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Bulletin
45

July 2013

CETIM



EDITORIAL

The current hegemony of transnational financial capital concentrated in the banks, investment funds, insurance companies, pension funds etc. is the result of a sea change in the world's economy under way since the 1970s. In the course of this period, most banking institutions (transnational in particular) have progressively distanced themselves from their traditional activities (most notably savings and credit at rates corresponding to the real economy) by launching into purely speculative activities. Food products now are part of the favored speculations by these actors, as well as land grabbing on a grand scale.

However, as demonstrated by studies in this area, speculation in food stuffs is one of the causes of famine and malnutrition throughout the world. It contributed to the 2009 food crisis with its concomitant food riots in dozens of countries. And it is thus that in 2009, for the first time in history, the number of starving and malnourished surpassed the one billion mark while the first Millennium Development Goal, to which the world's governments have committed themselves, is "eradicate extreme poverty and hunger" by 2015.

It is in this context that the Global Commodities Summit was held in Lausanne last April. In order to combat this morbid market and to demand that political authorities take measures to, inter alia, prohibit all speculation in agricultural raw materials, the CETIM contributed to the creation, in Switzerland, of a Federation comprising civil society organizations and political parties. You will find the Federation's manifesto in the pages that follow. A counter-summit, organized by the Federation in Lausanne (at the beginning of April) was a resounding success.

Speculation, and its resulting human rights violations, can be effectively combated only on the condition that there is a strong world-wide mobilization organized by social movements.

MANIFESTO OF THE FEDERATION AGAINST SPECULATION IN NATURAL RESOURCES

From 15 to 17 April 2013, the Hotel Beau-Rivage Palace in Lausanne played host to the second Global Commodities Summit organized by the *Financial Times*, which brought together the world's largest trading houses, investment banks and natural resources groups. It is no accident that this event was held in Switzerland: in the course of the past ten years, many trading companies have settled in the Lake Geneva area and in the canton of Zug, transforming our country into a veritable hub of world commodities trading.

In this context, the CETIM and several other associations, organizations, political groups, appalled by the information that they regularly receive from the field, set up a Federation Against Speculation in Natural Resources, to inform the population and denounce the behavior of numerous trading companies, investment banks and other multinationals active in commodities trading that are contributing to the impoverishment of populations, the degradation of the environment and the forced and wide-scale displacement of thousands of persons.

You will find the Manifesto adopted by the Federation in the following pages.

Why Denounce This Summit?

Speculation causes the price of food stuffs to skyrocket. Speculation in agricultural commodities and foodstuffs contributes to the increase in the price of food. Whole populations suffer from hunger because of the excessively high price of food, while companies and banks earn colossal profits. Speculation is not the only cause of the increase in prices of products such as wheat and corn, but it amplifies the process.

Tax advantages and capital flight drive producing countries into poverty. Switzerland offers commodity trading companies highly favorable tax regimes, tax exemptions and the support of its banking sector. Transnational corporations typically practice tax evasion, euphemistically termed "tax optimization", declaring their profits in tax havens by manipulating the price of products and services exchanged among their affiliates. By depriving the so-called emerging countries of the South of the wealth generated by their natural resources, these transnational corporations drive millions of persons into dead-end poverty.

The land grab deprives peasants of their means of subsistence. Agribusiness corporations, investors, pension funds and governments are rushing to lease or buy land to produce food intended for the world market or for the production of biofuels, as well as to develop mining and extracting activities or oil production. The land grab aggravates the problem of hunger, drives populations from their lands and threatens the environment and biodiversity. The right to food and food sovereignty as well as other human rights are violated.

Extraction and production of natural resources entails violations of human rights and the destruction of the environment in the producing countries. The activities of transnational corporations in politically and economically fragile countries often translates into the most serious violations of the basic rights of the populations and contribute to the degradation of the environment.

The Federation Against Speculation in Natural Resources links its action and its demands to campaigns already underway in Switzerland, such as the *Droit sans frontières* campaign, the *Stop à la spéculation* initiative and the international campaign *Publiez ce que vous payez*.

