Traditional African Pharmacopoeia and Medicine; Jean-Maurille Ouamba; Gerphametrac; traditional practitioner; Tetra, malarial.



Known as "Mzee Musa" by the locals, this traditional doctor displays his medicines, Ukunda, Kenya, July 2007. Kenya is to develop a national strategy for both promoting and regulating the use of traditional medicine, and providing alternative forms of treatment to the country's poor.
© Allan Gichigi/IRIN

R*eport*



'The Marginal', Luanda.
© Debra Percival

ANGOLA. 2002: Year One

A report by Debra Percival

Ano Zero: the simple lettering on a bag said everything. It was a reminder that Angola is starting over in the wake of a civil war that lasted 28 years and it's not just about the rebuilding of infrastructure. There is a huge expectation amongst a war weary population of between 16-17 million people of whom 50 per cent are estimated to be under 26.

Keen to be part of the oil-led boom, China, South Africa, Portugal and Brazil are all stepping up their relations with a country that has registered double-digit growth since 2002. Some predict that Angola can imitate South Africa in becoming an economic power house in the Southern African region. But there are still yawning disparities in the standard of living of Angolans and fears that the current dip in oil

prices and dent in global demand for diamonds – the other economic mainstay - may knock public investment plans off course.

Away from the mirrored new structures and the tooth-grinding traffic jams of central Luanda, power cuts are frequent and electricity is still inexistent in some of the peri-urban areas of Luanda. One of the reasons cited for Angola's topping of world tables of the most expensive cities for expatriates is the high level of imports, lack of competition in the hospitality sector and the sheer amount of hard currency circulating which pushes up the value of the Angolan kwanza and means sky high rents of upwards of US\$7,000 per month for a two-bedroomed apartment. These are challenges for the government in seeking investment to diversify the economy.

SPEEDY GROWTH

after a protracted war

The original inhabitants of this second largest country south of the Sahara by area were thought to have been the Khosian speakers followed by large numbers of Bantu speakers in the 10th century. The Portuguese first arrived in the late 15th century, establishing relations with the Kongo State stretching from modern Gabon in the north to the Cuanza River in the South, also with Lunda and Ndongo. Portuguese explorer, Paulo Dias de Novais, founded the present day capital, Luanda, as 'São Paulo de Loanda' in 1575. Several Portuguese settlements were set up on the coast becoming important posts in European trade with India and the Southeast Asia, also for selling slaves to Brazil. It was not until the Berlin Conference in 1885 that the country's current borders were set.

After nearly 500 years of Portuguese rule, the Movimento Popular de Liberação de Angola (MPLA) and the União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) and the Frente Nacional para a Libertação de Angola (FNLA) fought a long struggle (1961-1975) to gain independence from Portugal on November 11 1975. Agostinho Neto (MPLA) became the first President of post-colonial Angola. But MPLA and UNITA (whose alliance with the FNLA was to fall apart and elements of the FNLA absorbed into UNITA) soon clashed ideologically and military fuelled by Cold War allegiances: the Soviet Union and Cuba supporting the Marxist MPLA whose support largely came from the oil fields and cities and United States and South Africa backed the anti-communist UNITA largely from the Ovimbundu ethnic group and whose stronghold was centered around Huambo and the Bié Plateau.

At the end of the Cold War towards 1989, Cuba eventually withdrew support from the MPLA whereas the US started to question its support of UNITA led by Dr. Jonas Savimbi. The US demanded free and fair elections to take place. An agreement on the removal of foreign troops from Angola in exchange for independence of Namibia from South Africa, prompted the UN-brokered elections in 1992 with both Savimbi and MPLA

Nightly lightshow on side of China's new headquarters in Africa, Luanda, Angola 2009.
© Debra Percival



leader Eduardo dos Santos running for the Presidency. But without any clear majority in the first round, fighting resumed. It was not until 22 February 2002 following Dr. Savimbi's ambush by Angolan troops that the war which had cost between half a million to a million lives ceased. The ceasefire of 22 April 2002 launched a "Programme for Social and Productive Regeneration of Demobilised and War Displaced People". MPLA leader Eduardo dos Santos became President. His party also currently hold a big majority in parliament following the legislative elections of September 2008 (see article on elections). Presidential and municipal elections are both due to take place in 2009, although due to a Constitutional review underway dates are yet to be announced.

> China's Africa headquarters

Peace triggered a rush by foreign investors seeking to be part of the oil-led post war boom, notably China. Angola is now the country's bigger partner in Africa, symbolised by its new headquarters for Africa in Luanda. China gives loans mainly to build the country's infrastructure, in exchange for minerals. Although official figures on the size of this cooperation are hard to come by, diplomats in Luanda estimate that between \$US12bn and \$US14bn of Chinese credit has gone to Angola since 2002. This includes a \$US5bn loan in December 2008 extended by \$US1bn in February 2009 to counter the drop in oil revenue which has affected the country's currency reserves. Brazil, South Africa and Portugal are other important partners.

For World Bank (WB) Country Manager, Alberto Cheuca Mora, there has been "relatively healthy macro-economic management of the economy since 2002", although education, health and agriculture are all lagging. But for the first time since the end of the war, there will be not double-digit growth in 2009 economists predict. "Angola will not experience recession and will not be in a situation where by the growth rate is lower than the population growth rate which is three per cent", said Minister of the Economy, Manuel Nunes in February 2009. The Minister said that the country was now thinking about a new marketing strategy for diamonds to boost demand. Pre-global economic slowdown, the country was seeking to increase production to 17-19M by 2010. Angola may also have to revise its \$US42bn public investment strategy for 2008, he hinted. The February 2009 meeting of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), currently presided by Angola, agreed that the country should cut

back its oil production quota to 1.65M barrels per day to shore up prices.

Near but far from Luanda's high-rises, inhabitants of Roque Santeiro (a slum area on a cliff face near Luanda's port named after a Brazilian soap opera) or Cazenga, where two million of Luanda's 5-6 million people live in poor dwellings, are hopeful that the economic boom will eventually improve their lives. Access to water, sanitation and electricity in these areas is sporadic. Funds from donors such as the WB and EC are being channelled to areas such as water and sanitation (see EDF article). Angola is one of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries so far having little interest in an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) – a free trade agreement with the EU – says João Gabriel de Ferreira, EC Ambassador to Angola. Ferreira says his understanding is that the country is currently drawing up new priorities in different sectors and is worried about impeding development of its infant industries. But Ferreira suggests that an EPA would: "Help a better definition of how they want to develop trade such as the area of customs tariffs and help with diversification of the economy." **D.P.** ■

Keywords

MPLA; UNITA; Eduardo dos Santos; Dr Jonas Savimbi; Rosa Cruz e Silva; EC; World Bank; Chá de Caxinde.



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KEEPING HERITAGE ALIVE

"We do not want Luanda to become a Shanghai or a Hong Kong", says Rui M. Nobre Guapo Garção, Director of the design group, RGG Creative Solutions, staring at the mushrooming tower blocs in Luanda. Jacques dos Santos, Director of the cultural organisation, Chá de Caxinde shares his view that the government should have a more forthright policy to preserve some of the old colonial buildings inside and outside Luanda. Minister of Culture, Rosa Cruz e Silva told us that keeping heritage alive with renovation of museums and training of staff and to catalogue their contents were also important.

PAINSTAKING RESEARCH ON ANGOLA

War and peace without democratisation and *Political sociology of an oil state* are the two volumes of *Post-colonial Angola* written by Christine Messiant (1947-2006), tracing the country's recent history to attain "peace without democracy", argues the author. Recently published posthumously by Éditions Karthala, volume 1 looks at how civil war fuelled ethnic division whereas volume 2 examines how Angola's strategic role has gone from preventing Soviet expansionism to supplying oil. Messiant was a former researcher at France's 'Centre d'Études Africaines de L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS)', co-founder of the review *Lusotopie* and on the editorial board of *Politique Africaine*. Vol. 1, 413 p; Vol.2, 429 p. Éditions Karthala, Paris 2008

Tomatoes on their way down the Rio Cuanza.
© Massimo Pronio



DIVERSIFICATION drive

Angola has no shortage of business prospectors from all corners of the globe seeking opportunities from food processing to selling building materials. The mainstay, oil, may bring in US\$40bn per year (2008) but employs just one per cent of the country's workforce, according to government statistics. The focus on stimulating job-creating sectors is being hastened by lower oil prices and the global economic slump which has brought a dip in global demand for diamonds, another of Angola's mainstays.

Agriculture, construction, hydro-electricity, infrastructure development, tourism and hotels all have potential to increase the country's productive sectors, according to the Angola National Private Investment Agency (ANIP). Pre-civil war, the manufacturing sector accounted for 16 per cent of GDP (1973) including foodstuffs and other consumer goods. By 1997, it had declined to 4.4 per cent of GDP (oil refining, drinks and cement). Imports meanwhile have shot up, according to figures from the accountancy firm KPMG, particularly from South Africa, Brazil and Portugal. The number of cargo ships queuing to unload in Luanda's port – often surpassing 30 at any time – is a symbol of the country's import dependency. ANIP has brought in a new investment code to simplify procedures and provide incentives to attract foreign investments of between \$US100,000 to US\$5USM. A US\$1bn World Bank (WB) loan was also announced for diversification in January 2008.

► Crying out to be cultivated

Food security is one of the features of the National Plan for 2009, according to the Minister of Planning, Ana Dias Lourenço who pinpoints more investment in fisheries, more irrigated fields, research centres, improve farming and seed quality to boost agricultural production by 20 percent in 2009. Pre-conflict, Angola was an exporter of Robusta coffee, sisal and bananas. Its main agricultural areas; Luanda, Bengo, Benguela, Huila, Cabinda and Kwanza South have potential for cereals, roots, beans, fruits vegetables, oil seeds, green products, cattle breeding and meat processing, pig and poultry-rearing, says ANIP.

