

FINAL STATEMENT of THE CETIM SYMPOSIUM

7-9th December 2007

We, the undersigned associations, organizations, parties and social movements, gathered on the occasion of the symposium “International Cooperation, Development Aid... Just What Are We Talking About?”, 7-9th December 2007, in Geneva,

Noting:

- that the policies of trade liberalization and privatization imposed in the course of the last decades have created ever greater inequalities, within each country and between countries, affecting first and foremost women and children;
- that in spite of the possibilities offered by the prodigious advances in scientific knowledge and technological progress, the scourge of hunger is only increasing throughout the world and that, paradoxically, farmers are among the primary victims;
- that “globalization” such as it has been understood and practiced by the dominant powers has not kept the promises of its promoters;

Are convinced that the various commitments made during the U.N. summits held in New York in 2000 and in 2005, whatever appraisal might be made of them, will not suffice to change fundamentally an orientation to a form of worldwide apartheid;

Note also that these policies, and the mode of production and consumption that they support, have already led to irreversible environmental degradation and that, if they are pursued, will lead humanity, especially its most vulnerable strata, to disasters of immeasurable magnitude;

Believe that the sudden awareness of the environmental crisis – alas, belated! – cannot deal with the real problem, which is one of the dominant model of “economic growth”, and will, on the contrary, only serve to open up new areas for profit-making; in this regard, the example of biofuels, the promotion of which has already done much harm to food production and small-scale agriculture, as well as the expansion of CO₂ markets, granting the right to pollute in return for the “transfer” of technology, show the limits of such “solutions”;

Note:

- that the debt burden – not to mention the environmental debt – being paid off worldwide and very often unnecessarily continues to crush most of the peoples of the Third World;
- that the cosmetic measures adopted for most indebted poor countries are grossly insufficient, often ineffective and, on the contrary, full of conditions that violate the principles of self-determination and of the equality of peoples and nations;
- - that the fiscal policies of several countries of the North as well as of the South, sap the development capacities of the poorest countries and that the only international fiscal policy really in force is that of tax reduction ad infinitum;

Consider also:

- that the right to intellectual property – this human right according to which the benefit of an invention or a creation should be acknowledged as belonging to its creator, whether individual or collective – has been completely perverted from its objectives in the service of commercial profit, thus privatizing collective knowledge and monopolizing knowledge and technology;
- that discriminatory migration policies encourage a brain drain from the poor countries to the industrialized and “developed” countries, to the detriment of the interests of the “developing” countries and in contempt of the efforts that these countries have made;

Note finally that, in violation of international law acquired at great cost through murderous world wars, the unilateralism of great powers and the greed of great transnational corporations create or stoke armed conflicts almost everywhere in the South, producing countless victims, displacing entire populations, destroying infrastructure and ruining in short order all that has been accomplished in development, results obtained only over a long period of time.

We call for support and promotion of the following appeal through its joint publication or separately from the present declaration.

APPEAL FOR ALTERNATIVE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

We, the undersigned associations, parties and social movements, concerned by the current course of globalization, call for pressure on our respective governments and on the international forum that is the United Nations, so that governments:

- support the demand for food sovereignty of the world's peoples and for the concept of local agriculture and small-scale farming;
- support the carrying out of national and international audits on the Third World debt so that its settlement, with a view to its cancellation, may be based on the principles of equity and justice;
- combat the destructive race to the bottom for non-taxation, fight resolutely against the various forms of fiscal and legal paradises and against fiscal competition, bring pressure to remove bank secrecy where it exists and to repatriate the ill gotten wealth;
- place the progress derived from knowledge, science and technology, which are the common work of communities, at the service of all humanity and consider the defence of the common heritage of humanity as a priority;
- promote a policy of emancipation for women and a policy for youth, based on a spirit of planetary and international solidarity;
- ratify promptly the United Nations Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which entered into force in July 2003;
- accord primacy in their national and international policies, in accordance with the Declaration of Vienna that they have approved unanimously, to human rights for all, including economic, social and cultural rights above all other considerations such as trade, the acquisition of markets and of power;
- consider the right to development as a human right indissociable from all other human rights, civil and political, economic, social and cultural, implying the full realization of each person and of all;
- take up again and make their own the definition of "development" as it was formulated by the Declaration on the Right to Development so that it may be a global economic, social, cultural and political process, aiming to improve continuously the well being of all of the world's population and of all individuals;
- place the human being and the peoples of the earth at the center of development;
- reaffirm the necessity of respecting absolutely, in international relations, the principle of the equality of nations and of peoples and their inalienable sovereign control of their natural resources and wealth and make sure that these resources are not exploited or consumed to the detriment of other nations and peoples;
- abstain, at the international level, from supporting any policy whose results could be contrary to these objective, abandoning the logic of competition in the interest of international cooperation;
- promote participative democracy, effective international solidarity, renounce the arms trade and militate for general disarmament with a view to the improvement of the well being of all, on an egalitarian basis;
- attain (for those countries with a high GDP) without delay the minimum level of 0.7% of GDP devoted to public aid to development, while adopting coherent national economic policies that take into account that aid to development is only one mechanism for change among many;
- draw inspiration from alternative economic initiatives such as the Bolivarian Alternative for the People of Our America (ALBA) or the Bank of the South; if they are pursuing their declared goals of financial autonomy and cooperation based on solidarity and complementariness, they deserve praise.

For this, we also call upon governments to put into practice the Declaration on the Right to Development that was adopted 6 December 1986 par the United Nations General Assembly by an overwhelming majority of

countries representing 85% of the world's population, to stop opposing it with delaying stratagems and to acknowledge the rightness and pertinence of its basic principles and concepts. The Declaration, the fruit of some 30 years of effort by the countries of the South in the aftermath of decolonization and by the Non-Aligned Movement, is a source of inspiration that is more relevant than ever if we are to prevent the world from sinking yet deeper into irreversible impasses.

Finally, we call upon all the citizens, the individuals, the associations, the movements and parties dedicated to justice in the world and international progress to mobilize, to organize and to act in the field, in the street as well as in the voting booth and in institutions to attain these goals.

SIGNATORY ORGANIZATIONS ARE (23 JUNE 2008):

Alliance Sud, Switzerland
Asociación Nueva Utopía, Switzerland
Association internationale des techniciens, experts et chercheurs (AITEC), France
Association pour la transaction des transactions et pour l'aide aux citoyens (ATTAC), Switzerland
Association Survie, France
Centrale sanitaire Suisse romande (CSSR), Switzerland
Centre de recherche et d'information pour le développement (CRID), France
Centre Europe – Tiers Monde (CETIM), Switzerland
Comité pour l'annulation de la dette du Tiers Monde (CADTM), Belgium
Comité pour l'annulation de la dette du Tiers Monde (CADTM), Switzerland
Commission Tiers Monde de l'Eglise catholique (COTMEC), Switzerland
Développement et Civilisations – Lebret-Irfed, France
Enfants du Malawi, France
Fondation Frantz Fanon, France
Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN), Switzerland
Forum africain des alternatives, Senegal
Forum du Tiers Monde (FTM), Senegal
France Libertés Fondation Danielle Mitterrand, France
MediCuba, Switzerland
Mouvement pour la coopération internationale (MCI), Switzerland
Plateforme pour une agriculture socialement durable, Switzerland.

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