Accordingly, the Federation immediately requests that the Swiss parliament, the Federal Council and the cantonal authorities:

- establish legal bases for companies headquartered in Switzerland requiring them to respect human rights and the environment throughout the world;
- establish legal bases so that victims of violations of human rights and environmental standards committed by these companies, their affiliates and suppliers have the possibility of filing complaints in Switzerland in order to obtain redress;
- establish legal bases against speculation in agricultural commodities and food stuffs and prohibit all speculation in primary agricultural products;
- take measures so that multinational companies active in the sector of extracting natural resources as well as trading companies pub-

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- lish all payments made to governments, in order to prevent corruption and embezzlement;
- take measures to assure transparency of financial flows emanating from the production of natural resources by obliging companies to publish the details of their financial transactions carried out among their branches active in various countries;
 - prevent the grabbing of land by refusing to support it through the hosting on Swiss territory of transnational companies practicing it;
 - abolish the tax privileges granted to transnational corporations;
 - recognize the ages-old customary legal right to land of small land holders and indigenous people, as well as the right of people to food sovereignty and to refuse extractive projects that drive them from their lands and only accentuate climate change.

For further information and the list of signatories: <http://stop-speculation.ch>

For the Swiss public, we are attaching to this mailing the people's federal initiative launched by the Young Swiss Socialists "Pas de spéculation sur les denrées alimentaires", which we encourage you to sign and distribute. For further information: <http://juso.ch/fr/stop-speculation>

www.cetim.ch

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You will find at your disposal full reports and files regularly updated on our themes of work, all our statements in the United Nations, information on our current campaigns and our next conferences and public debates, etc.

You can become a CETIM member from today or order our online publications.

CETIM STATEMENT TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (March 2013)

For the immediate and unconditional lifting of the embargo against Cuba

For over twenty years, the US embargo against Cuba has been condemned by an ever larger, and now overwhelming, majority of Member States of the United Nations General Assembly.¹ In spite of the United Nations' repeated injunctions,² and in spite of accession to power of President Barack Obama, the embargo continues to be imposed by the isolated but stubborn will of the US government. In the 21st vote of the General Assembly in 2012, 188 of 193 States declared the necessity to lift the blockade against Cuba.³

Extraterritorial Application of US Laws

Imposed in February 1962, the US embargo was reinforced in July 1963 and May 1964. It was very slightly relaxed through the migration agreements in the 1970s and through a degree of tolerance of exceptions to the ban on the export of US produced food (1998). It was then tightened up in October 1992 by the Cuban Democracy Act. This act, known as the Torricelli act, aimed to curb the development of the Cuban economy's new driving forces at the beginning of the "special period" by preventing the inflow of funds and goods, through i) strict limitation of currency transfers by families in exile, ii) a ban on entry into US ports of any ship that had anchored in a Cuban port ii) sanctions against companies doing busi-

WHO ARE WE?

Through its publications and its work with the UN, the CETIM denounces the maldevelopment in general, ecological as much as economic and social, and promotes an exchange of critical views from both Southern and Northern societies. The CETIM is focuses in particular on respect for, implementation and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights, as well as issues related to the right to development.

business with Cuba, even when under the jurisdiction of a third party state. The embargo was further tightened by the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (“Helms-Burton law”) of March 1996, which aimed to harden “international” sanctions against Cuba. Although slightly relaxed during Obama’s first term of office, (in March/April 2009, US citizens of Cuban origin were allowed to visit the island and to transfer funds up to a certain limit provided these were not destined for bank accounts of members of the communist party or popular movements), the major provisions of the embargo remain in force.

The Harmful Economic Effects of the Embargo

Official Cuban sources estimate the direct economic damage inflicted on Cuba by the US embargo since it began at more than 104 billion dollars.⁴ While the embargo damages all Cuban economic sectors, above all, and aside from the negative effects on exports, it impedes the current driving forces of the economy, first of which is tourism, foreign direct investment and to a certain extent as well, currency transfers. For example, institutes for the promotion of these investments in Cuba have received proposals for cooperation from US groups, not one of which has so far been able to be taken forward – not even in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry where Cuba offers strong attractive potential (for example, the country holds more than 600 patents in the biotechnology sector.⁵

In Cuba, the embargo penalizes activities in the following sectors: banking and finance, insurance, petroleum and chemical industries, construction, infrastructure and transport, shipbuilding, agriculture and fishing, electronics and information technology. With regard to exports, dynamism in this sector, in products such as nickel, tobacco, fishery products, sugar, or is hampered by lack of access to international markets.⁶