But according to a Portuguese World Bank agricultural specialist interviewed in Luanda, increased production will not happen overnight. The country has to start from scratch in setting up a seed bank and storage in rural areas where surplus production waiting to go to market can be placed. And the country's

two million subsistence farmers have to learn new production techniques, he says.

Other minerals iron ore, gold, phosphates, manganese, copper, lead, zinc, granite, marble and tungsten, as well as hydro-electric potential and natural gas, iron and steel all have potential, says ANIP including the re-opening of the Cassinga and Cassala iron ore mines and steel works project at Namibe. The BIOCUM project linking up Brazilian company, *Odebrecht* in partnership with national oil company, *Sonangol*, to produce sugar, ethanol and 160,000 megawatts of power with waste products is just one example of large-scale projects getting off the ground in the diversification drive.

D.P. ■

Keywords

Angola; Diversification; Agriculture; Ana Dias Lourenço; ANIP.

EC AID goes from relief to capacity building

Interview with João Gabriel Ferreira, Head of the EC Delegation in Angola

João Gabriel Ferreira is Head of the European Commission Delegation to Angola. In the Directorate General for development in Brussels (formerly DG 8) he variously worked on relations with Cape Verde, Mauritania, Sahel, Southern Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, the Indian Ocean and Madagascar and was for four years on the Angola country 'desk'. He was number two in the EC Delegation to Brazil and subsequently Chargé d'Affaires prior to his Luanda appointment in November 2006 where we spoke in February 2009.

What is the EC's role in Angola given the country's high level of growth?

Growth is one thing, development another. Since the war Angola has achieved double digit economic growth but development efforts are moving at a slower pace. You can see this in the Human Development Index (HDI)*. Angola is not really in a very good position. There's room for improvement.

How is EC aid evolving?

The Delegation opened in 1995. We have been applying LRRD which links relief rehabilitation and development. For many years we essentially worked on relief, humanitarian aid and food aid. Although the war did not end until 2002, there were moments when fighting abated and peace agreements were signed bringing a ray of hope. During these moments, donors, and the EC in particular, did some rehabilitation

where possible. Now there's no more relief and in 2002 we started to think about how to shift from rehabilitation to development. There was simply no access in many areas of the country. Rebuilding was firstly needed to make possible other activities centred on the social sector; education, health and training which are what we are tackling now.

What are new priorities under the 10th EDF (2008-2013)?

These are mainly: support to governance and to economic and institutional reform; social and human development and thirdly to rural development agriculture and food security. We have to help the country meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

How does China's massive aid affect what the EC does?

The Chinese offer credit lines, we give grants. By definition, credit lines have to be repaid, grants do not. I do not know the full extent of Chinese involvement in Angola but it is significant; to my knowledge several billions of dollars. There are no strings. To my knowledge, they sign contracts for whatever is needed, essentially infrastructure building. We are still rebuilding some infrastructure but this is not the main target of our direct bilateral support. Angola is eligible for the infrastructure facility for all Africa but so far, no projects have been submitted and as far as I know, there is no interest from Angola to access



this – perhaps due to agreements with China but also some with the Brazilian government in infrastructure, although support is more diversified in the case of the Brazilians. The 10th EDF will concentrate on capacity building: to the Ministry of Planning, Justice in the broad sense, The National Institute of Statistics and Trade.

What is the nature of your political dialogue with Angola?

We've had some formal meetings but I, and other Heads of Mission of EU countries, believe there's much work to do in this area of cooperation. Political dialogue is defined in Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement where its definition is very broad. It's not a matter of discussing a), b) or c). Some consider that we are trying to target a small number of issues like democracy, human rights and gender issues. We are interested in these but more widely, what the country has to say about regional issues, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, its perspectives on the Southern African Development

Keywords

João Gabriel Ferreira; Angola; EC Delegation to Angola; MDGs; China; 10th EDF; Debra Percival.

On top:
Ambassador João Gabriel Ferreira 2009.
© Debra Percival

One of the poorest areas of Luanda, Roque Santeiro 2009.
© Debra Percival

Community (SADC), the African Union (AU) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission whose headquarters are in Luanda. So far, we have not been fully successful in this respect although we have discussed issues such as regional integration and national and regional politics, Angola's elections and visas for incoming and outgoing visitors. We are thinking about how to improve dialogue.

What have you gained professionally and personally from being here?

Professionally, it's another layer of experience and to some extent, it's a return, since I worked with Angola from 1994-1998. It is extremely interesting to see the evolution in Angola which is on the whole positive. I had the opportunity of visiting during the war and

the difference is amazing. I'm getting richer in intellectual terms. I am learning through new books written by Angolan writers about social issues. **D.P. ■**

*Angola ranks 157 out of 179 in the 2008 Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Box: HALO deminer using a metal detector to look for mines in a field in Bié province where returnees have built their houses © The HALO Trust



MINE-FREE WITHIN 10-15 YEARS?

Alongside Colombia and Afghanistan, Angola is amongst the three most heavily mined countries in the world, says Richard Grindle, Programme Manager for Angola of the Halo Trust, the British NGO that is clearing three-quarters of the country's mines. Anti-personnel and anti-tank mines still kill or maim 100 people a year. Angola could be free of mines within 10-15 years, provided that donors do not take their eye off the issue, says Grindle. The European Community (EC), DFID, Irish, Swiss, US and Finnish governments have all funded Halo.

The most effective way of clearing the estimated numbers is by painstakingly cutting through vegetation, sweeping terrain with hand-held metal detectors and digging up the mines. Halo began its task in Angola in 1994 during an initial reprieve in fighting in the civil war. When a mine is found, its location is recorded by satellite. The data is collated by Angola's National Intersectorial Commission for Humanitarian Demining and Assistance (CNIDAH) which also coordinates the work of all the NGOs including Halo which is working in six provinces. Halo's 1,000 staff are paid €220 US dollars a month, each clearing a 30 metre-long, one metre-wide channel per day. Last year, 250 hectares or 280 football pitches were cleared, says Grindle. The EC is expected to make available €4M of funding over four years to NGOs for mine clearance in Angola under the 10th EDF. De-mining is important to boost the country's agricultural production. Grindle draws attention to the importance of the Ottawa Convention of 1997 in banning the production and trade of anti-personnel mines. **D.P. ■**

10TH EDF – NATIONAL INDICATIVE PROGRAMME FOR ANGOLA (2008–2013)

Governance	€42M
Human and Social development	€68.5M
Rural development	€68.5M

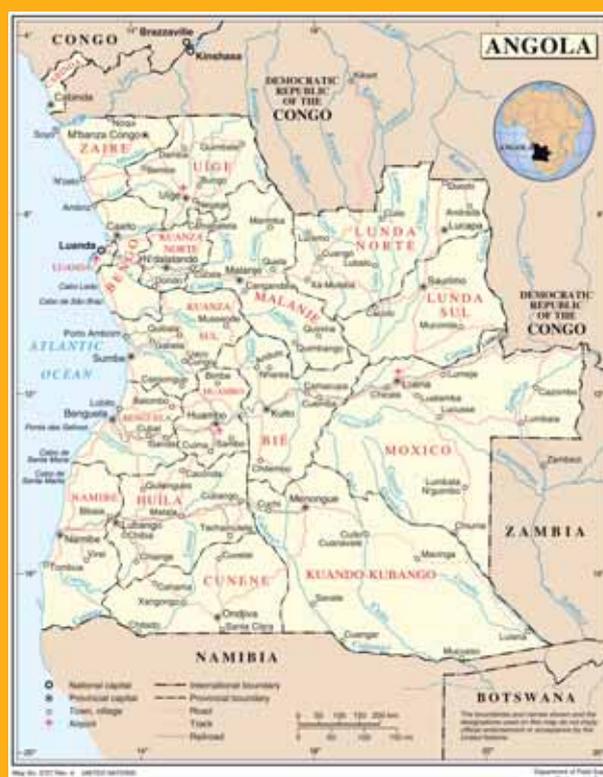
Other programmes, €35M of which:

Water	€8M
Regional Integration	€9M
Private Sector	€3M
Non-State Actors	€3M
Technical Cooperation Facility	€3M
Biodiversity Management	€2M
Governance Initiative in PALOP countries	€7M

A further sum of €13.9M is foreseen in a separate 'B' envelope for such items as emergency assistance. The country is also one of 15 beneficiaries of the €116M 10th EDF regional programme for countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Map of Angola.

© United Nations Organisation



Communities get involved in MANAGING WATER



EDF-financed water point, Cazenga, Luanda, Angola 2009. © Debra Percival

A 9th EDF project is providing a clean and reliable water supply and improved sanitation to Cazenga, a peri-urban area of Luanda which is home to an estimated two million of the city's six million population. It also means cheaper water and is trailblazing ways of managing the resource. It is just one of the projects the EC has funded in the sector since war ended.

Before the €22M project got off the ground, people were “left to their own devices” to access safe water, says Mauro di Veroli, the project’s coordinator in the EC Delegation to Angola. Water was hugely expensive despite the price of 32 kwanzas per 1,000 litres established by the government in 2004. The Belgian company, Techniques Spéciales à l’Export (TSE) is building the infrastructure of the two distribution tanks – one of which has already been completed – which convey water to the taps by gravity and booster pumps. It has also constructed 400 water points, each with four taps. One hundred and eighty have already been completed, says Mauro di Veroli, sited every 200 metres along the labyrinth of Cazenga’s streets.