The Negative Social Effects of the Embargo

The relaxing of restrictions relating to food products and medicines by the US government have remained sporadic and in no way alter the fact that in practice Cuba is the victim of a de facto embargo in these areas. The decreased availability of these kinds of products exacerbates the population’s hardship and represents a permanent threat to their food security, nutritional balance and health status. It has to be acknowledged that a humanitarian disaster – which appears to be the implicit aim of this embargo – has only been avoided by the Cuban state’s determination to maintain, as whatever cost, the pil-

lars of its social model, which guarantees to all, despite real shortages, basic food supplies at modest prices, free meals in crèches, schools, hospitals, old people’s homes... It is a reaffirmation of the priority accorded by the government to human development and it explains the excellent health and education statistical indicators in Cuba – despite extremely limited budgetary resources and multiple problems. However, the pursuit of social progress in Cuba is threatened by the reality of the continuing embargo.

Pressure is exerted by the US Department of State and the Treasury on foreign suppliers to Cuba. These pressures relate to the whole range of supplies for the health sector (medicines for pregnant women, radiological and laboratory supplies and equipment, operation tables, surgical and anesthetic equipment, artificial respirators, dialysis equipment, defibrillators, diverse pharmaceutical products...) and it goes as far as preventing supplies of infant food and equipment for pediatric intensive care units.⁷ Production capacities for vaccines developed in Cuba, are hampered by frequent lack of spare parts and essential imported components, as well as water treatment centers. Shortages of medicines that are not produced in Cuba complicate the prompt and complete implementation of treatment protocols for breast cancer, leukemia, cardiovascular and renal disease, or AIDS, for example. Furthermore, US attacks on the free movement of scientific personnel and knowledge has resulted, in practice, in the inclusion in the embargo of whole domains that are formally excluded by the law. In this way, even the most promising opportunities for development cooperation with other countries, on a firm foundation of solidarity, are blocked.⁸

Finally the embargo contradicts the principles of promotion and protection of human rights to which the people of the USA and the rest of the world aspire. And how will the damage to the people of the United States themselves, caused by the cruel and shameful measures of Abraham Lincoln’s heirs ever be forgotten? One example suffices: in 1985, thanks to research directed by Dr Campa’s team, the laboratories of the Finlay Institute in Havana, discovered the first effective vaccine against meningitis B. In 1989, after the results were verified by a group of foreign experts (including US Americans) a vaccination campaign of the population aged 3 months to 24

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years was launched in the whole country. Since then, millions of doses have been administered in Latin America, notably in Brazil – where they were sent free of charge when the embargo forbade the signing of any contracts. Fifteen or so countries (from Russia to South Korea) used it during renewed outbreaks of the epidemic. This vaccine was awarded the gold medal of the Intellectual Property Organization in 1993 and was patented (Va-MenGOC-BC®). Its commercialization was foreseen by a foreign company but over a period of two years, negotiations with the Anglo-American company Smith-Kline-Beecham were impeded by the Treasury. In this space of time, more than 500 people, mainly children, died in the USA as a consequence of meningitis of the meningococcal B group. The intervention of prominent scientists, politicians and honest citizens in the USA, exerting the required pressure to obtain authorization for importation, was finally accepted “for health reasons in the interests of the USA”. Thus and for the first time, a vaccine discovered and developed in a country of the South was administered in a country of the North.⁹

An Inhuman and Intolerable Embargo

The normative content of this embargo – especially the extraterritorial nature of its rules, which means to impose unilateral US sanctions on the international community, or the denial of the right to nationalization, through the legal concept of « traffic » is a violation of the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter. The embargo is also a violation of international humanitarian rights and international human rights. It violates the principle of sovereignty of States, upheld by jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice to freely choose their political, economic, social and cultural system.¹⁰ It is also an intolerable violation of the right of the Cuban people to self-determination, given that the embargo deprives them of their own means of subsistence and economic and social development.

Furthermore, the embargo directly contradicts freedom of trade, navigation and movement of capital, a right that the USA claims everywhere else in the world.

To crown it all and paradoxically, by maintaining the threat of sanctions by its Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the US government puts its European partners in a very uncomfortable situation of permanent submission to its overwhelming power, sacrificing the interests of their own businesses, while it appropriates arbitrarily, and for itself alone, the right to lift the ban on export of US goods to Cuba on a case by case basis – notably in the area of agricultural and pharmaceutical products. It is understand-

able that this situation is intolerable from the point of view of the interests of European companies and of those employees whose salaries depend on their activities.

The US embargo against Cuba is illegal, illegitimate and inhuman. The measures of constraint listed above constitute an undeclared act of war by the US against Cuba, the social and economic effects of which prevent the full enjoyment of the human rights of the Cuban people. They clearly aim to cause maximum suffering and to harm the physical and moral integrity of an entire population, especially the most vulnerable (amongst whom children and old people). In this respect, they may constitute a crime against humanity.¹¹ It is for this reason and for all those mentioned above, that we demand the immediate and unconditional cessation of this intolerable embargo.

Given the proliferation of unilateral coercive measures in flagrant violation of international law in force, à l'instar of the case presented in this declaration, we urge the Human Rights Council to create a new mechanism of special procedures (Special Rapporteur or Working Group) with the mandate to investigate the impact of the unilateral, coercive measures affecting the enjoyment of human rights and to propose measures, including compensation to the victims, to put an end to this kind of practice.

¹This declaration was written in collaboration with Rémy Herrera, researcher at CNRS, Paris.

²See among others, Resolutions 47/19 of 24 November 1992, 56/9 of 27 November 2001 and 67/4 of 13 November 2012 of the UN General Assembly.

³Over the last ten years, two of four countries voted against, while between one and three countries abstained. The countries concerned were: USA, Israel, Federation of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau.

⁴Cf. Report of the UN Secretary-General, A/67/181, p. 7, 25 July 2012.

⁵Cf. R. Herrera, « Tourisme et développement dans les Caraïbes », *Mondes en développement*, vol. 40, n°157, 47-66, 2012.

⁶R. Herrera, « Where is the Cuban Economy Heading? », *International Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 34, n° 4, pp. 3-11, 2005.

⁷See: American Association of World Health, *The Impact of the US Embargo on Health and Nutrition in Cuba*, The Association, 1997.

⁸R. Herrera, « Cuba : Résistance, mode d'emploi », *Afrique Asie*, January 2007.

⁹See: R. Herrera (dir.), *Cuba révolutionnaire – Économie et planification*, L'Harmattan, 2006.

¹⁰See for example: « Case concerning the military and paramilitary activities in and against Nicaragua » (Nicaragua v. United States of America), Judgment of 27 June 1986.

¹¹The expression used by Ramsey Clark, former US Attorney General, at the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embargo_des_%C3%89tats-Unis_contre_Cuba.

WHAT IS BEHIND FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS?*

Free trade agreements¹ are frequently presented by the mainstream media as beneficial for the two parties that sign to them. Negotiated between two countries assumed to be equal, sovereign and acting in the name of the general welfare, they claim to rationally implement the conclusions of the economic sciences relative to the gains to be had from liberalization of international trade. What is the real story?

An Increase in Inequality

We contend, without exaggeration and with regret, that the dominant economic theory is almost completely disconnected from rational thought.² It is in utter denial, to the point of refusing to acknowledge the existence of the crisis; it believes in self-regulating markets; and it claims that incorporation into neo-liberal globalization, assumed to be indispensable, will indubitably make it possible to benefit from the “opening”, all while assailing its critics with the absurd threat of autarchy – which nobody wants. It thus prompts one to forget that it is possible, and desirable, to control this opening to trade by a set of tools available to all governments, ranging from local production protection to exchange control mechanisms. Although it is governments that sign free trade agreements, the agreements are effectively implemented by economic actors with interests – and powers – that are quite different from those of the governments, which is reflected in the political struggles that these states encounter as well as in the power relations that orient the many and complex contradictions characterizing the real workings of the current global capitalist system.

Generally, free trade agreements are implanted by political alliances that bond local élites (or factions of élites) and representatives of international high finance – linked to world banking and financial oligopolies based for the most part in the United States. These accords can thus be passed between countries with markedly different economic structures, especially when the treaty involves a “small country” of the South (which can have a considerable population, but whose economic power on the international scene is insignificant, as in the case of Nigeria, Bangladesh, Indonesia or Colombia) and a “big country” of the North (which can have a modest size but a world-class reserve currency, such as Switzerland). These structural differences concern capital stocks, technology levels, and especially earnings levels (more than work productivity), as well as degrees of legislative refinement (notably regarding agriculture,

with phyto-sanitary norms for imports and dumping provisions for exports). They are differences that are sometimes so pronounced that these agreements end up, most often, increasing inequality between the economies concerned and, within each country, increasing inequality among social groups. Thus, there is a double phenomenon of polarization related to a double surplus transfer: from the South to the North internationally, from the working classes to the ruling classes domestically.³