Roberta Virgilio of the Italian NGO, Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC), is setting up management systems for the water points, along with two other NGOs, each covering a specific area of Cazenga; Cazenga Popular, Talahadi and Hoji ya Henda. When fully up and running, Roberta Virgilio says every

waterpoint will be overseen by a ‘Zelador’ or ‘Zeladora’ (female): ‘the one who cares’. Luanda’s water utility, Empresa de Aguas de Luanda (EPAL) – which is also receiving technical assistance under the EC project – is expected to draw up contracts with the local associations, ‘Associa de Moradores para a Gestão de Chafarizes’ (AMOGEC). Each of these will look after 15 water points and provide information to consumers and also pay a monthly salary of \$100 to the ‘zelador’. EPAL is expected to introduce a system of pre-paid card ‘cartão prepago’ for water priced at the fixed 2004 rate. Manuela Monteiro of the Portuguese NGO, Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr (IMVF) told us that her NGO would shortly distribute 5,000 free jerry cans under the project to carry water hygienically. Other NGOs, including Development Workshop (DW) and OXFAM are involved in construction of latrines, management of household waste and, also, capacity building for local masons and kits to improve environmental sanitation and personal hygiene. Theatre groups from Cazenga are also involved in the

project to put across the message to residents of the pre-paid card system. The project has also triggered ideas from customers on other issues such as how to manage waste water.

► Capacity building focus of 10th EDF

The 10th EDF (2008-2013) will look more at giving institutional support for water supply management rather than building new infrastructure in the water and sanitation sector. Some \$17M of 10th EDF monies will go to projects to increase the number of skilled workers and modernise service provision. Funds will also go to drawing up a strategy on how to improve domestic water quality, to support water sector institutions and provide help with outlining a national sanitation programme. **D.P.** ■

Keywords

Cazenga; water; sanitation; capacity-building; 9th EDF; 10th EDF; GVC; TSE; IMVF; DW; OXFAM.

OPPOSITION CHALLENGES

government's strength in National Assembly

Interview with President of UNITA, Isaias Samakuva



Isaias Samakuva is President of the União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola). Founded in 1966, it fought alongside the Movimento Popular de Libertação (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) in the war for independence of Angola and subsequently against the MPLA in the ensuing civil war (1975-2002) when UNITA was backed by China, and later the United States and South Africa.

UNITA is the leading opposition party in the National Assembly holding 16 out of the 220 seats. With strongholds in Huambo and Bié province in Central Angola during war-time, now in peacetime Samakuva claims UNITA has support in all Angola's 550 communes. We spoke to him on the outskirts of Luanda about the direction as a political party in opposition and policies to increase support.

Samakuva joined UNITA in 1974 as a sympathiser. From 1976 to 1988, he was to stay 12 years in the bush reaching the post of brigadier. He was subsequently appointed as UNITA's representative to the UK for four years and in 1994 became a member of UNITA's delegation for peace talks. When war re-started in 1998, he went to Paris, remaining four years as coordinator of UNITA's external missions. On the death of UNITA's former leader, Dr. Jonas

Savimbi, in 2002, he returned to Angola and was elected UNITA's President in 2003.

Why does UNITA have weak support in peacetime?

The results of the last elections cannot be trusted. We want to know how many we are. Like the European Union (see intro), we produced a report following the elections. From

Above:
UNITA President, Isias Samakua 2009.
© Debra Percival

Left:
Luena, where the peace agreement was signed in 2002. © Massimo Pronio



the National Electoral Commission's own data, we realised that 12,200 'phantom' tables have emerged (nobody knows where they come from). A calculation of the minimum voters on each table, adds up to three million 'phantom' voters. Under the national election plan, there were supposed to be 37,750 tables, but at the end of the day there were 50,900. Intimidation during the election was huge, not only in Luanda but all over the country so the results do not express the will of the people.

Policy-wise, what are your plans to increase support for UNITA?

The people of this country need a change of direction. The economy needs to be diversified. It is all concentrated on oil and diamonds. There's a need to give attention to agriculture. Tools do not exist and people need help with fertilisers. The country needs to train people who can go into rural areas to teach how to use fertilisers do marketing and diversify their production: there are areas which are good for maize whilst others may be good for fruits. Some citizens are making some efforts on this without help from anybody. We also have other minerals, very good deposits of gold – but nobody is touching gold. The Japanese

were very interested in our iron. We also have copper, nickel and phosphates.

What would you do to ensure that the benefits trickle down to ordinary people?

Companies should be obliged by law to look at the social sphere. Employees should benefit from the profits companies make. If you go to the Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul (diamond mining provinces), the road from Lunda Sul to Lunda Norte is very bad. Some people from territories that produce oil are in misery: they are without electricity, schools. There are some efforts being made but not enough. Some oil companies have projects, others nothing at all.

What's your view of Chinese influence in the country?

It is good to have relations with a country that is very dynamic but this should be in accordance with international rules. There should be transparency. Nobody in the country, apart from those directly dealing with China, knows how much we are getting. The National Assembly (NA) does not know but the Constitution of the country says that any

credits should go through the NA and that the government should be accountable. We see roads, hospitals and schools being built with credit from China and others, so what is what? We see a lot of Chinese people working whilst Angolans are looking for work and what the Chinese are doing is not skilled work.

What is UNITA's philosophy and vision in peace-time?

The citizen is the departure and arrival point of every action of government. We have to dialogue, consult and listen to the citizen. We think that training, food and health are the things that must be solved first. I see a prosperous Angola that has the values of social justice, solidarity, respect, for human rights and democracy. **D.P. ■**

Picture above:
President of Republic, José Eduardo dos Santos on billboards everywhere in Luanda 2009. © Debra Percival

Picture below:
MPLA holds a big majority in National Assembly. Street sign, Luanda 2009. © Debra Percival

Keywords

Isaías Samakuva; UNITA; MPLA; Dr. Jonas Savimbi; China; Debra Percival.



EU EVALUATES LANDMARK ELECTIONS

The 5 September 2008 legislative elections were the second to be held in Angola since independence from Portugal in 1975: the first which took place in 1992 led to a new civil war which lasted until 2002. Invited by Angola's National Electoral Commission (NEC), Vice-President of the European Parliament, Luisa Morgantini (Italian MEP of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left group) led a team of 108 observers from 21 EU States, plus also Norway and Switzerland and seven members of the European Parliament. The observers monitored 405 polling stations in 18 provinces. On a positive note; their final report concluded that the elections were a step in strengthening democracy. A high voter turnout (over 80 per cent in many provinces), signalled a clear commitment to the democratic process, leaving behind decades of war and civil conflict. Another landmark: 39 per cent of members of Angola's National Assembly are women. But the mission pinpointed weaknesses in the election's organisation notably an uneven playing field during the campaign of contestants' coverage by state-controlled media with public television, Televisão Pública de Angola (TPA) and Rádio Nacional de Angola (RNA) and the daily, *Jornal de Angola*, giving more column inches and airtime to the winning MPLA.

To view the full report: www.eueomangola.org

ANGOLANS

need to be more aware of their rights, say NGOs

Angolan human rights organisations want to strengthen the rights of the country's citizens to build on national reconciliation which has moved ahead since war ended in 2002. Many of the NGOs are also awaiting recognition from government.

Human rights' leader, Francisco
Tonga, concerned by encroaching
development 2009. © Debra Percival



“We (Angolans) have not yet found ourselves”, says João Castro ‘Freedom’, Secretary General of the Liga Internacional da Defesa Dos Direitos Humanos E Ambiente Internacional (LIDDHA) set up in 1999. A look back at Angola’s history explains how lack of respect for citizens’ rights is the legacy of centuries of foreign influence in the country: nearly five hundred years of Portuguese colonial rule with the demands of Angolans being rejected led to armed conflict. Subsequent conflict on Angolan soil, pitching East against West for domination of Africa during the Cold War, followed. One example of the lack of unity among groups in the country’s 18 provinces, he says, is in the fact that marriages are still disallowed between some ethnic groups. Since 2002, both peace and rapid economic development have lifted the country to a metaphorical level five, he says, but without going through levels one, two, three or four: “We are up there in the air and don’t know where to go.”

“Many people are not aware of their rights”, continues Simão Yakitenge Ngola Lutumba, President of Multisectoral para o Desenvolvimento Integral (CMDI); whether they be prisoners, women or poor. Meeting with us in Luanda in February, the human rights groups did say the situation has improved since the end of civil war seven years ago but each gave examples of rights being flouted. Salvador Freire Dos Santos of Mãos Livres explains the need for incidents such as summary killings by police [citing a particular case in December 2008 involving ‘bandits’] to be fully and impartially investigated. As for the right to information, although new titles are springing up, the government-financed newspaper, *Jornal de Angola*, and public TV still predominate. A lack of funding makes it difficult for independent media to survive and any independent local radio is unable to operate beyond a 60-kilometre radius, says Dos Santos. And independent information is especially lacking in the provinces. This vacuum means donors have stepped in, he says (see box).

> Private dwellings at risk

YaKitenge, whose NGO works in health and education, says a recent report by his NGO found the highest incidence of poverty in Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul, provinces in North East Angola where people are prevented from working in fields because of diamond mining.

Dialogue with government must be stepped up: “We must look at other ways of doing things”, he says. CMDI says that prisons built for 300 inmates house 1,800 prisoners and they are full of young people, many of whom are detained without trial. Francisco Tonga of the Conselho de Coordenação dos Direitos Humanos/Angola, an umbrella of 25 NGOs furthering human rights, draws a direct link between a lack of respect for certain areas and the continued poverty of many Angolans. His NGO has received €80,000 from the European Development Fund (EDF) to inform citizens about their rights. Looking out from the rooftop of his office near the airport one issue faced by Angolans living in the poorer outskirts of Angola is driven home: huge commercial buildings encroaching on areas of private dwellings and some people having to move home to make way for the advancing economic boom.