Weakening the Small Economies of the South

Moreover, free trade agreements tend to weaken the small economies of the South for the basic reason that, in place of domestic growth motors arising from domestic demand driven, for example, by domestic consumption and national investment, they substitute external growth motors oriented to exports, which draw on uncompetitive systems of production. Thus, they expose these extroverted and decentralized economies of the South, to “exogenous shocks”, such as substantial variations in world demand, fluctuations in their national currency on the exchange markets (where the United States dollar, even depreciated, remains the key currency) and the contagions from serious international crisis. Added to this, in certain cases, there is, through the increase in the foreign debt, the transformation of export-promotion regimes – which, theoretically is what these treaties are all about – into financial capital accumulation regimes. One of the most spectacular examples of this is Colombia, commercially attached to the United States, where the free trade agreement allowed the exorbitant swelling of a “financial bubble” in the real estate sector, a bubble that broke in 2008 and aggravated endemic crisis of the country. But the partisans of this treaty, in Colombia and in the United States, continue to praise the positive effects triggered by the prodigious boom in the exports of... calibrated bananas and cut flowers! What a rosy future will be built on such as basis for this country!

In the end, for the economies of the South, the results are their being locked in to ever greater constraints by international high finance, by their foreign debt and by the intertwining of their finances with those of the North (in crisis!); a poisoning of the countries of the South – sometimes even with the blessing of the local ruling élites – in a spiral that makes them abandon ever more of the key elements of national sovereignty (in such areas as food, currency and the military); and an obstinate clinging to neo-liberal anti-crisis policies that trap the social groups of the South in underdevelopment and mass poverty, thus undermining huge swathes of their



economy, destroying small holder agriculture, stymying the dynamics of their industries, pillaging the environment, dismantling social policies, renouncing human rights... and playing into the hands of obscurantism of all sorts. Further, there is an acceleration of the illegal transfers of surplus: corruption, capital flight, trafficking of the worst sorts...

It cannot be overemphasized that free trade agreements are the results of failures – first of all the failure of neo-liberal globalization, in systemic crisis with no end in sight. Then there is the failure of multilateral negotiations at the World Trade Organization, more and more openly contested. Finally, there is the failure of regional organizations of the South designed as means of domination by the North. Thus, in Latin America, the current free trade treaties are in tatters, the last remnants of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) ardently desired by the United States administration in order to extend to the entirety of the “Western Hemisphere” the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)⁴ and thus reproduce there the dichotomies of the world system, a project rejected by the resistance of the peoples of Latin America, who have decided to go on the offensive.

It is thus urgent to mobilize throughout the world against these free trade agreements, which are powerful vectors of domination by the countries of the North and transmission belts of a neo-liberal globalization in disarray but that some would restore.⁵

* Article written by Rémy Herrera, researcher at the National Center for Scientific Studies (CNRS) and panelist during the CETIM Symposium “Who benefits from free trade?”, 1-3 last November. This article has been published in the review *Afrique Asie*, February 2013.

¹ “Who benefits from free trade?” was the theme of a symposium, very successful, organized in Geneva by the Europe – Third World Centre, 1-3 last November.

² For those who might find criticism of the dominant economic theory stimulating: R. Herrera, *Dépenses publiques et croissance économique*, L'Harmattan, 2010; and *Un autre capitalisme n'est pas possible*, Syllepse, 2010.

³ See the CETIM written statement drafted in 2007 to United Nations Human Rights Council in collaboration with R. Herrera and P. Nakatani on the debt of the countries of the South and the East, A/HRC/4/NGO/17.

⁴ R. Herrera, « Dangers de l'ALCA et nécessité d'une alternative pour le développement », *Cahier de la Maison des Sciences économiques de l'Université de Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne*, Série rouge n° 22, March 2004.

⁵ See: R. Herrera (2010), *Les Avancées révolutionnaires en Amérique latine* (Lyon: Parangon, 2010).

CETIM ADVISES YOU THE FOLLOWING READING

“Économie verte”: marchandiser la planète pour la sauver?

[“Green Economy”: *Commodify the planet to save it?*]

Joint publication

“Green Economy”! The new development paradigm to respond to the crises that the world is experiencing? A model of ecological prosperity and an alternative to globalized capitalism? A way out of the environmental impasses resulting from productivism and consumerism?