Tonga says that human rights groups should also have their say in the current Constitutional reform.

All the NGOs called for funds from government, private entities and the social fund set up by oil companies to be allocated in a more transparent way João Castro ‘Freedom’ said it was almost impossible for an Angolan NGO to tender for a project funded by the EU: “This is just not good enough in the Third Millennium”, he told us.

D.P. ■

Keywords

Angola; human rights; João Castro ‘Freedom’; Francisco Tonga; Simão Yakitenge Ngola Lutumba; Debra Percival.

EU SUPPORTS INDEPENDENT RADIO

The EC is putting in €800,000 of a €1.13M project to build on the objective reporting of Luanda’s popular and only politically independent radio station, ‘Radio Ecclesia’. The BBC World Service Trust will train journalists to increase reports that “cover the local democratic processes in a balanced objective and thought provoking way”. Programmes will feature the voices of non-state actors and local authorities with audience feedback. The project also plans for the station to be taken on the road with 20 out of studio events planned.

Country of the **BAOBAB**

Tourism is almost unknown in Angola and for most will remain a dream - for a while anyway. We spoke with Massimo Pronio, who working for the EC Delegation in Angola between 2004-2007 spent his freetime discovering the country’s hidden beauties. The signing of the Luena Peace Agreement in 2002, ushering in a new era of national reconciliation, peace and stability, has turned heads towards developing tourism’s potential to diversify the economy. Since the country’s tourism infrastructure is poor and keeping to main roads is a must due to the landmines still buried, the sector is only just starting to develop.

Pronio says whether driving along the coast or in the internal plateau, the Planalto, the Baobab Tree (*Imbondeiro* in Portuguese or *Mukua* in Kimbundu) dominates the landscape. Angola has a myriad of natural beauties; breathtaking coastlines, fish-rich seas, hill, mountain and plateau areas, rivers (populated with crocodiles) and splendid waterfalls. Its climate varies from tropical in the north which borders the DRC to desert-like in the south bordering Namibia, describes Pronio. In more remote areas, time virtually came to a standstill in 1974 when Portugal's colonial rule ended followed by the outbreak of a civil war lasting 28 years.

He says the Palanca Negra Gigante, a beautiful type of antelope which was thought to be extinct, has in the last few years been sighted in the Cangandala Park Reserve near Malanje, but this symbolic species for Angola is still on the list of the world's critically endangered species. Calandula Falls, near Malanje, can be reached in a few hours' drive from Luanda. Go via Pungo Andongo to see the beautiful Pedras Negras; huge round-shaped rocks.

The capital, Luanda, was planned in colonial times as a pleasant small city by the sea with a big harbour and a sweeping, promenade-lined bay ('The Marginal'). Today it is overcrowded, paralysed by traffic and not especially welcoming. If you stay in Luanda, says Pronio, visit the monument to Agostino Neto, the Fortaleza and 'Ilha', a beautiful beach-lined peninsula.

> Angola's natural wonders

For short day trips from Luanda, Pronio recommends Barra do Dande, the Fort of Mushima, the Fortress of Massangano, the Kissama Reserve, Rio Longa and two fishing villages about two to three hours south of Luanda: Cabo Ledo and Cabo San Braz. A must on the way is the Mirador da Lua, one of Angola's geological wonders. With more time to spare, drive to the beautiful coastal city of Benguela which gives the name to the famous Benguela current. Then head for Catumbela and Lobito to the peninsula (Ilha).

South West from Benguela are Baya Azul, Caota and further on, Baia Farta, where sandy cliffs overhang the crystal ocean. Lubango is a beautiful city in an agricultural area, famous for its strawberries. Find the time to visit Tundavala's Canyon, says Pronio. The twisty road down to Namibe, two hours from Lubango through the wonderful mountains of Serra da Leba, is a feat of engineering. The road has seven layers of asphalt and was financed by the European Development Fund (EDF). As you descend, you are likely to meet people of the Mukuwila ethnic group dressed in their traditional highly-coloured garments. Namibe is a beautiful coastal town bordered by desert with a promenade and palm trees. Continue the drive South to the town of Tombwa, once known for its fishing industry but nowadays hardly populated due to the advancing desert and shortage of water.

A first encounter with the Namibe Desert

comes between Namibe and Tombwa in the form of the 'Oasis of Arco', a lagoon formed by the Rio Curoca which takes its name from a rock in the shape of an Arc, says Pronio. Heading further South through the desert you come to the estuary of the Cunene River (Foz de Cunene), which is just a border post but a great spot for fishing and seal, turtle and dolphin-watching.

Getting there is part of the adventure. It can be reached either by driving through the Iona Park and camping in the desert (Look out for the *Welwitschia Mirabilis*, a desert plant) or take a two-day trip along the coast and camp in the sandy dunes. The trip can only be done on certain days and only when there's low tide. Completely untouched by humans, the area is home to seals and turtles. On the coast, spot flamingos and on the horizon, watch dolphins as they jump out of the sea. On land, next to the ocean, Oryx Antelopes climb up the sandy dunes. And a drive down the coast to where desert meets ocean, passing through Baia dos Tigres, is a unique experience in itself. Go to Angola for this alone, says Pronio. **D.P.** ■

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"Sacred Baobab" seen from the ground.
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Below:

The Mirador da Lua, one of Angola's geological wonders, 2009. © Debra Percival

Keywords

Massimo Pronio; Tourism; Angola; Namibe; Lubango; Benguela; Luanda; Baobab; Palanca Negra Gigante.



Jerónimo Belo*

The Angolan singer
Afrikanita.
© Divaldo Gregório

ANGOLA finds its place in history



Angola's vibrancy and the efforts made by millions of ordinary people to rebuild the country after a long and bloody armed conflict, allowing families to be reunited and the country's development to move ahead, have not raised that much curiosity from the outside compared to the watching of oil prices and business opportunities in this potentially wealthy country. An appreciation of Angolan culture is crucial to understand this constantly rebuilding country.

Angola is alive and kicking as it embraces that long-held dream: a return to history through an affirmation of culture to discover its rightful place in time through cinema, theatre, the launch of books and records, music concerts by local artists, poetry readings, conferences and discussions.

Angola is full of hope.
The importance of oil will fade.

Once guns were silenced in 2002, Angola started what perhaps proved to be its hardest task: that of forging an identity, 'Angolanidade'. This involves recognising its current national reality and inheritance from the past and on the other, positive outside contributions. This phenomenon which is increasingly coming to the fore in Angolan society is not something entirely new. Look, for example, at the history, struggles and aspirations of African Americans from the second half of the 1940s. Likewise, the first President of the

People's Republic of Angola, Agostinho Neto (doctor, poet and President of the People's Republic of Angola, 1975-1979), Viriato da Cruz and António Jacinto, the messengers of the new Poetics of 'Angolanness.' This group capitalised on the historic moment and created the ethos and esthetical reference of vanguardism.

> The origins of Jazz

The recurrence of poems alluding to slavery – the painful bleeding of our human potential – and the Blues – the biggest expression of African American music – have led to the origins of Jazz music which are associated with the suffering of the Africans who were transplanted to the New World, as well as with the worst aspects of capitalism: slavery and racism.

The struggles and aspirations of the African American – from slave to citizen – have had the greatest influence on the path of Africa's elite to consciousness. Today, the spirit of open-

ness that characterises Angolans is reflected in music. Music is one of the best ways of getting to know the Angolan capital, Luanda. Singers and musicians increasingly express themselves through Semba, Angola's principal music, combined with the freedom and improvisation of Jazz. The result is Semba Jazz; a music permeated with flavours and aromas. It is performed by artists who know their past well and believe that their roots are no obstacle to growth but will help them grow even stronger, such as Mário Garnacho (pianist), Hélio Cruz (drummer), Wando Moreira (bass), Dalú Roger (percussion) or still, singer Afrikanita. The Atlantic Ocean has brought this music – whose main purpose is to get people to come together and dance – much closer, thus fulfilling an old dream: a return to Africa. ■

* Jerónimo Belo is a cultural journalist based in Angola.

Keywords

Angola; Jerónimo Belo; Agostinho Neto; Semba Jazz; Afrikanita.

A Czech Bohemia

A report by Marie-Martine Buckens

Streets of Prague, 2009
© Marie-Martine Buckens

Formerly the nerve centre of Central Europe, Prague is now being pushed to the front of the European stage. Holding the Presidency of the European Union for the first time since it became a member in 2004, it is with determination, but not without some apprehension, that it is leading the negotiations between the 27 member states. Negotiations made more difficult with the spectre of a widespread economic crisis. But, through their rich, diverse and sometimes hard but always passionate past, the Czechs have learnt to fear nothing and to defend human rights to the hilt. ■

BOHEMIA, where EAST meets WEST



A bridge in Prague, 2009
© Marie-Martine Buckens

Representing almost two-thirds of the surface area and population of the present-day Czech Republic – Moldavia and a tiny fraction of Silesia making up the rest of the country – Bohemia was the melting pot for what later became Czechoslovakia prior to the Czech Republic.



Statue of Jan Hus, reformer and first dean of the Charles University in Prague, 2009.
© Marie-Martine Buckens

Mountain ranges, such as the Ore and the Giant Mountains, mark Bohemia's borders, separating it from Germany to the west, Poland to the north-east, the province of Moravia to the east and Austria to the south. This central position meant that it was much coveted by monarchs and emperors. After the Premyslid dynasty initiated by Libusa who, based in Prague, was at the origin of the first Czech state, from the 10th century Bohemia became a part of the Holy Roman Empire and experienced a golden Middle Ages. The Emperor Charles IV – who lent his name to the famous stone bridge lined with statues that crosses the Vltava – made it Europe's most important city and the home of central Europe's first university. This was followed, in the 15th century, by the first uprising of Czech peasants and nobles against the Catholic Empire that, 20 years later, ended in the defeat of the insurgents. A centu-

ry later, the Austrian Habsburgs seized the crown of Bohemia and retained it for the next 400 years. Although one particularly enlightened Habsburg emperor, Rudolph II, brought the spirit of the Renaissance to Prague, the Protestant revolt grew from the early 17th century and culminated in the Thirty Years War.

> Birth

It was not until the 19th century that Austrian domination finally weakened and the Czechs rediscovered their culture and the Czech language was again established. On the horizon was the First World War, in the aftermath of which the Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken up, and which saw the subsequent birth of a new nation. Czechoslovakia came into being in 1918. Twenty years later, the republic was one of the first victims of the political manoeuvring that preceded Nazi domination of continental Europe. Although Prague emerged virtually intact physically from the Second World War, the Jewish community – making up almost a third of Prague’s pre-war population – paid a heavy price under the Nazi occupation, losing almost three-quarters of its members. Czechoslovakia was liberated by

the Soviets who entered Prague in May 1945 after the uprising in the city.

It proved to be a poisoned liberation. After three years in power, the coalition government that had united all the resistance parties took a radical turn. In 1948, Czechoslovakia entered a period of over 40 years under a Stalinist government that trampled on individual liberties. There were purges of Jews, intellectuals and even Czech communists. In 1952, 14 communists were arrested, 11 of whom were sentenced to death following the “Prague trials”. It was later discovered that the evidence and confessions had been fabricated. Three were also sentenced to life imprisonment, including Artur London, a Jewish communist who had been appointed deputy foreign minister in 1949. Pardoned in 1956, he left Czechoslovakia in 1963 for exile in France. Three years later he published *The Confession*, which was filmed by the Greek director Costa Gavras.

> Charter 77

The year 1968 is ingrained in the memories of Czechs and indeed Europeans as a whole: the Warsaw Pact tanks repressed the attempt

at resistance by the citizens of Prague. A core of intellectuals remained. In 1976, in protest against the repressive policy of the government, the intellectuals circulated a petition, known as Charter 77, calling on the government to respect the Charter of Human Rights signed the year before in Helsinki. They included a certain Václav Havel, a playwright who, in 1989, was swept to power in the ‘Velvet Revolution’. Four years later he became president of the Czech Republic after it split from Slovakia.

After 13 years’ service as his country’s president, in the spring of 2003 Václav Havel stepped down in favour of the ultraliberal Vaclav Klaus, prime minister at the time. Although a eurosceptic, it was he who presided over his country’s entry to the European Union in May 2004.

M.M.B. ■

Keywords

Bohemia; Emperor Charles IV; Václav Havel; Vaclav Kraus; Artur London.

CRYSTAL TEARS

In September, the Sklo Bohemia factory in the town of Svetla-nad-Sazavou, 80 km south-east of Prague, switched off its ovens in which the famous Bohemia crystal was melted. A few weeks later, the company closed its second largest manufacturing site in Podebrady, some 50 km east of Svetla. Sacrificed on the altar of the crisis.

Long gone is the time when lead crystal, the jewel of Bohemia and its key export and most widely used product, was mainly melted in the traditional glassworks that had been scattered around the region’s mountains since the 17th century. Over time, the foundries took on an industrial dimension. And so the Svetla factory would see itself first nationalised by the communist regime and then privatised in the 1990s during the country’s transition to a market economy. The town’s population followed the industrial development, rising from 2,500 in 1970 to its current population of 6,000. The parent company Bohemia Crystalex Trading (BCT) and its partner company Porcela Plus (PP), specialising in porcelain, which employ nearly

7,000 people at some ten sites, started insolvency proceedings at the end of 2008. And the reasons for such a fiasco? For the head of the Svetla factory’s unions, one of the major errors was the voluntary abandonment, shortly after the fall of communism in 1989, of the traditional Russian market, which was immediately taken up by the competition, and the move toward the American market, fatal due to the fall in the dollar and the strengthening of the Czech currency. Added to this was the rise in the cost of raw materials – potash, minium and electricity – and increasingly tough competition, mainly from Asia. The result is that, once prosperous, the factory has accumulated 4 billions Koruna, some €160M, in debt.

M.M.B. ■



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Keywords

Crystal, Bohemia, Svetla; Marie-Martine Buckens.

COOPERATION

The Prague Castle 2009. |
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A FRESH WIND from Central Europe

Conversation with Petr Jelinek, head of the Czech Development Agency, recently set up by the Foreign Ministry.

During its six months as holders of the EU presidency, the Czech Republic most certainly plans to extend European development policy to Eastern European countries. Yet this will not in any way be at the cost of renouncing the privileged links between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. This is especially true for the African countries in whose interests the Czech population say they are prepared to make sacrifices. Cuba will also be receiving special attention.

“Our cooperation policy is aimed first of all at the Eastern European countries”, Petr Jelinek admits right away. “Then there are certain Asian countries and finally Africa.” On closer inspection, most of the countries that benefit from Czech cooperation financing are seen to have adhered to communism at some time or other in their history. As did the Czech Republic itself – or Czechoslovakia as it was known in its days as a Comecon* member – in the years following the Second World War when development cooperation first took off with a foreign policy dictated essentially by the Soviet ‘Big Brother’.

It was in Moscow that new overseas alliances were decided. In the midst of the Cold War, they were forged with the aim of countering the influence of the West, notably and above all in their former Asian or African colonies. It is scarcely surprising therefore to find names such as Vietnam, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro among the eight countries adopted by the government as priority beneficiaries of public aid for the 2004/2010 period. Then there is also Angola and Zambia in Africa as well as Mongolia, Moldavia and Yemen, due to the links established with South Yemen in the 1970s by the Soviet Union, Cuba and China. “Not forgetting”, adds Petr Jelinek, “Afghanistan and Iraq, for which the aid is essentially humanitarian”. Their cooperation policy is allocated the equivalent of 0.12 per cent of the Czech Republic’s GDP. “The aim is to arrive at 0.17 per cent in 2010, but we will not achieve it. We will already be pleased if we manage to increase this budget by 0.01 per cent of GDP a year”, explains Petr Jelinek. Whatever the case he certainly has the backing of the Czech population on this: Fifty per cent of persons polled last year said they were prepared to accept a tax increase to aid the less favoured countries.

> The Angolan adventure

“Our privileged cooperation relations with countries such as Angola, but also with Ethiopia, are not expressed solely in terms

of activities in the field. As part of scientific and technical cooperation with Angola, 100 Angolans came to study in the former Czechoslovakia, including one member of the present Angolan Government. Our cooperation was intense between 1975 and 1980 but was then interrupted when about 100 Czechs were abducted by UNITA rebels. After the civil war, Angola’s reconstruction needs were immense. We decided to resume cooperation in 2004 after analysing the situation. Yes, the country is experiencing a spectacular boom due to its oil, and yes it is benefitting from China’s financial resources. But at the same time it is today facing falling barrel prices and almost three-quarters of the population still live below the poverty line. This is why our present cooperation is concentrating primarily on education or agriculture.” Zambia is another African country where the Czech Republic is present. “Our activities are less intense there”, explains Petr Jelinek, who adds: “On the other hand, it is very likely that our cooperation with Ethiopia will be strengthened. Its needs, especially after the problems in the wake of the 2006 elections, are enormous.”

> New organisation

To effectively implement its cooperation policy, the Foreign Ministry decided to centralise within a single agency projects that, prior to 2008, had been managed by nine different ministries (health, agriculture, etc.) “It



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now remains for us to be able to grant funds, notably to NGOs working in the field. For the moment we only allocate financing on the basis of public service contracts”, adds Petr Jelinek. **M.M.B.** ■

* The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, or COMECON, was an organisation for mutual economic aid between the countries of the communist bloc. Set up by Stalin in 1949, it was dissolved when the Soviet empire collapsed in June 1991, marking the end of the Cold War. In addition to the Soviet Union, its members were first of all the Eastern European communist countries: Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the German Democratic Republic and Albania (the latter left after Moscow and Tirana broke off diplomatic relations in 1961). Yugoslavia had the status of associate member. Other non-European countries later joined: Mongolia in 1962, Cuba in 1972, and Vietnam in 1978.

Keywords

Prague; Czech Republic; cooperation; Comecon; Petr Jelinek; Angola; Ethiopia; Marie-Martine Buckens.

HUMAN RIGHTS: A PRIORITY FOR PRAGUE

During its European presidency, the Czech Republic does not intend to revolutionise the cooperation policy pursued to date. “No change”, confirms Petr Jelinek, “but all the same we are going to try and pursue discussions with the other big international donors so as to make the aid more effective”. But, given its past, there is one field in which Prague plans to make its voice heard: human rights. “We have a special instrument, intended to support civil society and the independent press”, stresses the head of the Czech Development Agency. This special budget line is piloted directly by the Foreign Ministry. The support actions are aimed at four countries: Cuba, Myanmar, Moldavia and Belarus.

PRAGUE.

Bohemian and independent

© Marie-Martine Buckens

Prague, where each cobblestone of the old city holds memories of the turbulent, fascinating past of Bohemia.

If you have just arrived in Prague, a jewel of a city set in the heart of Bohemia, the locals are bound to remind you about the prophecy of the princess Libusa, at the head of one of the Slavonic tribes living in the valley of the river Vltava around the year 500: *I see a great castle whose glory reaches the skies. The Vltava flows at its feet. That is where you must go. In the depths of the forest, you will find a man carving the door lintel of his house. There you will built a castle that you will call Praha (Prague) after the word meaning a door lintel. And as every lord lowers his head to pass under the door lintel of a residence, the great and good of this world will lower their heads before that castle.* Of course, says the chronicler of Radio Praha, Václav Richter – the princess’s prophecy was taken seriously: people set off, found the man carving the door lintel of his house, and on the left bank of the Vltava, built a wooden castle bigger and more sumptuous than Vysehrad, the residence of Prince Premysl and his spouse Libusa.