At its best, the new green panacea falls far short of this perspective. Worse: through the measures being prescribed – by the UNDP, the OECD, the World Bank, among others – it is being resolutely imposed in contradiction to common sense. “Sustainable development” remains the announced objective, but it is the “green economy” that is supposed to get us there.

By putting «natural capital» on the market, promoting “ecosystem services”, privatization of resources, patenting life, “free trade” in arable land, water, air, forests, biodiversity... and the vaunted “effective management” thus induced, the process claims to regulate permanently our relationship with the environment, dynamizing “creative employment growth” and so assuring “a viable future for capitalism”.

The simple greenwashing of the economy these past few years superseded by the legitimation of green capitalism of tomorrow! Or how to emphasize for the future the fundamentals of a production and consumption model at the very heart of the aggravation of current social and environmental imbalances. All the same, does the reluctance of the major countries of the North and the South constitute an alternative saving grace? Nothing could be less sure.

Price: CHF 20 / 13 €, 191 pages, ISBN: 978-2-84950-377-5, Ed. CETRI/Syllepse, 2013. It can be ordered of CETIM.

“PENSÉES D’HIER POUR DEMAIN” COLLECTION

This CETIM series offers the public (the young public in particular) collections of writings (in French) by various stakeholders who, not long ago, were at the heart of the struggle of peoples for their emancipation and whose thinking, now, is more relevant than ever.

Patrice Lumumba

Collection of writings introduced by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja

Born in 1925 in the then Belgian Congo, Patrice Lumumba is a hero of both the country’s national independence and African unity.

The speech that he gave on 30 June 1960 during the independence ceremony for the Republic of the Congo still resonates today in the memory of Africans, and even beyond.

Under pressure from Western governments, Lumumba, a democratically elected prime minister and the first head of state of the independent Congo, was soon driven from office then arrested, imprisoned, tortured and finally killed. The coalition of Western imperial interests and several local leaders in their pay sealed the fate of the Congo for a long time to come.

This little book presents several of Lumumba’s most important writings. It is a must read, for history as well as for current and future struggles!

Price: CHF 11 / 8,50 €, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-2-88053-090-7, 2013. It can be ordered of CETIM.

Frantz Fanon

Collection of writings introduced by Mireille Fanon-Mendès-France

Born in 1925 on the island of Martinique, deceased at the age of 36, on 6 December 1961, Frantz Fanon remains formidably present and enlightening.

A medical doctor specialized in psychiatry, militant, companion-in-arms of the Algerian FLN, writer, he is the author of several books and other writings. The best known, *Peau noire, masques blancs* and *Les Damnés de la terre*, like the others, are striking by their surprising relevance and their often premonitory character. Further, generation after generation,

reading Frantz Fanon has been mandatory for anybody hoping to change the world.

“For those who resist, behind the appropriation of the words liberty, justice, peoples’ rights by those with a stake in the imperial and neo-colonial order, the permanence of the ugliness of the world’s disorder is revealed in its misery and exploitation.”

Mireille Fanon-Mendès-France

This little book presents a selection of the most compelling writings by Fanon on racism, neo-colonialism, migration, alienation, the perversion of the mainstream discourse...

Price: CHF 11 / 8,50 €, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-2-88053-091-4, 2013. It can be ordered of CETIM.

Amilcar Cabral

Collection of writings introduced by Carlos Lopes

Born in 1924, the historical leader of the movement for the independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, Amilcar Cabral was assassinated at Conakry on 20 January 1973, betrayed by some of his own companions, who were -- in all likelihood -- in the pay of the Portuguese colonial regime.

The independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde was officially recognized several months later, in 1973, by the United Nations, and respectively in 1974 and 1975 by the Portuguese Carnation Revolution. By then, Amilcar Cabral had already entered history as one of the main heroes of African emancipation!

The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of his death as well as the first steps taken in the direction of national liberation help us to understand the extent to which Cabral’s contribution was unique, but also the extent to which his thinking remains pertinent today.

“The name Amilcar Cabral is associated with a victorious liberation struggle, an innovative guerilla tactic, effective participative governing structures in the liberated areas and also a substantial intellectual contribution. Cabral never chose the easy way out.”

Carlos Lopes

This little book presents several of Amilcar Cabral’s most significant writings dealing with, among other things, the role of culture, of the local bourgeoisie and of the construction of unity in national independence movements.

Price: CHF 11 / 8,50 €, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-2-88053-092-1, 2013. It can be ordered of CETIM.