‘Prah’, the door lintel, the prime position of a city torn between East and West, ancient and modern, the gold of mythology and the grey-

ness of reality. Whatever the truth may be, continues Václav Richter, Prague bears the heredity of the legendary priestess in becoming, as foretold, the ‘golden city’, the ‘city of a hundred towers’, and later the ‘mother of cities’ or simply the ‘little mother’.

Prague which, over the years and through bloody battles, through the construction of the castle which dominates the city, its bridges, churches and mansions each as beautiful as the next, would become the nerve centre not only of the kingdom of Bohemia, but of a sizeable part of Central Europe.

► Independence

But the history of Prague is not just woven from threads of gold and brocade. The people of Prague have often paid the price of their deeply-rooted desire of independence in blood. In fire too. First of all, there was Jan Hus, the first Czech Dean of Prague University: a great religious thinker, he denounced the corrupt practices of the church, which earned him the unconditional support of the Czech nobles and peasants, but also led to him being burned at the stake, which was prepared surreptitiously

by the organisers of the Council of Constance in 1415. His execution unleashed the Hussite Wars, which would last for 20 years. Two centuries later, another revolt, Protestant this time, would lead to the Thirty Years War.

And then, barely 40 years ago, there was another Jan, Jan Palach. As did the bonzes in Vietnam, this young Czech student committed suicide by setting himself on fire, to call on the Czechoslovak people to continue the struggle, and protest against the occupation of his country. A dramatic gesture which remains etched in the memory of everyone. When handing over a statue in his honour to the Czech authorities the French Secretary of State for European Affairs referred on 19 January 2009 to the “sacrifices made by the Czech Republic to uphold the highest values of Europeans, promote their liberty, and open the way to the reunification of the continent”.

M.M.B. ■

Keywords

Libusa; Jan Hus; Jan Palach; Václav Richter; Prague; Bohemia, Marie-Martine Buckens.

An NGO born of the 'Velvet revolution'

'People in Need' was created by a handful of activists in 1992, three years after the fall of communism. Today, it is the most important humanitarian NGO of the ten member states who recently joined the European Union.

In 1989, Simon Panek was 22 years old when the great student demonstration of 17 November, which inspired massive demonstration against regime, succeeded in overthrowing the communist regime. Wiser for this experience, the young student and a few of his friends decide to start an NGO whose aim is to aid populations in times of crisis: whether the crisis is due to a war or a natural disaster. "This diversity of interventions is due to the fact that, just after communism, there was nothing as far as cooperation was concerned and we just had to use every available means." People in Need first helped the neighbouring war-torn region of Nagorno-Karabakh, before helping Bosnia. Their priority consists in helping people rebuild and supplying them with materials. "We only launched development programmes later", adds Simon Panek. Although the NGO (www.peopleinneed.cz)

spends over 70 per cent of its budget on humanitarian and development projects, it does not forget its 'roots': working towards a fairer, more tolerant society, particularly within the borders of the Czech Republic, where People in Need implemented social integration and information programmes on poverty and human rights. Today, People in Need works in around 40 countries – including Africa, particularly in Ethiopia, Angola and Namibia. Despite a considerable staff – more than 200 employees – for an NGO that is only 15 years of age with a budget of some €15M, Simon Panek knows that he cannot compete with the 'Big NGOs'. "We are intent on holding on to our diversity, particularly the human rights aspect and democracy programmes in non-democratic countries, which was one of our priorities from the very start."

M.M.B. ■



© Marie-Martine Buckens

Keywords

Simon Panek; People in Need; Marie-Martine Buckens.

MARTINA, daughter of Europe

Martina Chladova studies in Prague, where she is the vice president of a group of volunteers who welcome foreign students in the Czech Republic within the framework of the Erasmus programme. This pragmatic young woman sees Europe as an essential transition in an increasingly rapidly changing world.

© Marie-Martine Buckens



Almost 20 years separate Martina Chladova and Simon Panek. "My generation did not experience communism", she tells us immediately. Like every Czech, she has heard of Simon Panek. After finishing her studies, she would be prepared to work for an NGO. And how about founding one herself? "Oh, no", she says, "there are quite enough NGOs already. Although I could very well see myself setting up activities related to the social responsibilities of enterprises", she adds. Has pragmatism overridden a certain romanticism of the

1990s? Possibly. "Only five years ago, we had no Internet or mobile phones. We must learn to react quickly if we are to survive." Working for Erasmus highlights this approach: "it allows me to test my personality". According to Martina, very few Czechs share this experience because of a lack of self confidence: "I think it is very Czech: we're not good at selling our good points..." **M.M.B.** ■

Keywords

Martina Chladova; Erasmus; university; Marie-Martine Buckens.

An **INTOXICATING,** incredible richness

Prague has seen them all... or just about. Smetana or Dvorak in its music academy; Mucha in its studio; Franz Kafka seeking literary inspiration in the surroundings of his castle, and nearer to us, novelist Milan Kundera. These are just a few names in the fertile anthology of Czech artists.



The Neruda street in Prague, 2009.

© Marie-Martine Buckens

Inset: Egon Bondy.

It would be impossible to talk about them all. Thus, we will be subjective, and will look at some of our favourites. Firstly, our favourite name: Jan Neruda, whose memory was honoured by the City of Prague when it renamed the street leading up to the Prague Castle *Nerudova ulice* (Neruda Street). The poet and journalist, who died in 1891, used his ferocious and witty eloquence to describe the petty bourgeois of Prague in his renowned work: 'the tales of the Little Quarter'. Chilean poet Neftali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto, fervent admirer of Neruda's work, would go so far as to take his name: Pablo Neruda and went on to win the 1971 Nobel prize for literature.

> The iconoclast

And then there is the unclassifiable Egon Bondy, real name Zbynek Fisher. He is only 19 years old when Czechoslovakia, which became communist immediately after the Prague coup, reinstates the Shoah in 1949. Zbynek is already active in a surrealist group and decides to take the Jewish name of Bondy as a reaction to anti-Semitic Stalinism. The unruly student only obtains his secondary school certificate at the age of 27, before studying philosophy and psychology. At 30 years of age, forced to work as a night watchman in the National Museum, he starts writing his first poems and advocates his own poetic movement, Total Realism. His poetry will be put to music by the band 'Plastic People of the Universe', whose members will be imprisoned by the communist police in 1976. Indeed, their arrest was at the origin of the famous manifesto *Charta 77*, which criticises the government for violating human rights. As one of

Czechoslovakia's first dissidents, Bondy will always maintain a certain distance from his 'heroes', starting with Václav Havel, future president of the country. In 1994, reacting to the partition of Czechoslovakia, he leaves Prague for Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, and was to teach Marxism and Buddhism at the university. The curious atheist was particularly fond of these two doctrines.

> The mystic

In October 2008, Prague paid homage to an artist that is virtually unknown outside the country. Bohuslav Reynek, who died in 1971, was simultaneously a translator – of French (Hugo, Claudel, Verlaine amongst others, and also of his wife) and German poets – a poet and an engraver. This secretive, mystical and fraternal poet was passionately attached to the high lands of his native Bohemia. His path symbolises an entire generation. In 1926, he marries the French poetess Suzanne Renaud with whom he was to stay in France up to the death of his father in 1936, when he was entrusted with the charge of the Petrkov farm. He was never to leave Bohemia again. The family domain is requisitioned under Nazi occupation. After the Prague coup, the domain is once again confiscated and Reynek and his two sons become simple employees in their farm. The poet, although forbidden to publish, was to pursue his work until his death in 1971.

M.M.B. ■

Keywords

Neruda; Egon Bondy; Bohuslav Reynek; Marie-Martine Buckens.

Sandra Federici

Jürgen Schadeberg, *Nelson Mandela in his Law Office, 1952*, printed 2007. Courtesy of Galleria L'Ariete artecontemporanea, Bologna

SOUTH AFRICA in black and white

The life in the White living quarters and in the Black township, the musical performances of the 1950s, extraordinary people such as Miriam Makeba: these are the subjects of the wonderful black and white photos of Jürgen Schadeberg, which were displayed in the Ariete Gallery in Bologna until 25 February 2009.

Schadeberg was born in Berlin in 1931 and worked as an apprentice photographer for a German Press Agency in Hamburg. In 1950 he emigrated to South Africa and became Chief Photographer, Picture Editor and Art Director for the legendary 'Drum Magazine'. It was during this time that he photographed pivotal moments in the lives of South Africans in the 1950s. These photographs represent the cultural life and the struggle of South Africans during Apartheid and include important historical figures such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Yusuf Mohammed Dadoo, Father Trevor Huddleston...

Schadeberg is recognised as one of the stars of international photography from the second half of 20th century up to now, witness to a unique historical period documented through key moments such as the Defiance Campaign of 1952, and the Sharpeville Funeral in 1960. He also documented in dramatic photos the removal of Sophiatown, the Johannesburg township that was the symbolic centre of black culture

(for arts, politics, religion, and entertainment) in the 1940s and 1950s. In February 1955 the residents were taken to a new place, 13 miles from the city centre, and resistance was peaceful. The government destroyed Sophiatown by the end of 1963 and rebuilt it as a white only suburb named Triomf (triumph in Afrikaans).

In 1964 Schadeberg left South Africa for London and during the 1960s and 1970s worked as a freelance photojournalist in Europe and America for various prestigious magazines. Before returning to South Africa in 1985 Jürgen lived in London, Spain, New York and France. The photographs from this period represent both social documentary and modernist, abstract images.

"When I arrived in South Africa in 1950 from Germany", writes Schadeberg, "I found two societies running in parallel with each other without any communication whatsoever.

"There was an invisible wall between the two worlds. The Black World, or 'Non European World' as described by white society, was culturally and economically rejected by the

White World. Only servants and menial workers could enter the White World.

"In the fifties The Black World was becoming culturally and politically very dynamic, whereas the White World seemed to me to be isolated, cocooned, colonial and ignorant of the Black World.

"As a newcomer and outsider I managed to quite easily hop from one world to another... for example in the evening I might photograph a white masked ball in The City Hall, the next morning an ANC Defiance Campaign meeting..."

Schadeberg has exhibited in museums and galleries all over the world and his works are collected in prestigious institutions such as La Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. ■

Keywords

Jürgen Schadeberg; photography; South Africa; Apartheid; Germany.

Elisabetta Degli Esposti Merli

The **VITALITY** of Contemporary African Creation

Salia nĩ Seydou dance company,
Poussières de sang, June 2008.
 © Antoine Tempé



Over the last few years there has been a rise in the number of contemporary dance companies, choreographers and artists in Africa. Tracing the history of this art form, we have to start with the national ballet companies created in Guinea and Senegal at the dawn of their independence, an historic period where art was used to assert the values and identity of the new African states.

Dances were very traditional until the 80s, when they experienced challenge from a growing interest in contemporary African artistic forms.

In 1995, the French association 'Afrique en création' held, in Luanda (Angola), the first biennial 'Rencontres de la création chorégraphique d'Afrique et de l'Océan Indien', African and Indian Ocean choreographic competition. Since 1995 six competitions have been held, the last of which was in Tunisia in 2008.

The number of contemporary African production companies has risen and their approach has changed greatly. Some uphold tradition while others, even though they recognise traditional values, aim to offer something new, modern and experimental. But this willingness to dialogue between two worlds is refuted by a third artistic movement opposed to anything defined as 'tradition', in other words, anything fixed in time.

One choreographer and dancer who expresses her creativity through performances that combine dance, theatre and music is Irène Tassemedo, a very ambitious artist from Burkina Faso. Her productions are marked by an original method of artistic inquiry that retains the explosive energy of African dance and the emotional and communicative force of the theatre. The choreographer founded her company Ébène in 1988 with which she has produced several world-renowned pieces. Another woman to have revolutionised the world of dance is Germaine Acogny, a Senegalese choreographer who, in 1968, founded her African dance studio while developing her own technique which blends traditional African dances with Western classical and modern dances. In Dakar, she also directed Mudra Afrique established by Maurice Béjart and President L.S. Senghor.

Two of the most original artists are Salia Sanou and Seydou Boro, founders of the Compagnie Salia nĩ Seydou. Along with their show 'Le Siècle des fous', a first production that attracted a lot of attention, 'Figninto' and 'Poussières de sang' prefigure, in their own way, what the African choreography of tomorrow will be. Then there is Alphonse Tiérou, a researcher and choreographer from the Ivory Coast who has been long committed to providing the theoretical foundations that are missing from African dance. Although he does not deny that there are several types of dance on the African continent, Tiérou believes that there are basic movements that unite these dances. He considers that some people talk about preserving traditional dances as if they were sardines to be preserved in oil.

As Tiérou would say, over and above the various trends crossing the African continent, «si la danse bouge, l'Afrique bougera» (if dance evolves, Africa will evolve). ■

Keywords

Africa; contemporary dance, traditional dance; Irène Tassemedo; Germaine Acogny; Salia Sanou; Seydou Boro; Alphonse Tierou.



FESPACO's 40th anniversary a mark of openness and excellence

The 21st Fespaco – Africa's biggest festival of cinema – in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, paraded its wares from 28 February to 7 March. What was evident at Ouaga this year was the level of quality achieved by African cinema, which is no longer looked on as being typified by shortcomings and outdated techniques.

The most prestigious awards went to countries not overly familiar with Ouaga's red carpet. While the Gold Stallion of Yenenga (étalon d'or), the highest award, went to the magnificent, moving and imaginative *Teza* by the Ethiopian director Haile Gerima, Algeria – which picked up a third of the prizes awarded – Morocco and South Africa were the festival's main winners. Algeria won the Golden Foe (Poulain d'or - best short fictional film) for *Sektou* ('Ils se sont tus') by Khaled Benaissa and the Bronze Stallion for the full-

length film *Mascarade* by Lyes Salem. South Africa took the Silver Stallion for *Nothing but the truth* by John Kani, and several awards for *Jeruselema* by Ruth Ziman, including best male performance, which went to Rapulana Seiphmo. The best female performance was won by the Moroccan actress Sana Mousiane in *Les jardins de Smira* by Lahlou Latif.

The host country, Burkina Faso, also enjoyed some success, picking up the European Union prize for *Cœur de Lion* by Boubacar Diallo, and the best fictional TV programme award, which went to Missa Ebié, while *Le fauteuil* by the same director also won the RFI prize.

The Fespaco set a record this year, with a total of 374 films selected for the various competitions. Some exceptional films did not win prizes, underscoring the overall quality of the festival. For instance, the documentary *En attendant les hom[m]es* by Katy Lena Ndiaye,

sensually showed Mauritanian women waiting for their men to return home from working abroad. Or *Yandé Codou, la griote de Senghor* by Angèle Diabang Brener, about this resilient woman, who is still alive, who possesses a dual talent as a literary genius and a politician. Displaying a mastery of the documentary, it has been described by critics as a fictional masterpiece. Indeed, Fespaco is the place to discover the great talents of the future.

H.G. ■

The party was in full swing during the opening ceremony of the Fespaco 2009.
© Hegel Goutier

Keywords

Fespaco; cinema; Africa; Ouagadougou; Burkina Faso.

BRUSSELS. EXTENDING OUAGADOUGOU

After the high level of professionalism shown at the Fespaco this year, another great event is the Culture Colloquium in Brussels on 1-3 April. This is where the players in European culture and their partners from other continents aim to establish a platform and discuss their requirements with regard to cultural cooperation. Moreover, politicians use this event to refine their cultural policies for the years ahead.

This was one of the main points made at the press conference held by Stefano Manservigi, the European Commission's Director General for Development, at Fespaco, in which Burkina Faso's Minister of Culture, M. Philippe Sawadogo, also participated. Stefano Manservigi said that the EC was in the process of carrying out an assessment with the Burkina Faso authorities of what had already been achieved in the field of cultural cooperation. This assessment should enable a better use of limited resources. Similar assessments would also be carried out with other partners of the European Union.

Explained Stefano Manservigi: "To produce this assessment, we will also look at what has been done in Europe. We don't want to have double standards. We will look at the EU too. We have programmes like Eurimages with great potential, with which we must go on the offensive. Compared to American cinema, we must shift from a defensive to an offensive position". He believes that cultural production requires structural policy and entire production process has to be looked at. Indeed, it is a broad sector across which decisions have to be taken.

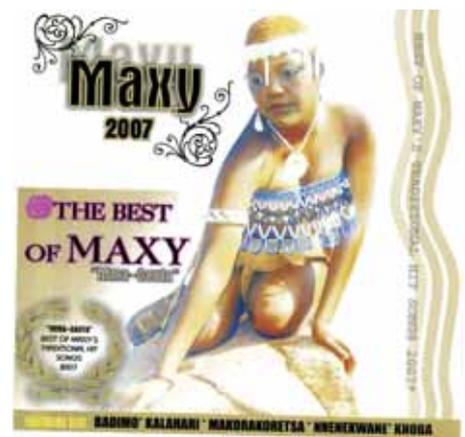
The platform and the requirements of the participants at the Brussels event will be aimed at the ministers of various sectors, including the economy, finance and investment and so on and will enable a charter to be drawn up on the use of European funds for development by means of cultural involvement and development.

A fireworks display ended the opening ceremony of the Fespaco 2009.
© Hegel Goutier

MAXY. Queen of Sands and African ethos

The Best of Maxy album (Olebile 'Maxy' Sedumedi) was released in 2007. This is perhaps the best album to discover this diva from Botswana, as it brings together her biggest hits since she began recording in 2001. As 2008 came to an end, newspapers in the region have not missed any opportunity to highlight how this prolific artist has become a cultural icon.

An accomplished businesswoman, as well as being involved in the campaign to support AIDS victims, Maxy is essentially a highly talented artist whose work reflects traditional music as well as the influences of hip hop, R&B, rock, pop, African gospel and, above all jazz. To fully appreciate this, just listen to the swing sound of Makorakoretsa on the album's third track. **H.G.** ■



Marlene Holzner

Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, with the winners of the EU European Development Youth Prize during his visit in Zambia on March 2009. © EC

YOUNG EU

Ambassadors for Africa

The following text is a communication by European Commission (Directorate-General for Development)

Winners of the EU European Development Youth Prize visited projects on the ground in Zambia, 3-7 March 2009. Through their visits and meetings, they have become EU ambassadors for development, able to pass on to their fellow students back home what they have learnt about development policy issues.

Lara Likar from Slovenia is surrounded by dozens of children in the Kasisi Children's Home, the largest orphanage in Zambia. Run by Polish nuns, it is home for more than 250 children, most of whom have lost their parents from AIDS. She is one of the 27 winners of the 2007 Development Youth Prize; a poster competition for 16-18 year old students in individual EU countries. Their group trip to Zambia has qualified them to talk about the problems faced by the continent and the importance of development policies and their complexities. "In a way, they have become ambassadors of development", said Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid.

As a former teacher, Commissioner Michel has a passionate interest in raising awareness of development issues among young people. Having created the prize in 2006, he headed the visit of 27 students together with their

teachers to Zambia, accompanying them on visits to some of the projects including the orphanage, the David Livingstone museum and a vocational training centre.

One of the most interesting experiences for the European students was to be able meet students of their own age at the David Kaunda high school in Lusaka, Zambia's capital. They were shown around by African students and lively exchanges about school systems and daily lives quickly took off. "School over here is so different but then again there are so many similarities", said Helen Huges from Ireland. Also on the programme: two vocational centres where Zambians learn crafts, such as carpentry and plumbing, a street kids' project where children who are not in formal education can come to a library and read, and a project for women who are victims of domestic violence. All projects were very people-oriented, giving students lots of oppor-

tunity to interact, ask questions and experience how their fellow Zambian students live. The highlight of discussions was a meeting with the President of Zambia – Rupiah Bwezani Banda. In a warm and welcoming manner, he talked with them for over one hour – a long time for such a visit – responding to all their questions. Most of the students had never previously spoken with a President and were obviously a little bit nervous.

A trip to Zambia would not be complete, however, without visiting the country's biggest tourist attraction – the Victoria Waterfalls. During the rainy season this was a very special experience, with water descending everywhere – the whole group got completely drenched. ■

To enter this year's Youth Prize – 2008/09 – visit the website: www.dyp2008.org.
Deadline for entries: 31 May 2009.

* Press Officer.

Words from Readers

We are interested in your point of view and your reactions to the articles. So do tell us what you think.

I want to thank *The Courier* for presenting the dynamics, the assets and the history of my region, Aragon. It is a region, an autonomous community which deserves to be more known. I hope it is the first of more to come and will give us the opportunity to know one another better, beyond the stereotypes.

Antonio LÓPEZ PEÑA
Deputy Head of Unit

European Commission
DG DEVELOPMENT (Brussels, Belgium)

I am a faithful reader of *The Courier*, which for me is more than just an official publication; it is a 'living encyclopedia', where everyone can find a large and varied panel of information. In issue 9, I very much appreciated the contribution of Jacques Attali on the global financial crisis and

its consequences for Africa. I totally share his point of view. In fact it shows that we can stay optimistic about the African continent regarding the financial crisis (without neglecting the collateral damages), as the African economies are not so interlinked in the global economy, but also thanks to the comparative advantages such as our reducing demography.

Brian Melle (Cameroon)

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Calendar

May - June 2009

May 2009

- 4-9 Sustainable development in Africa: The Role of Higher Education. Abuja, Nigeria. www.aau.org
- 6-8 IST-Africa 2009 Conference & Exhibition. Kampala, Uganda. www.ist-africa.org/Conference2009
- 14-16 20th Annual General Assembly (AGA) and Conference "Fighting Poverty. Creating Opportunities". Rome, Italy. www.efc.be
- 27-29 eLearning Africa 2009. Dakar, Sénégal. An annual event for developing e-learning capacities in Africa, with nearly 300 speakers from 50 countries, 20 best practice demonstrations and 19 pre-conference events. For more information, visit: www.elearning-africa.com

June

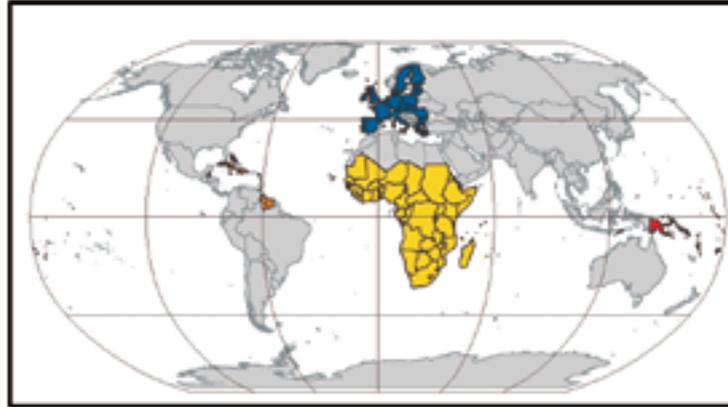
- 14-17 EMRC AgriBusiness Forum 2009 In partnership with the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and Rabobank. Cape Town, South Africa. www.emrc.be
- 22-26 Euro Africa Campus on Cultural Cooperation. Maputo, Mozambique. <http://ocpa.irmo.hr/activities/meetingst>
- 23-24 "10th OECD Forum. Beyond the Crisis: For a stronger, cleaner, fairer economy. Paris, France
- 29-30 Conference on African Transnational and Return Migration for Homeland Development from the Perspectives of Euro-African Relations and Latin American Experience. University of

Warwick, England.
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/crer/events/african/>

July

- 6-8 World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE+10) UNESCO will host the "World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE+10)" to take stock of progresses made since the first conference held in 1998. Paris, France. www.cepes.ro/forum/welcome.htm
- 22-2 30th Durban International Film Festival The festival will present over 200 screenings of films from around the world, with a special focus on films from South African and Africa. <http://www.cca.ukzn.ac.za>

Africa – Caribbean – Pacific and European Union countries



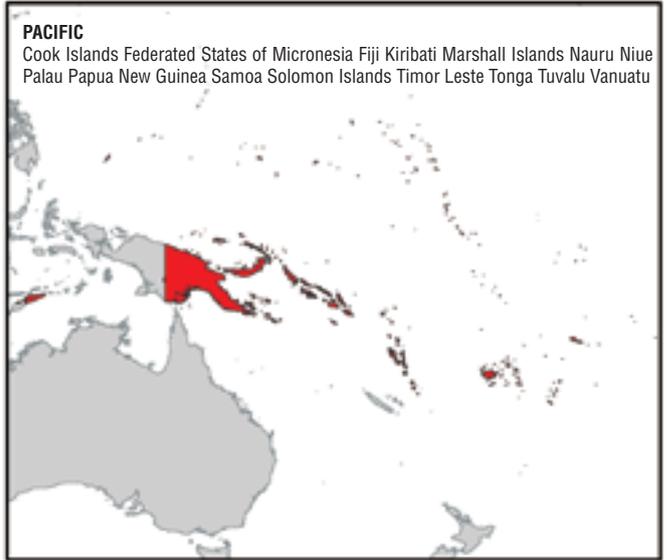
CARIBBEAN

Antigua and Barbuda The Bahamas Barbados Belize Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Grenada Guyana Haiti Jamaica Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Trinidad and Tobago



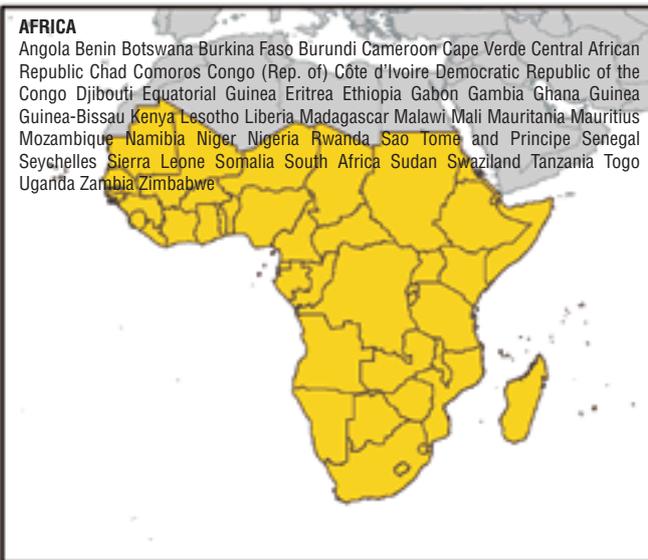
PACIFIC

Cook Islands Federated States of Micronesia Fiji Kiribati Marshall Islands Nauru Niue Palau Papua New Guinea Samoa Solomon Islands Timor Leste Tonga Tuvalu Vanuatu



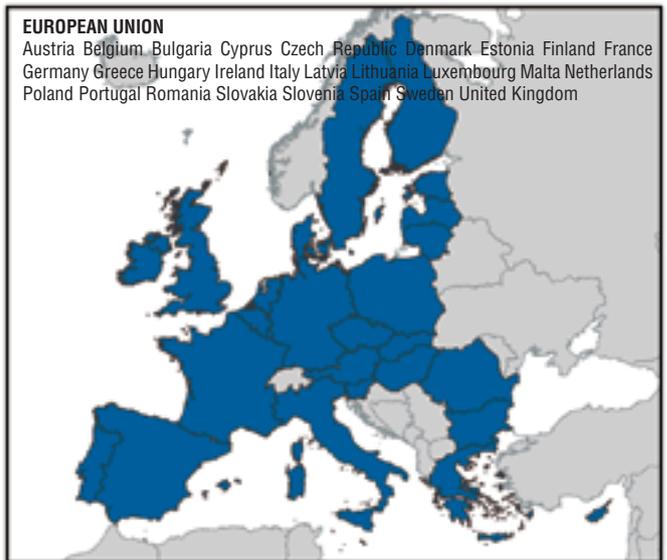
AFRICA

Angola Benin Botswana Burkina Faso Burundi Cameroon Cape Verde Central African Republic Chad Comoros Congo (Rep. of) Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of the Congo Djibouti Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Ethiopia Gabon Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Kenya Lesotho Liberia Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritania Mauritius Mozambique Namibia Niger Nigeria Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Seychelles Sierra Leone Somalia South Africa Sudan Swaziland Tanzania Togo Uganda Zambia Zimbabwe



EUROPEAN UNION

Austria Belgium Bulgaria Cyprus Czech Republic Denmark Estonia Finland France Germany Greece Hungary Ireland Italy Latvia Lithuania Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Poland Portugal Romania Slovakia Slovenia Spain Sweden United Kingdom



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